

Leading the nation in starting a project aimed at horizontal recycling of refill packs in Japan in collaboration with Kobe city, retailers, consumer products manufacturers and recyclers

**KOBE
PLASTIC
NEXT**



**Kobe Plastic Next:
Joining Forces to Recycle Refill Packs**

From October 1 (Friday) collection boxes will be placed in 75 locations throughout the city of Kobe to recycle refill packs and give back to residents.

The city of Kobe and 16 companies, including retailers, consumer products manufacturers and recyclers (resource recycling business operators) will collaborate to achieve circularity in society and, as of October 1, 2021, will start Kobe Plastic Next: Joining Forces to Recycle Refill Packs, a project that aims to achieve horizontal recycling by separating and collecting used household and personal care refill packs, such as detergents and shampoos, at collection boxes placed at 75 retail outlets throughout the city and reverting them to refill packs.

The Act on Promotion of Resource Circulation for Plastics that will go into effect in April 2022 is designed to encourage voluntary initiatives amongst local governments and businesses to collect and recycle plastics. This project, which starts in October of this year, six months before the enforcement of the act, is an attempt to be the leading initiative in Japan in the horizontal recycling of refill packs, crossing the boundaries of competition in collaboration with local governments and multiple business engaged in manufacturing, sales, collections and recycling.

■ Current State of Refill Pack Recycling and Commitment to Horizontal Recycling

The percentage of refill packs and other refill packaging among all household and personal care products is around 80%, which significantly contributed to reducing the amount of plastic used. However, refill packs, which are made from film with a multilayer structure that has different properties, are rarely recycled in plastic products consumers regularly use, and the horizontal recycling of these, i.e., recycling used products into the same product, is considered difficult.

Against this backdrop, the project was launched to curb consumption of natural resources by taking on the challenge of horizontal recycling of refill packs (film to film). Businesses that share the same aspirations as the city of Kobe, where the project will take place, are coming together crossing the boundaries of competition toward realizing the continued and sustained use of plastics for the same purposes. The project aims to set an example to help promote similar activities across Japan.

Gist of This Project

Refill pack collections: Building a sustainable collection scheme

- (1) Collections taken by 4 retailers at 75 retail outlets throughout the city (Largest nationwide)
Goal: 5 tons/year in the first year (Future goal: 10 tons/year)
- (2) Consolidated pickups during return trip operations after deliveries to retail outlets, optimized collections, and reduced environmental impact

Refill pack recycling: Building a new business model for a circular economy

- (3) Issues and technology shared by 10 consumer products manufacturers via this recycling experiment aiming at horizontal recycling. Also, discussions on optimum materials and shapes for refill packs' easier recyclability
- (4) Attempt at trial sales of products made from horizontally recycled refill packs at retail outlets throughout the city
- (5) Idea brainstorming and examination of various recycled products to give back to the residents of the city

■ Wash Out and Dry the Refill Packs and Bring Them to Collection Boxes Placed in 75 Retail Outlets throughout the City!

Household and personal care refill packs, including detergents, shampoos and kitchen care products, from any manufacturer are eligible for collection. Consumers are asked to wash out and dry the used refill packs before bringing them to the collection boxes placed at retail outlets for WELCIA YAKKYOKU Co., Ltd., CONSUMERS CO-OPERATIVE KOBE, KOHYO Co., Ltd. and The Daiei, Inc. For cooperating with the recycling collection, consumers will be awarded 50 points (equivalent to 5 yen) in Iikoto-guruguru, the city's official app, for each refill pack.

[Press-related inquiries]

Sasaki / Hamazumi, Kobe Environment Bureau
Fukushima / Yamamura,

Public Relations Office for Kobe Plastic Next: Refill Pack Recycling (Planning-boat)
info@planning-boat.com

[Inquiries from the general public]

Kobe City General Call Center
Tel.: +81-570-083330 (+81-78-333-3330)
<https://kobeplasticnext.jp/> (in Japanese)

Outline of Kobe Plastic Next: Joining Forces to Recycle Refill Packs

The project takes on the challenge of horizontal recycling (film to film) with the city of Kobe, retailers, consumer products manufacturers and recyclers collaborating to collect and recycle household and personal care refill packs (film-type packaging) and reverts them to the same products.

