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**As Super Bowl Sunday Approaches,**

**New Nonprofit Serves up Pizza Box Recycling Tips**

*Home Slice Applauds Curbside Composting of Takeout Containers*

**(AUSTIN, TEXAS)–**With Super Bowl LV approaching this Sunday, millions of pizzas are about to be devoured in front of TVs across America–but what to do about all those cardboard takeout boxes?

[WasteLessWednesday](https://wastelesswednesday.org/), a newly launched nonprofit organization that nudges consumers with one environmentally minded gif every week, is helping Americans understand how to divert the takeout boxes from landfills.

City of Austin customers can toss their pizza boxes into the curbside composting carts provided by Austin Resource Recovery, the City’s solid waste department.

“Home Slice is so excited there are composting and recycling options for our takeout customers, especially with the Super Bowl and National Pizza Day (February 9) right around the corner,” says Home Slice partner Jeff Mettler. “We've been lucky for years to be able to recycle pizza boxes at our restaurants with [Break It Down](https://breakitdownaustin.com/), the recycling and composting service for our restaurants. We are glad that options for composting at home are growing.”

Nationally, a 2020 study commissioned by corrugated packaging manufacturer WestRock concluded that despite a little grease and cheese, “there is no significant technical reason to prohibit post-consumer pizza boxes from the recycle stream.” The Recycling Partnership followed up with a national consumer study that showed 70 percent of Americans say pizza boxes should be recycled.

“The pizza box study caught my attention more than any I’ve seen in the world of recycling since the ‘90s,” says WasteLessWednesday founding co-director Valerie Salinas-Davis. “For decades, we’ve been taught that though recovered corrugated cardboard is a valuable commodity, messy pizza boxes aren’t recyclable. Then we learned the neat trick to tear off and recycle just the lid. Now the cardboard industry is saying, ‘Yes, those pizza boxes are entirely recyclable.’ It’s now a matter of educating the industry and localizing proper information.”

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The WestRock study is endorsed by the American Forest and Paper Association, whose membership processes cardboard for recycling. WestRock estimates 3 billion pizza boxes are used on the U. S. market every year, but points out 73 percent of the U.S. population has access to recycling programs that could accept the containers.

Austin Resource Recovery customers are lucky to have access to the City’s curbside composting program, which just completed the last phase of its multi-year implementation to single-family households last month. Austinites who live in multi-family complexes like apartments and people living in other communities across America should check with their property managers and local collection programs about the best way to recycle or compost pizza boxes.

Founded by advertising executives with years of environmental public service campaign experience, WasteLessWednesday offers a library of vibrantly colored “EnviroGifs” that can be adapted and shared by recycling and sustainability coordinators, businesses and consumers anywhere.

“When it comes to revelations about the potential for widespread pizza box recycling, our tomato-red #Winning EnviroGif can be used to serve up the correct tips for any locale,” says WasteLessWednesday co-director Patti Englebert, who coordinates the production of gifs, posters and other creative resources for the nonprofit.

To view the library of some 40 EnviroGifs, follow updates, and even suggest tips that can be produced in the future, visit WasteLessWednesday.org

**Tips For Recycling Pizza Boxes Anywhere**

Recycling is different everywhere. If your community or apartment complex–

* Welcomes pizza boxes for recycling: be sure the box is completely empty of crusts, liners and the little white, plastic “pizza saver” before tossing it into the recycling bin.
* Composts pizza boxes: you can leave the crusts in, but remove liners and other inorganic materials like the pizza saver.
* Accepts corrugated cardboard for recycling but doesn’t explicitly welcome pizza boxes: tear off the lid and throw away the bottom if it’s soiled.

*Contamination of our recycling streams–meaning, tossing things in your bin that aren’t recyclable–is one of the industry’s biggest challenges. Always remember:* ***If in doubt, throw it out.***

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