 Click to Print[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Campaigns find ways to reuse and recycle promotional materials

Is that sign from 2004, or 2008?

By [Asher Price](#)

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Thursday, February 28, 2008

Last Thursday, a message was posted on Obamacycle, a Web site dedicated to reusing Sen. Barack Obama campaign materials by zipping them from one state to another.

"We're still sorely in need of yard signs, T-shirts, and bumper stickers," read the note, which included instructions for mailing the material to Austin and was titled "Desperately Seeking Signs in Texas and Ohio!"

On Tuesday night, Amy Layous, who had served as a precinct captain in Lexington, Mass., during its primary, sent a package with 100 bumper stickers and 50 yard signs to Texas, at a cost of \$70, to the Illinois senator's campaign.

"I had packed everything and put it away to tell my children," said Layous, 35. "(But the campaign) would have to print it all over again, and that will cost even more money."

As the Republican and Democratic campaigns scramble to save money and get materials in place, recycling promotional material has become a key piece of logistics. It's also good for the environment: On a municipal level, the City of Austin is starting a program to recycle yard signs after its City Council race in May.

Campaigns consider their plentiful advertising material — bumper stickers, buttons, placards — so important to luring voters that they've labeled it a word commonly used for fish bait: chum.

"We always try to grab chum in one state and take it to the next," said Kamyil Bazbaz, a spokesman for Sen. Hillary Clinton's campaign. "We just don't want to waste. We don't want to leave a trail behind."

Hope Dozier, a 30-year-old volunteer for the New York senator's campaign, said she uprooted 50 yard signs in her home state of Virginia after its primary, threw them in the car and replanted them in Texas soil.

Ultimately, however, the glossy plastic used for most chum is hard to recycle. The city has also begun a pilot program to encourage candidates to make their signs out of a corrugated, recyclable plastic.

After the May election, either the city or the candidates — the details haven't been decided — will take their signs to an Austin company called Cycled Plastics, which will make the signs into small pellets that can be

incorporated into other plastic products, said Deborah Salzman, waste management supervisor for the city's solid waste materials division.

She said that each City Council candidate places as many as 2,000 campaign signs around town. So far, Randi Shade and Robin Cravey are participating in the recycling program, she said. The campaigns for incumbents Jennifer Kim and Lee Leffingwell say they plan to have recyclable signs.

Candidates who think they might run in the future might want to keep some details off the signs.


"I always like to look at them with an eye to what kind of shelf life are they supposed to have," Jennifer Palmieri, an adviser to John Edwards, told National Public Radio this month after his presidential campaign folded.

"Does it say 'John Edwards '08,' or does it just say 'John Edwards'? In 2004, I think, the campaign sign just said 'John Edwards.' Therefore, they were packed away, and (we) thought, 'Well, if John runs again for president, we have signs ready to go.' "

asherprice@statesman.com; 445-3643

Find this article at:

<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/local/02/28/0228campaignrecycle.html>

 [Click to Print](#)

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.