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## PRESS RELEASE

Unique Convenience Store Recycling Program, Message in a Bottle™, to further expand in Twin Cities through innovative partnerships.

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“Where is the recycling bin?” was the common question that arose when Minnesotans were running errands, but residents of the metro area will have increased access to recycling when they stop to fill up at the gas pump. The Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM), in partnership with the Minnesota Beverage Association, AccessAbility and ProAct, Inc., today announced the further expansion of the unique Message in a Bottle™ recycling program in the Twin Cities area to an additional 60 convenience stores. This announcement comes just in time for America Recycles Day, a national day of recycling awareness and action.

You may have seen the large pop bottle shaped bins at Holiday Station Stores, Kwik Trip Stores and other convenience stores in Minneapolis, St. Paul; RAM has been working the past two years to expand the MIB program in the metro area from 12 convenience stores to 150. Currently, 90 convenience stores have the MIB service. The majority of businesses participating are located in Minneapolis, Dakota County, St. Paul, and parts of Ramsey and Washington County. The further expansion will bring free recycling service for convenience stores to more of Minneapolis, St. Paul and Hastings. The continued support of the Minnesota Beverage Association and others has made this expansion possible.

“The expansion from 12 convenience stores in 2011 to over 150 throughout the metro area is having a great impact on recycling, as well as green job creation,” said RAM’s director, Maggie Mattacola. “Each convenience store recycles on average one ton of beverage container material each year, since the beginning of 2013 we have recycled over 150,000 pounds of plastic bottles and over 25,000 pounds of aluminum cans, as we add more locations those numbers continue to increase.”

In the metro area the MIB program partners with ProAct, Inc. and AccessAbility, nonprofit organizations providing employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities, for the collection and sorting of the beverage containers. MIB is a green jobs program making recycling easy for customers of local businesses.



This expansion will have a real impact on recycling, as well. Each convenience store is estimated to collect approximately 2,000 pounds of recyclables each year, for a total of 300,000 pounds of beverage containers recycled annually once the program is at full capacity. Statewide, Message in a Bottle™ is currently available in 15 communities, covering much of Minnesota, and has recycled over 1 million pounds annually since its inception in 2007.

“The Minnesota Beverage Association is proud to assist with the expansion of this amazing program to further help Minnesotans recycle more when they are on the go,” stated President, Tim Wilkin. “This program is a win-win-win for businesses, their customers and the community.”

About RAM: The Recycling Association of Minnesota (RAM) is committed to promoting resource conservation through waste prevention, reuse, recycling, composting and purchasing practices using the most cost effective and environmentally sound methods available in Minnesota. We do this by holding conferences, convening educational forums, creating networking opportunities, disseminating timely information, providing public education, creating unique recycling programs and initiating cooperative dialogue among our diverse membership. RAM provides outreach activities to the public through the America Recycles Day campaign, our unique recycling programs, our website, recycled product educational kits, educational events and other means. RAM has more than 200 members from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. RAM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

About Minnesota Beverage Association: The Minnesota Beverage Association’s members are producers, marketers and distributors of almost every non-alcoholic beverage you can imagine. For over 100 years the Association has been committed to promoting the best of the beverage industry through information dissemination, recycling programs, awareness campaigns and providing timely updates on industry activities.

About ProAct, Inc.: Dedicated to serving people with disabilities and other barriers to employment and community inclusion, ProAct provides a wide range of client services that enhance employment skills and self-sufficiency capabilities. At the same time, ProAct offers employers from the Twin Cities area, western Wisconsin and southern Minnesota with quality workplace employees and assembly, packaging and light manufacturing products and services. ProAct, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Eagan.

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