

# How to Recycle Anything

An A-to-Z guide of what can be tossed into which bin.

By **Natalie Ermann Russell**

## A

**Aerosol cans:** These can usually be recycled with other cans, as long as you pull off the plastic cap and empty the canister completely.

**Antiperspirant and deodorant sticks:** Many brands have a dial on the bottom that is made of a plastic polymer that's different from the plastic used for the container, so your center might not be able to recycle the whole thing (look on the bottom to find out). Tom's of Maine makes a deodorant stick composed solely of plastic No. 5.

## B

**Backpacks:** The American Birding Association accepts donated backpacks, which its scientists use while tracking neotropical birds ([americanbirding.org](http://americanbirding.org)).

**Batteries:** Recycling batteries keeps hazardous metals out of landfills. Many stores, like RadioShack and Office Depot, accept reusable ones. Car batteries contain lead and can't go in landfills, because toxic metals can leach into groundwater, but almost any retailer selling them will also collect and recycle them.

**Beach balls:** They may be made of plastic, but there aren't enough beach balls being thrown away to make them a profitable item to recycle. If a beach ball is still usable, donate it to a thrift store or a children's hospital.

**Books:** "Hard covers are too rigid to recycle, so we ask people to remove them and recycle just the pages," says Sarah Kite, recycling manager of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, in Johnston. In many areas, paperbacks can be tossed in with other paper.

## C

**Carpeting (nylon fiber):** Go to [carpetrecovery.org](http://carpetrecovery.org) and click on "What can I do with my old carpet?" to find a carpet-reclamation facility near you, or check with your carpet's manufacturer. Some carpet makers, like Milliken ([millikencarpet.com](http://millikencarpet.com)), Shaw ([shawfloors.com](http://shawfloors.com)), and Flor ([flor.com](http://flor.com)), have recycling programs.

**Cars, Jet Skis, boats, trailers, RVs, and motorcycles:** Even if these are unusable—totaled, rusted—they still have metal and other components that can be recycled. Call junkyards in your area, or go to [junkmycar.com](http://junkmycar.com), which will pick up and remove cars, trailers, motorcycles, and other heavy equipment for free.

**Cell phones:** According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, fewer than 20 percent of cell phones are recycled each year, and most people don't know where to recycle them. The Wireless Foundation refurbishes old phones to give to domestic-violence survivor [calltoprotect.org](http://calltoprotect.org). For information on other cell-phone charities, log on to [gowirelessgogreen.org](http://gowirelessgogreen.org). In some states, like California and New York, retailers must accept and recycle old cell phones at no charge.

**Compact fluorescent lightbulbs:** CFLs contain mercury and shouldn't be thrown in the trash. Ikea and the Home Depot operate CFL recycling programs; you can also check with your local hardware store or recycling center to see if it offers recycling services.

**Computers:** You can return used computers to their manufacturers for recycling (check [epa.gov](http://epa.gov) for a list of vendors) or donate them to a charitable organization (log on to [sharetechnology.org](http://sharetechnology.org) or [cristina.org](http://cristina.org)). [Nextsteprecycling.org](http://nextsteprecycling.org) repairs your broken computers and gives them to underfunded schools, needy families, and nonprofits.

**Crayons:** Send them to the National Crayon Recycle Program ([crazycrayons.com](http://crazycrayons.com), which melts down crayons and reforms them into new ones. Leave the wrappers on: "When you have black, blue, and purple crayons together without wrappers, it's hard to tell them apart," says the program's founder, LuAnn Foty, a.k.a. the Crazy Crayon Lady.

**Crocs:** The manufacturer recycles used Crocs into new shoes and donates them to underprivileged families. Mail them to: Crocs Recycling West, 3375 Enterprise Avenue, Bloomington CA 92316.

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**DVDs, CDs, and jewel cases:** If you want to get rid of that Lionel Richie CD because "Dancing on the Ceiling" doesn't do it for you anymore, you can swap it for a disc from another music lover at [zunafish.com](http://zunafish.com). But if you just want to let it go and not worry about it ending up in a landfill, send it (along with DVDs and jewel cases) to [greendisk.com](http://greendisk.com) for recycling.

