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“A Bag’s Life” Campaign Encourages Floridians to Change Habits, Creates Buzz for Plastic Bag Recycling

Entertaining Website, App Point to Nearly 1,600 Retail Drop-off Locations

(TALLAHASSEE, FL) – April 20, 2010 – A statewide plastic bag recycling awareness campaign called [A Bag’s Life](http://www.abagslife.com), which includes an interactive and educational website <http://www.abagslife.com> and mobile app with nearly 1,600 recycling drop-off sites by zip code, will be launched during Earth Day at the Capitol with the help of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Retail Federation and Florida Recycling Partnership.

The kickoff takes place Thursday, April 22 in the Capitol Courtyard from 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

A Bag’s Life encourages Floridians to reduce, recycle and reuse their plastic bags with quirky but direct messaging like “Don’t Treat Me Like Trash” and “Gimme a Second Chance” coming straight from an iconic bag. It includes a video contest and social networking element to fire up support for contests that will be held in the fall. The easy to use retail location identifier lists the nearest drop-off points and the Google Maps option makes recycling plastic bags easier than ever before.

Demonstrating what public and private groups can accomplish by working together, A Bags Life is a cooperative effort of the DEP, Florida Recycling Partnership, Florida Retail Federation, Recycle Florida Today and American Chemistry Council. The campaign is being touted as the first of its kind nationally because of its statewide reach and comprehensive, easily accessed list of locations of the state’s largest retailers, including grocery and home improvement stores. More are expected as popularity and measurability increase.

“Retailers recognize the important role they have to play in Florida’s recycling policies, and they embrace that role with enthusiasm,” said Samantha Hunter Padgett, executive coordinator of the Florida Retail Federation Sustainability Council. “Many of our members are already actively engaged in the effort to recycle plastic bags. A Bag’s Life takes those efforts one step further by making it easy for customers to locate the nearest recycling opportunity at their favorite local retailer.”

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The plastic bag icon on the website is designed to take on a life of its own, smiling when it's happy, frowning when it's not. Website copy suggests that individuals should step up and do their part to address litter and waste rather than blame the bag if it's not being recycled or reused.

“Recycling plastic bags is a responsibility we all share and by embracing positive ‘green’ actions today we benefit the future of our planet,” said Lauren McCarthy, executive director of the Florida Recycling Partnership. “By taking the extra time to bring bags back to the store and drop them in recycling bins, people are not only giving that bag a second chance to be made into something else like outdoor decking or construction materials, they’re also incorporating simple earth-friendly practices into their everyday lives.”

Video Contest and Caught in the Act

Florida residents are encouraged to upload two-minute fun and/or educational videos to www.abagslife.com telling the story of A Bag's Life, and the top viewed clips will be judged on creativity, with final prizes awarded in the fall. Grand prize winners, as well as 2nd and 3rd place prizes, will be awarded in two categories — Reuse Fun and Recycling Educational.

The video contest will be followed by “Caught in the Act” recycling events in various cities, where social media, including Facebook and Twitter, will fire up support and offer clues where people can drop off their bags in return for prizes.

Earth Day 2010

The A Bag's Life launch corresponds with Earth Day at the Capitol. A celebration that marks 40 years since its inception, the theme for this year's celebration is “Easy as One — Ordinary Habits, Extraordinary Results.” The DEP event includes approximately 1,000 school children participating in a recycling contest between students and adults. Attendees were asked to bring 22 plastic bags in honor of the day's events on April 22nd to be recycled into a pirate ship, made from recycled plastic lumber.

About A Bag's Life

A Bag's Life serves as a public educational campaign that unites the Florida Recycling Partnership and Florida Retail Federation with non-profits, business, community and government organizations around the common goal of promoting the three R's as they relate to plastic bags — reduce, reuse and recycle.

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