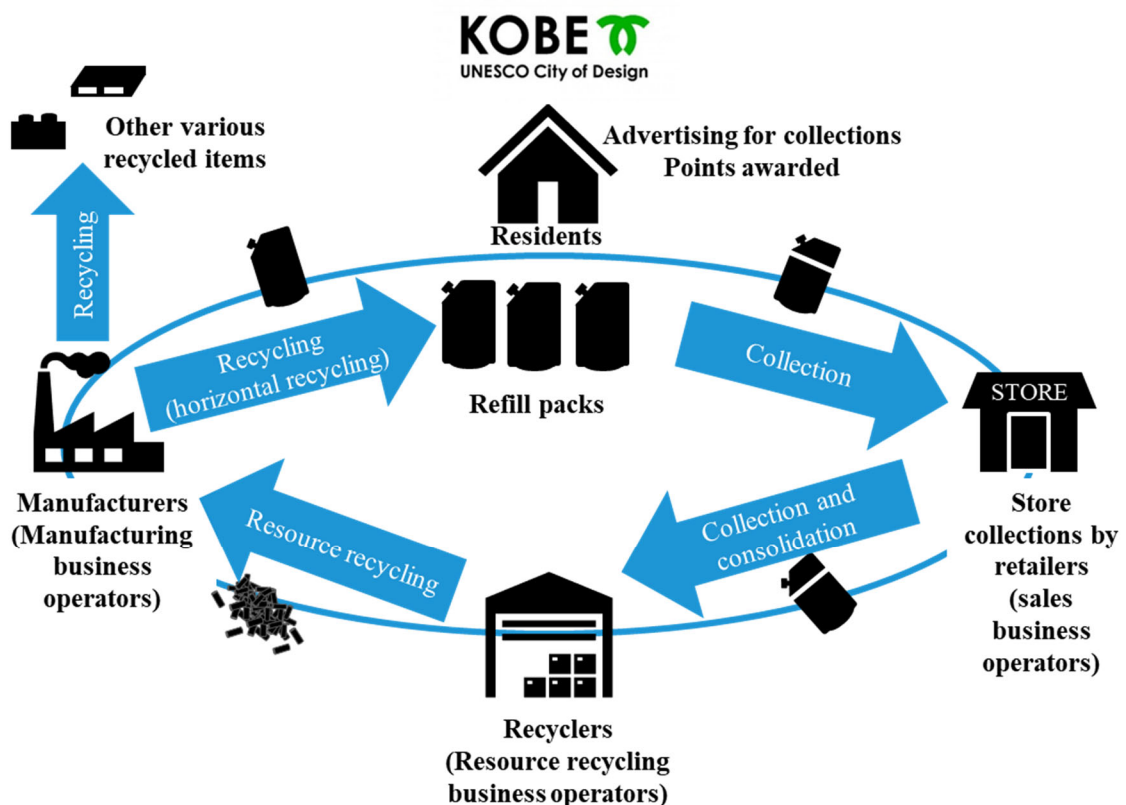
Participating members share the same aspirations and will collaborate to reach out to residents of the city. The project aims to set an example to help promote similar activities across Japan.

Participating Members in the Kobe Plastic Next: Refill Pack Recycling Project Team

*As of September 29, 2021; Listed in alphabetic order in Japanese

[Project entity]	City of Kobe
[Retailers]	4 companies: WELCIA YAKKYOKU Co., Ltd., CONSUMERS CO-OPERATIVE KOBE, KOHYO Co., Ltd. and The Daiei, Inc.
[Manufacturers]	10 companies: Earth Corporation, Kao Corporation, Cow Brand Soap Kyoshinsha Co., Ltd., Kosé Corporation, Kobayashi Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., Saraya Co., Ltd., P&G Japan G.K., Milbon Co., Ltd., Unilever Japan Customer Marketing K.K., Lion Corporation
[Recyclers]	2 companies: Amita Corporation and Daiei Kankyo Co., Ltd.
[Collaboration/Partners]	Japan Clean Ocean Material Alliance (CLOMA)

Organization Chart of Kobe Plastic Next: Joining Forces to Recycle Refill Packs



[City of Kobe] Encouraging collections by reaching out to residents and building momentum for the goals of the project