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**Empty metal cans (cleaning products):** Cut off the metal ends of cans containing powdered cleansers, such as Ajax and Bon Ami, and put them in with other household metals. (Use care when cutting them.) Recycle the tubes as you would any other cardboard.

**Empty metal cans (food products):** Many towns recycle food cans. If yours doesn't, you can find the nearest steel-can recycling spot at [recycle-steel.org](http://recycle-steel.org). Rinse out cans, but don't worry about removing the labels. "Leaving them on doesn't do any harm," says Marti Matsch, the communications director of Eco-Cycle, one of the nation's oldest and largest recyclers, in Boulder, Colorado. "When the metal is melted," she says, "the paper burns up. If you want to recycle the label with other paper, that's great, but it's not necessary."

**Eyeglasses:** Plastic frames can't be recycled, but metal ones can. Just drop them into the scrap-metal bin. However, given the millions of people who need glasses but can't afford them, your frames, broken or not, will go to better use if you donate them to [neweyesforthenedy.com](http://neweyesforthenedy.com) (sunglasses and plastic frames in good condition can also be donated). Or drop off old pairs of glasses at LensCrafters, Target Optical, or other participating stores and doctors' offices, which will send them to [onesight.org](http://onesight.org).

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**Fake plastic credit cards:** They're not recyclable, so you can't just toss them along with their paper junk-mail solicitations. Remove them first and throw them in the trash.

**Film canisters:** Check with your local recycling center to find out if it takes gray film-container lids (No. 4) and black bases (No. 2). If not, many photo labs will accept them.

**Fire extinguishers:** There are two types of extinguishers. For a dry-chemical extinguisher, safely relieve the remaining pressure, remove the head from the container, and place it with your bulk-metal items (check with your local recycler first). Alternatively, call fire-equipment companies and request that they dispose of your extinguisher. Carbon dioxide extinguishers are refillable after each use.

**Food processors.** Some communities accept small household appliances for recycling—if not in curbside collection, then in drop-off locations. (New York City will even pick up appliances left on the sidewalk.) “If an appliance is more than 50 percent metal, it is recyclable,” says Kathy Dawkins, director of public information for New York City’s Department of Sanitation. Most appliances are about 75 percent steel, according to the Steel Recycling Institute. So unless you know something is mostly plastic, it will probably qualify.

**Formal wear:** Finally, a use for that mauve prom or bridesmaid dress: Give it to a girl who can’t afford one (go to [operationfairydust.org](http://operationfairydust.org) or [catherinescloset.org](http://catherinescloset.org)).

## G

**Gadgets:** There are many ways to recycle PDAs, MP3 players, and other devices so that any money earned from the parts goes to worthy causes—a win, win, win scenario (for you, the environment, and charity). [Recycleforbreastcancer.org](http://Recycleforbreastcancer.org), for example, will send you prepaid shipping labels, recycle your gadgets, then donate the proceeds to breast cancer charities.

**Glue:** Many schools have recycling programs for empty containers of Elmer’s glue and glue sticks. Students and teachers rinse out the bottles, which are then sent to Wal-Mart for recycling. Find out more at [elmersgluecrew.com](http://elmersgluecrew.com).

**Glue strips and inserts in magazines:** Lotion samples and nonpaper promotional items affixed to glue strips in magazines should be removed because they can jam up recycling equipment (scented perfume strips, on the other hand, are fine). “One of the biggest challenges we get is pages of promotional stickers and stamps,” says Matsch, “which can adhere to the machinery and tear yards of new paper fiber.”

## H

**Hangers (plastic):** These are not widely accepted at recycling centers, because there aren’t enough of them coming through to make it worthwhile. However, some cities, such as Los Angeles, are equipped to recycle them. You might consider donating them to a thrift store.

**Hangers (wire):** Some dry cleaners and Laundromats will reuse them. Otherwise, they can be recycled with other household metals. But be sure to remove any attached paper or cardboard first.

**Hearing aids:** The Starkey Hearing Foundation ([starkeyhearingfoundation.org](http://starkeyhearingfoundation.org)) recycles used hearing aids, any make or model, no matter how old. Lions Clubs also accept hearing aids (as well as eyeglasses) for reuse; log on to [donateglasses.org](http://donateglasses.org) to find designated collection centers near you.

