

IMPACT IN PROGRESS CASE STUDY



Improving Recycling in Springdale Starts with Smarter Engagement

Boston Mountain Solid Waste District, Arkansas

Delivering access to recycling is only the beginning. For the recycling system to work, residents need to actively and correctly participate. That's why the Boston Mountain Solid Waste District (BMSWD), with support from The Recycling Partnership, is launching a new multifaceted education and engagement campaign to strengthen recycling in Springdale, Arkansas.

Running from June to September 2025, the campaign addresses two core challenges: **low participation** and **high contamination**. Currently, only half of Springdale's 22,600 households are setting out their recycling carts. Meanwhile, more than 40% of the materials collected by Springdale's hauler, CARDS, include non-recyclable items, driving up costs and creating safety concerns at the processing facility.

This is where data, design, and behavior-based messaging come together. The campaign focuses on three interconnected strategies.

Measurement

- Pre- and post-campaign MRF audits, along with smart camera data collection, will provide a clear picture of behavior change over time.

Smart Cameras for Direct-to-Resident Feedback

- Smart cameras from Prairie Robotics will monitor cart set-outs and automatically trigger mailers with real-time photo feedback when contamination is spotted. These personalized nudges help households better understand what belongs—and what doesn't—in the cart.

Strategic Outreach

- **Audience Segmentation:** Households receive tailored messages based on actual set-out behavior observed by the smart cameras.
- **In-Home Recycling Bin Kits:** Kits containing small in-home recycling bins will be offered to households that are setting out carts infrequently or not at all.
- **Digital Experience:** An updated webpage complete with recycling guides, FAQs, and Bertie the chatbot to answer specific recycling questions at any time.
- **Multilingual Communications:** All printed materials will be in English and Spanish, and digital downloads in Marshallese will be available via QR code.

After six weeks of outreach, Springdale's progress will be measured across key indicators: participation rate, set-out behavior, digital engagement, tonnage collected, and contamination levels.

This isn't about recycling for recycling's sake. It's about creating systems that work—and scale. By pairing technology with behavioral science and community insight, BMSWD is building a model for smarter, more effective recycling.



Want to improve outcomes in your community?

Start by connecting with residents in ways that resonate. Partner with us to bring proven, data-informed strategies to life.