- Holding public relations and education activities and disseminating information on collection records to residents with the aim of collecting 5 tons per year on the first year (Future goal: 10 tons/year)
- Encouraging collections by awarding points for Kobe City’s public eco action app, “Iikoto-guruguru” meaning circulating good actions
(Planned to be conducted in collaboration with UMILE part of Unilever Japan’s UMILE program)
- Holding events to give back recycled products of refill packs to residents in collaboration with participating businesses

[Retailers] Constructing a sustainable collection scheme through collections at stores

- Placing collection boxes in 75 retail outlets throughout the city of Kobe and collecting refill packs at those stores
(Recycling experiment has been conducted since June 30, 2021 at 2 retail outlets, CO-OP Living KONAN and Daiei Kobe Sannomiya Store. As of September 21, the amount of refill pack collected was 9kg.)
- Optimizing collections and reducing the environmental impact by leveraging “return trip operations” from retail outlets and existing operators picking up waste and other items to collect refill packs



Collection boxes scheduled to be established on October 1

[Consumer products manufacturers] Acting in solidarity with horizontal recycling, brainstorming ideas, and giving back recycled products to residents

- Conducting horizontal recycling experimental study at the pilot plant established at Kao’s Wakayama Research Laboratories, using collected refill packs treated as a batch regardless of the manufacturer. Sharing issues and technology to act in solidarity with the aim of horizontal recycling
- Discussing points of improvement, such as materials and shapes for refill packs that are easier to recycle and labels that are easier to consumers to understand
- Aiming at trial sales of products made from horizontally recycled refill packs at retail outlets throughout the city
- Brainstorming ideas with project team and examining various recycled products to give back to the residents of the city

[Recyclers (Resource recycling business operators)] Resource recycling of collected refill packs

- Gathering items collected and consolidated and sorting them into those applicable to the horizontal recycling experiment and into those applicable for other recycled products. Giving feedback to the project team on the state of collected items
- Manufacturing raw materials for various recycled products to give back to the residents of the city

Refill Packs Collections Outline

- Start date of collections: October 1, 2021 (Friday)
- Collection locations: Collection boxes placed at 75 retail outlets throughout Kobe
 - WELCIA YAKKYOKU Co., Ltd.: 11 retail outlets
 - CONSUMERS CO-OPERATIVE KOBE: 33 retail outlets
 - KOHYO Co., Ltd.: 9 retail outlets
 - The Daiei, Inc.: 22 retail outlets

*The details as of October 1 will be as depicted on the project website (<https://kobeplasticnext.jp>) (in Japanese).

- Eligibility for collection: **Used household and personal care refill packs** (regardless of the manufacturer)

Eligible items

OK



Shampoos, conditioners, treatments, hair styling products, make-up remover, facial cleansers, skin care products such as toner and emulsion, body wash, bath additives, clothing and fabric care products (detergents, softeners, bleach, glue, deodorants for clothing and fabrics, insect repellents etc.), kitchen care products (detergents, cleaning materials etc.), household care products (detergents, antibacterial products, bathroom products and toiletries, aroma deodorizers etc.), disinfectants for hands, alcohol disinfectants etc.

Ineligible items

Not OK



Bottles, tubes, food packaging, food trays, cups, Styrofoam, paper, plastic products other than refill packs, all containers for food, products labeled dangerous that it must not be mixed.

■ Collection method: Please bring the refill packs to the stores after washing out and drying them.

STEP 1 つめかえパックのうえをカットして開く
Set aside. Cut and open the top of the refill pack.

STEP 2 2回、水を入れて、洗う
Rinse and wash out twice.

STEP 3 よく乾かす
Dry thoroughly.

STEP 4 回収ボックスに入れる
Place in pack. Place in collection box. Please don't wrap with a rubber band or tape.

[Points awarded to Iikoto-guruguru]

By cooperating with these collections, 50 points for Iikoto-guruguru, the city's official app, will be awarded for each refill pack. (50 points = equivalent to 5 yen, maximum 3 packs/day and 10 packs/month)

Directions

- (1) Download the city of Kobe's app, Iikoto-guruguru.
- (2) Open the special page in the app while at the collection retail outlet to get your position information with the GPS function.
- (3) Scan the barcode printed on the refill packs that you have.



*These points for Iikoto-guruguru can be exchanged for digital points at over 120 companies. (This is planned to be conducted in collaboration with UMILE part of Unilever Japan's UMILE program.)

<https://www.city.kobe.lg.jp/a66324/kurashi/recycle/heat/iiguru-app.html> (in Japanese)