**Holiday cards:** After they’ve lined your mantel for two months, you could throw them into the recycling bin, or you could give them a whole new life. St. Jude’s Ranch for Children ([stjudesranch.org](http://stjudesranch.org)), a nonprofit home for abused and neglected youths, runs a holiday-card reuse program in which the kids cut off the front covers, glue them onto new cards, and sell the result—earning them money and confidence.

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**iPods:** Bring in an old iPod to an Apple store and get 10 percent off a new one. Your out-of-date iPod will be broken down and properly disposed of. The catch? The discount is valid only that day, so be prepared to buy your new iPod.

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**Jam jars:** Wherever there is container-glass recycling (meaning glass jars and bottles), jam jars are eligible. It helps if you remove any remaining jam, but no need to get obsessive—they don't have to be squeaky clean. Before putting them in the bin, remove their metal lids and recycle those with other metals.

**Juice bags:** Because most are a combination of a plastic polymer and aluminum, these are not recyclable. But TerraCycle will donate 2 cents for each Honest Kids, Capri Sun, and Kool-Aid Drink pouch and 1 cent for any other brand you collect and send in to the charity of your choice. The organization provides free shipping, too. What does TerraCycle do with all those pouches? Turns them into colorful purses, totes, and pencil cases that are sold at Target and Walgreens stores throughout the country. To get started, go to [terracycle.net](http://terracycle.net).

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**Keys and nail clippers:** For many recycling centers, any metal that isn't a can is considered scrap metal and can be recycled. "There's not a whole lot of scrap metal we wouldn't take," says Kite. "It's a huge market now."

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**Leather accessories:** If your leather goods are more than gently worn, take them to be fixed. If they're beyond repair, they have to be thrown in the trash—there's no recycling option. (A product labeled "recycled leather" is often made from scraps left over from the manufacturing process, which is technically considered recycling.) Donate shoes in decent condition to [solesforsouls.org](http://solesforsouls.org), a nonprofit that collects used footwear and distributes it to needy communities.

## M

**Makeup:** Makeup can expire and is none too pretty for the earth when you throw it in the trash (chemicals abound in most makeup). Some manufacturers are making progress on this front. People who turn in six or more empty MAC containers, for example, will receive a free lipstick from the company in return; SpaRitual nail polishes come in reusable, recyclable glass; and Josie Maran Cosmetics sells biodegradable plastic compacts made with a corn-based resin—just remove the mirror and put the case in your compost heap.

**Mattresses and box springs:** Mattresses are made of recyclable materials, such as wire, paper, and cloth, but not all cities accept them for recycling. (Go to [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) to find out if yours does.)

**Metal flatware:** If it's time to retire your old forks, knives, and spoons, you can usually recycle them with other scrap metal.

**Milk cartons with plastic spouts and caps:** Take off and throw away the cap (don't worry about the spout—it will be filtered out during the recycling process). As for the carton, check your local recycling rules to see whether you should toss it with plastics and metals or with paper.

**Mirrors:** These aren't recyclable through most municipal recyclers, because the chemicals on the glass can't be mixed with glass bottles and jars. You can donate them to secondhand stores, of course. Or if the mirror is broken, put it in a paper bag for the safety of your trash collectors. To find out what your municipality recycles, call 800-CLEANUP or visit [recyclingcenters.org](http://recyclingcenters.org).

## N

**Nikes and other sneakers:** Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program ([nikereuseashoe.com](http://nikereuseashoe.com)) accepts old sneakers (any brand) and recycles them into courts for various sports so kids around the world have a place to play. You can drop them off at a Nike store, other participating retailers, athletic clubs, and schools around the country (check the website for locations), or mail them to Nike Recycling Center, c/o Reuse-a-Shoe, 26755 SW 95th Avenue, Wilsonville OR 97070. If your sneakers are still in reasonable shape, donate them to needy athletes in the United States and around the world through [oneworldrunning.com](http://oneworldrunning.com). Mail them to One World Running, P.O. Box 2223, Boulder CO 80306.

**Notebooks (spiral):** It may seem weird to toss a metal-bound notebook into the paper recycling, but worry not—the machinery will pull out smaller nonpaper items. One caveat: If the cover is plastic, rip that off, says Matsch. "It's a larger contaminant."

