

**Vikings Season 5**  
**at Ashford Studios**  
and on location in  
**Wicklow**

**Bins and signs**  
A Case Study

On Vikings Season 5, Production decided to trial a 3 bin waste system to reduce our landfill. Could we change 5 year old habits (or years longer!) *mid season?! Yes!*

With the co-operation of the Locations crew and Hot Buns Catering, and with financial assistance from Production to cover the extra cost of compostable catering supplies (ultimately balanced out by reduction in landfill costs) we hugely reduced our landfill and brought our recycle rate from 5% to 39% within 3 months. None of this could have been achieved without our bin signs and system.

**THE SET UP**

We learned that it is important that the whole production is on board, that discussion is had by production with all HOD's, and that the Greening Practices are passed personally by them to their crew. If at all possible, have a crew member dedicated to supporting the Greening. It is a job of diplomacy. It cannot be assumed that everyone recycles at home, knows the difference between biodegradable and compostable, or understands how anyone could make a difference. We found that memos have

limited impact without the face to face re-enforcement of the information and the chat that goes with it.



Support your Green Practice information with posters, the more controversial the better, - they will become talking points.

# HOW LONG UNTIL IT'S DECOMPOSED?

IF ONE BOTTLE OF WATER MADE IT INTO THE SEA, HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE TO FULLY DECOMPOSE?



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## THE BINS

The key elements of making a bin system work are clear communication and ease of access. People in a hurry need to glance around, see a bin, and quickly understand which of the three to use; recycle, compost or general.



Always place your bins out in the same layout to avoid confusion (of hurried crew!)

## Trouble shooting the sign imagery

At the beginning there was a problem with general waste being put in the wrong bins, - cigarette butts, coffee sachets, butter pat foils, etc, and we had to constantly add stickers of more images as previously unidentified bin contaminating invaders became apparent!

There were also things that would *normally* be recycled, - for instance, a yoghurt pot, which you *can* recycle when clean, but if you put it in the recycling with any yoghurt in it, it contaminates the whole bag of clean dry recyclables. Likewise with tinfoil and clingfilm. Ok if clean, - unlikely to be on a film set! We added 'empty your water bottle', for obvious reasons!, and an UPDATE when we found out that altho' they had a recycle symbol, most disposable coffee cups were not recyclable as they have a plastic lining.

## What size sign do you need?

To start with, we made the signs 1m x .66m. You couldn't miss them! This size was great for an introduction to the system, and for use in studio, but proved challenging in the wilds of the Wicklow mountains, and we have downsized them for Season 6 by a third.

It's likely that most productions would not need the scale of bin or sign that we use on Vikings, and there are great, durable products from Rubbermaid, <http://www.midland-environmental.ie/company/partner-showcase/rubbermaid> which you can buy with some signage ready to attach and are great for indoor sets and studio. But if you have large numbers of extras spread around a location and being fed in the hand, it's important to be highly visible.



Concept by Oisín O Breag. Sign by Pacific Signs.

On Vikings we use multiple images on the signs, - more quickly absorbed than words and specific to the items most commonly binned on our production.

## Attaching the signs to the bins

We cut a pattern into the unprinted section of the Corex sign so that it could be mounted onto a 140litre or a 240litre bin, by slotting it into the opened lid.

The sign was divided into 3 sections; recycling, compost, and general, with downward arrows signalling which bin to use. We use clear bags in bin rings for recycling, so we can see what goes into it and weed out if necessary, and a black one for general. The compost bin in the middle is brown, provided and collected by Thornton's Waste Management. We insured that there was *never* a single bin – always the trio.

We spoke personally to the cast and crew about what we were doing and why, standing by the bins every day to point out the right use and being seen to use litter pickers to decontaminate.

## **Don't forget the liners!**

**Compostable bin liners** available in various sizes from  
[www.down2earthmaterials.ie](http://www.down2earthmaterials.ie) [www.ecoland.com](http://www.ecoland.com))

**Clear bags from recycled hay bale plastic** from  
Celtic Business Systems Ltd 01-2810147

**Black bags,-** sure you won't be needing many of them hopefully!

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