



Ecobrick Handbook

Prepared for Franklin County Solid Waste
Created by Christine Argus

For the 2025-2026 year, we have assembled the Ecobrick Handbook to help you understand the benefits of condensing your plastics. This Handbook is available on the Franklin County Solid Waste Management website which can be accessed by looking up <https://franklincounty.ky.gov/solid-waste-management/>. Please take the time to read through this handbook in full, and think about how to get started with your own ecobrick to reduce your plastic footprint and contribute to a build in the local community.

Franklin County is looking to collect ecobricks from the community to turn them into a planter at its very own Lakeview Park. Think of the impact you can have! Just one ecobrick you create would be able to last in the park several years. We need your participation and look forward to working on this project with you!

What is an Ecobrick?

An ecobrick is a plastic bottle that is solidly packed with clean and dry, used plastic. Each ecobrick that is created must meet the following six criteria:

1. Secured Concentration
2. Spiral Design
3. For-Earth Enterprise
4. Net-Subtractive
5. Supporting Biodiversity
6. Awareness Raising

Franklin County intends to meet all of this criterion, collecting ecobricks from the community to create a planter in Lakeview Park.

How to Create an Ecobrick

You can create an ecobrick with two simple tools, a plastic bottle and a stick! This handbook will discuss directions in depth. Please view the manual linked [here](#), or on our website for a simplified version.

Ideally, your ecobrick would be packed from a bottle mostly free of ridges and uniform in size. However, we know we don't live in a perfect world! If you consume a product that comes in an ideal bottle like the photo depicts below, please make the effort to use that as the origin of your ecobrick. Some bottles that come off the shelf in this ideal form include brand names like Smartwater, Barq's and Essentia.



If you do not actively use any of these branded products, feel free to create an ecobrick with any bottle you have! Since this is an outdoor building project, exact sameness of bottles is not important as long as the volume is consistent. **The only requirement we have of you is that your ecobrick is created from a transparent 500ml bottle, also measured as a 16.9 fl oz bottle. Regular, plastic ecobricks are the kind we are looking for.** Please do not fill them with anything other than clean and dry plastic.

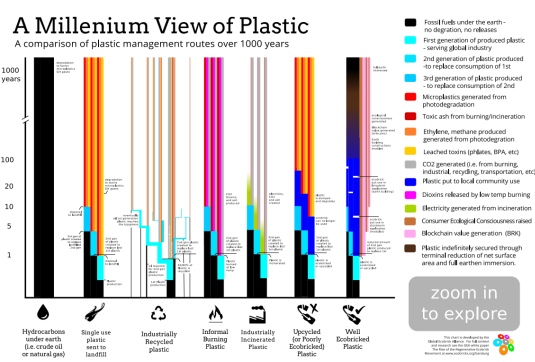
When it comes to filling your ecobrick, anything other than clean and dry plastic poses a risk of microbial decay or bottle rupture. This means you would have to start all over, and we don't want that. Additional risk to your ecobrick is posed based on what stick you choose. Make sure it is one that is not sharp. Sticks made of wood or bamboo are best, and the longer and thinner the better they are for getting plastics to the bottom.

Once you are committed to a stick and bottle, save up your clean and dry plastics. Some examples of plastic to fill your ecobrick with include wrappers, straws, grocery bags, and plenty more. Pack the plastics into bottle tight, pressing them down and mixing as you go. Repeat these steps till all ridges of your bottle are full, compact, and filled with plastic. Then all that is left is screwing the cap on your ecobrick, an optional inscription of your own, and providing your ecobrick to the dropoff location listed later in this handbook.

While you are beginning to pack your regular, plastic ecobrick do keep in mind there are two other kinds of ecobricks you can make. They are called cigbricks and ocean ecobricks! We are not collecting them at this time, but if you want to create your own or learn more, visit this [link](#) to see what standards they must meet.

Why Make an Ecobrick?

Make an ecobrick to help save the environment, of course! Did you know that one plastic bottle alone can take up to 450 years to decompose? And the shortest measure of time for a piece of plastic to decompose is 20 years! Plastics are definitely unique and useful to society, but as they degrade they release poisonous petroleum and natural gasses into the air. By packing your plastics into one bottle, you are minimizing the surface area in which these gasses are released. View the figure below to see how efficient ecobricking is as a form of plastic management.



Remember to Keep in Mind

There are both important and fun things to remember when creating your ecobrick! Again, the plastic filling your bottle *must* be dry and clean. Any wet or dirty plastic can lead to microbial growth and methane forming inside of your ecobrick. You want your ecobrick to be pretty, not bloated! If this risk is not paid attention to, the possibility your ecobrick is unusable and the cap pops off becomes more likely.

Note too that if you would like to identify your ecobrick among the others that are donated, pick a color! When your ecobrick will be put to use in the park, only the bottom color will be visible. It will also be what our contractors use to make patterns and designs. Any soft plastic with a solid color may be pushed to the bottom of your ecobrick to do so. You will want it compressed to where it fills 1-2cm of the bottle's base.

Conversely, you will want to leave a gap of 1-2cm at the top before screwing on the cap. Please be certain that your ecobrick is not packed to overflowing. If the plastic packed inside is even slightly pressing up against the lid, the pressure will eventually crack your ecobrick over the years.

Get Excited

We are really eager to get this project started with you. Below are some photos of what Franklin County has been inspired by and intends to do with the collection of your ecobricks. We hope you will join us in making these planters a reality at Lakeview Park!



Next Steps

Ecobricks take awhile to pack and we understand that! This is why our project is set to last through the 2025-2026 year. Once you have a complete ecobrick, please see that it gets dropped off at 321 W Main St in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Please think of inscribing on your ecobrick because it will last such a long time, too. You can write down the amount of plastic collected, your name, or the date. Many ecobrickers choose to include a quote or vision on their bottles. Our only recommendation is that when you are inscribing on your bottle, you use bold colored enamel paint, oil paint, or nail polish. You can definitely use a permanent marker or a label but it will not last as long. If you prefer something that will carry your legacy with it, choose wisely!

You are also more than welcome to donate more than one ecobrick over the course of the year. The final date to deliver an ecobrick is set in place as August 2026.

Questions & Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Christine Argus or Ally Hall.

Contact Information		
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