## O

### Office envelopes

- **Envelopes with plastic windows:** Recycle them with regular office paper. The filters will sieve out the plastic, and they'll even take out the glue strip on the envelope flaps.
- **FedEx:** Paper FedEx envelopes can be recycled, and there's no need to pull off the plastic sleeve. FedEx Paks made of Tyvek are also recyclable (see below).
- **Goldenrod:** Those ubiquitous mustard-colored envelopes are not recyclable, because goldenrod paper (as well as dark or fluorescent paper) is saturated with hard-to-remove dyes. "It's what we call 'designing for the dump,' not the environment," says Matsch.
- **Jiffy Paks:** Many Jiffy envelopes—even the paper-padded ones filled with that material resembling dryer lint—are recyclable with other mixed papers, like cereal boxes. The exception: Goldenrod-colored envelopes must be tossed.
- **Padded envelopes with Bubble Wrap:** These can't be recycled. The best thing you can do is reuse them.
- **Tyvek:** DuPont, the maker of Tyvek, takes these envelopes back and recycles them into plastic lumber. Turn one envelope inside out and stuff others inside it. Mail them to Tyvek Recycle, Attention: Shirley B. Wright, 2400 Ellingham Avenue #A, Richmond VA 23237. If you have large quantities (200 to 500), call 866-338-9835 to order a free pouch.

## P

**Packing materials:** Styrofoam peanuts cannot be recycled in most areas, but many packaging stores (like UPS and Mail Boxes Etc.) accept them. To find a peanut reuser near you, go to [loosefillpackaging.com](http://loosefillpackaging.com). Some towns recycle Styrofoam packing blocks; if yours doesn't, visit

epspackaging.org to find a drop-off location, or mail them in according to the instructions on the site. Packing pillows marked "Fill-Air" can be deflated (poke a hole in them), then mailed to Ameri-Pak, Sealed Air Recycle Center, 477 South Woods Drive, Fountain Inn SC 29644. They will be recycled into things like trash bags and automotive parts.

**Paint:** Some cities have paint-recycling programs, in which your old paint is taken to a company that turns it into new paint. Go to earth911.org to see if a program exists in your area.

**Pendaflex folders:** Place these filing-cabinet workhorses in the paper bin. But first cut off the metal rods and recycle them as scrap metal.

**Phone books:** Many cities offer collection services. Also check yellowpages.com/recycle, or call AT&T's phone book-recycling line at 800-953-4400.

**Pizza boxes:** If cheese and grease are stuck to the box, rip out the affected areas and recycle the rest as corrugated cardboard. Food residue can ruin a whole batch of paper if it is left to sit in the recycling facility and begins to decompose.

**Plastic bottle caps:** Toss them. "They're made from a plastic that melts at a different rate than the bottles, and they degrade the quality of the plastic if they get mixed in," says Kite.

**Plastic wrap (used):** Most communities don't accept this for recycling because the cost of decontaminating it isn't worth the effort.

**Post-its:** The sticky stuff gets filtered out, so these office standbys can usually be recycled with paper.

**Prescription drugs:** The Starfish Project (thestarfish-project.org) collects some unused medications (TB medicines, antifungals, antivirals) and gives them to clinics in Nigeria. The organization will send you a prepaid FedEx label, too.

**Printer-ink cartridges:** Seventy percent are thrown into landfills, where it will take 450 years for them to decompose. "Cartridges are like gas tanks," says Jim Cannan, cartridge-collection manager at Recycleplace.com. "They don't break. They just run out of ink. Making new ones is like changing motors every time you run out of gas." Take them to Staples and get \$3 off your next cartridge purchase, or mail HP-brand cartridges back to HP.

## Q

**Quiche pans and other cookware:** These can be put with scrap metal, and "a plastic handle isn't a problem," says Tom Outerbridge, manager of municipal recycling at Sims Metal Management, in New York City.

## R

**Recreational equipment:** Don't send tennis rackets to your local recycling center. "People may think we're going to give them to Goodwill," says Sadonna Cody, director of government affairs for the Northbay Corporation and Redwood Empire Disposal, in Santa Rosa, California, "but they'll just be trashed." Trade sports gear in at Play It Again Sports (playitagainsports.com), or donate it to sportsgift.org, which gives gently used equipment to needy kids around the world. Mail to Sports Gift, 32545 B Golden Lantern #478, Dana Point CA 92629. As for skis, send them to skichair.com, 4 Abbott Place, Millbury MA 01527; they'll be turned into Adirondack-style beach chairs.

