

# RECYCLE RIGHT

We're proud that each year millions of Americans (many of whom are our customers) recycle. While the shift toward single stream recycling makes recycling incredibly easy (single stream = all items going into one bin or cart), it also means people mix in items that cannot be recycled with those that can. The result: each year environmental service providers and local governments spend millions of dollars removing items (also called contaminants) that shouldn't be in the recycling stream or must discard overly contaminated items that could have been recycled.

We want to be part of the education effort currently underway to help everyone recycle smart. Here are a few pro-environment tips and commonly mistaken recyclable items. Share with your family, friends and neighbors, so we can all make our Mother Earth proud.



## WHAT CAN I RECYCLE IN MY CART OR BIN?

While recycling is the first step in the process, it's important to put materials in the cart or bin that actually belong there. Know before you throw! The [National Waste & Recycling Association](#), working with [Keep America Beautiful](#), the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#), and the [Solid Waste Association of North America](#), have come up with a list of acceptable recycling items so people will know what can be accepted at any recycling facility in the United States.



## COMMON RECYCLING MISTAKES

These are commonly mistaken items that often show up in recycling carts and bins, but they **CANNOT BE RECYCLED AT YOUR CURB**. Please don't toss these in with your recycling.

 <p><b>PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS</b></p>	<p>These are the most common item in the bin or cart that shouldn't be there, and they can be the most detrimental. When they get caught in the recycling sorter, they have to shut the whole system down and manually pull them out. Instead, consider recycling them by taking them back to grocery, pharmacy, or big-box stores where there are specially designated bins for recycling plastic bags.</p>
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**CANNOT BE RECYCLED AT YOUR CURB Continued.....** Please don't toss these in with your recycling.

 <p><b>TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS &amp; DONUT BOXES</b></p>	<p>Food residue can contaminate the boxes or other recyclable material. They can only be recycled if free of food waste and residue from food (think cheese from pizza).</p>
 <p><b>POLYSTYRENE (STYROFOAM)</b></p>	<p>Although Styrofoam is recyclable, it requires highly specialized equipment that single stream recycling facilities are not equipped with. Some restaurants (such as Chick-fil-A) accept their own Styrofoam cups for recycling.</p>
 <p><b>PAPER COFFEE CUPS</b></p>	<p>Although often thought of as a better alternative to Styrofoam, paper cups pose issues to recycling as well due to the plastic coating applied to prevent leaking. Your best bet is to bring your own mug!</p>
 <p><b>SHREDDED PAPER</b></p>	<p>Shredding paper reduces its size so dramatically that it ends up mixed with the residue or glass at recycling facilities. Because the machines sort broken glass and other debris by size, the shredded paper often gets destroyed or disposed of because it ends up in the wrong place. Once it is mixed with glass or residue, it cannot be recovered for recycling.</p>
 <p><b>PIZZA BOXES</b></p>	<p>This is one of the most common recycling mistakes. Although they are made of cardboard, the grease from the pizza contaminates the raw material. You can tear off the untarnished parts and recycle them though!</p>
 <p><b>HOUSEHOLD GLASS</b></p>	<p>Items like window panes, mirrors, light bulbs and dishes are dangerous and should be left out of your recycling. Light bulbs can be recycled at many hardware and home improvements stores. Dishes, if not broken, can be donated to local charities.</p>
 <p><b>WET PAPER</b></p>	<p>Paper that has gotten wet can make recycling difficult or impossible. Take care to cover your recyclables to keep them safe from the elements. Wet paper should be discarded with the trash.</p>
 <p><b>MILK &amp; JUICE CARTONS</b></p>	<p>These are often coated with a thin layer of wax but can still be recycled in many (but not all) communities. Best bet is to check with the local municipality, hauler or recycler to see if these can be recycled.</p>
 <p><b>BABY DIAPERS</b></p>	<p>The plastic and paper from them cannot be salvaged. Plus it's just plain gross!</p>
 <p><b>AEROSOL CANS</b></p>	<p>While these are made of metal, because of the chemicals used to pressurize the cans, they are classified as a household hazardous waste and should be discarded as such - not with recyclables or with the garbage.</p>

**CANNOT BE RECYCLED AT YOUR CURB Continued.....** Please don't toss these in with your recycling.

 <p><b>CERAMICS &amp; POTTERY</b></p>	<p>This includes things like coffee mugs and old flower pots. Look into donating items like this if they are in alright shape, someone else may be able to reuse them!</p>
 <p><b>PAINT, PESTICIDES, AUTOMOTIVE FLUIDS, DIESEL FUEL, GASOLINE KEROSENE &amp; CAR BATTERIES</b></p>	<p>They cannot be accepted and should be disposed of at a hazardous waste disposal facility.</p>
 <p><b>AUTOMOTIVE PARTS &amp; SCRAP METALS</b></p>	<p>These are too large and cumbersome for recycling equipment and could cause injury.</p>
 <p><b>HYPODERMIC NEEDLES</b></p>	<p>At one time, people were told that it was safe to put needles into a plastic bottle. It is not safe. Our workers can be exposed to grave illness and blood borne diseases. People need to properly dispose of used needles.</p>

**MORE HELPFUL TIPS**

PLACE ALL **RECYCLABLES LOOSE** IN THE **RECYCLING BIN OR CART**.



**RINSE PLASTIC AND METAL CONTAINERS TO REMOVE ALL REMAINING RESIDUE.**

**DO NOT PLACE YARD WASTE IN YOUR RECYCLING CART.**



**ALL ITEMS MUST BE IN YOUR CART OR BIN TO BE COLLECTED. DO NOT PLACE RECYCLABLES ON TOP OF OR AROUND YOUR CONTAINER.**



**BOTTLE CAPS CAN REMAIN ON THE ITEM AND CAN BE RECYCLED TOO!**

**IF YOUR RECYCLING PROGRAM ACCEPTS GLASS, YES, ALL COLORS ARE ACCEPTABLE.**



**WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT (IN THE GARBAGE).**