**Rugs (cotton or wool):** If your town's recycling center accepts rugs, great. If not, you're out of luck, because you can't ship rugs directly to a fabric recycler; they need to be sent in bulk. Your best bet is to donate them to the thrift store of a charity, like the Salvation Army.

## S

**Shopping bags (paper):** Even those with metal grommets and ribbon handles can usually be recycled with other paper.

**Shopping bags (plastic):** If your town doesn't recycle plastic, you may be able to drop them off at your local grocery store. Safeway, for example, accepts grocery and dry-cleaning bags and turns them into plastic lumber. (To find other stores, go to [plasticbagrecycling.org](http://plasticbagrecycling.org).) What's more, a range of retailers, like City Hardware, have begun to use biodegradable bags made of corn. (BioBags break down in compost heaps in 10 to 45 days.)

**Shower curtains and liners:** Most facilities do not recycle these because they're made of PVC. (If PVC gets in with other plastics, it can compromise the chemical makeup of the recycled material.)

**Six-pack rings:** See if your local school participates in the Ring Leader Recycling Program ([ringleader.com](http://ringleader.com)); kids collect six-pack rings to be recycled into other plastic items, including plastic lumber and plastic shipping pallets.

**Smoke detectors:** Some towns accept those that have beeped their last beep. If yours doesn't, try the manufacturer. First Alert takes back detectors (you pay for shipping); call 800-323-9005 for information.

**Soap dispensers (pump):** Most plastic ones are recyclable; toss them in with the other plastics.

**Stereos and VCRs:** Visit [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) for a list of recyclers, retail stores, and manufacturers near you that accept electronics. Small companies are popping up to handle electronic waste (or e-waste) as well: [Greencitizen.com](http://Greencitizen.com) in San Francisco will pull apart your electronics and recycle them at a cost ranging from nothing to 50 cents a pound. And the 10 nationwide locations of [freegeek.org](http://freegeek.org) offer a similar service.

## T

**Takeout-food containers:** Most are not recyclable. Paper ones (like Chinese-food containers) aren't accepted because remnants can contaminate the paper bale at the mill. Plastic versions (like those at the salad bar) are a no-go too.

**Tinfoil:** It's aluminum, not tin. So rinse it off, wad it up, and toss it in with the beer and soda cans.

**Tires:** You can often leave old tires with the dealer when you buy new ones (just check that they'll be recycled). Worn-out tires can be reused as highway paving, doormats, hoses, shoe soles, and more.

**Tissue boxes with plastic dispensers:** The plastic portion will be filtered out during the recycling process, so you can usually recycle tissue boxes with cardboard.

**Toothbrushes:** They're not recyclable, but if you buy certain brands, you can save on waste. Eco-Dent's Terradent models and Radius Source's toothbrushes have replaceable heads; once the bristles have worn out, snap on a new one.

**Toothpaste tubes:** Even with all that sticky paste inside, you can recycle aluminum tubes (put them with the aluminum cans), but not plastic ones.

**TVs:** Best Buy will remove and recycle a set when it delivers a new one. Or bring old ones to Office Depot to be recycled. Got a Sony TV? Take it to a drop-off center listed at [sony.com/recycle](http://sony.com/recycle).

## U

**Umbrellas:** If it's a broken metal one, drop the metal skeleton in with scrap metal (remove the fabric and the handle first). Plastic ones aren't accepted.

**Used clothing:** Some towns recycle clothing into seat stuffing, upholstery, or insulation. Also consider donating clothing to animal boarders and shelters, where it can be turned into pet bedding.

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## M

**Makeup:** Makeup can expire and is none too pretty for the earth when you throw it in the trash (chemicals abound in most makeup). Some manufacturers are making progress on this front. People who turn in six or more empty MAC containers, for example, will receive a free lipstick from the company in return; SpaRitual nail polishes come in reusable, recyclable glass; and Josie Maran Cosmetics sells biodegradable plastic compacts made with a corn-based resin—just remove the mirror and put the case in your compost heap.

**Mattresses and box springs:** Mattresses are made of recyclable materials, such as wire, paper, and cloth, but not all cities accept them for recycling. (Go to [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) to find out if yours does.)

**Metal flatware:** If it's time to retire your old forks, knives, and spoons, you can usually recycle them with other scrap metal.

**Milk cartons with plastic spouts and caps:** Take off and throw away the cap (don't worry about the spout—it will be filtered out during the recycling process). As for the carton, check your local recycling rules to see whether you should toss it with plastics and metals or with paper.

epspackaging.org to find a drop-off location, or mail them in according to the instructions on the site. Packing pillows marked "Fill-Air" can be deflated (poke a hole in them), then mailed to Ameri-Pak, Sealed Air Recycle Center, 477 South Woods Drive, Fountain Inn SC 29644. They will be recycled into things like trash bags and automotive parts.

**Paint:** Some cities have paint-recycling programs, in which your old paint is taken to a company that turns it into new paint. Go to earth911.org to see if a program exists in your area.

**Pendaflex folders:** Place these filing-cabinet workhorses in the paper bin. But first cut off the metal rods and recycle them as scrap metal.

**Phone books:** Many cities offer collection services. Also check yellowpages.com/recycle, or call AT&T's phone book-recycling line at 800-953-4400.

**Pizza boxes:** If cheese and grease are stuck to the box, rip out the affected areas and recycle the rest as corrugated cardboard. Food residue can ruin a whole batch of paper if it is left to sit in the recycling facility and begins to decompose.

**Plastic bottle caps:** Toss them. "They're made from a plastic that melts at a different rate than the bottles, and they degrade the quality of the plastic if they get mixed in," says Kite.

**Plastic wrap (used):** Most communities don't accept this for recycling because the cost of decontaminating it isn't worth the effort.

**Post-its:** The sticky stuff gets filtered out, so these office standbys can usually be recycled with paper.

**Prescription drugs:** The Starfish Project (thestarfish-project.org) collects some unused medications (TB medicines, antifungals, antivirals) and gives them to clinics in Nigeria. The organization will send you a prepaid FedEx label, too.

**Printer-ink cartridges:** Seventy percent are thrown into landfills, where it will take 450 years for them to decompose. "Cartridges are like gas tanks," says Jim Cannan, cartridge-collection manager at Recycleplace.com. "They don't break. They just run out of ink. Making new ones is like changing motors every time you run out of gas." Take them to Staples and get \$3 off your next cartridge purchase, or mail HP-brand cartridges back to HP.

## Q

**Quiche pans and other cookware:** These can be put with scrap metal, and "a plastic handle isn't a problem," says Tom Outerbridge, manager of municipal recycling at Sims Metal Management, in New York City.

## R

**Recreational equipment:** Don't send tennis rackets to your local recycling center. "People may think we're going to give them to Goodwill," says Sadonna Cody, director of government affairs for the Northbay Corporation and Redwood Empire Disposal, in Santa Rosa, California, "but they'll just be trashed." Trade sports gear in at Play It Again Sports (playitagainsports.com), or donate it to sportsgift.org, which gives gently used equipment to needy kids around the world. Mail to Sports Gift, 32545 B Golden Lantern #478, Dana Point CA 92629. As for skis, send them to skichair.com, 4 Abbott Place, Millbury MA 01527; they'll be turned into Adirondack-style beach chairs.

**Rugs (cotton or wool):** If your town's recycling center accepts rugs, great. If not, you're out of luck, because you can't ship rugs directly to a fabric recycler; they need to be sent in bulk. Your best bet is to donate them to the thrift store of a charity, like the Salvation Army.

**Mirrors:** These aren't recyclable through most municipal recyclers, because the chemicals on the glass can't be mixed with glass bottles and jars. You can donate them to secondhand stores, of course. Or if the mirror is broken, put it in a paper bag for the safety of your trash collectors. To find out what your municipality recycles, call 800-CLEANUP or visit [recyclingcenters.org](http://recyclingcenters.org).

## N

**Nikes and other sneakers:** Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program ([nikereuseashoe.com](http://nikereuseashoe.com)) accepts old sneakers (any brand) and recycles them into courts for various sports so kids around the world have a place to play. You can drop them off at a Nike store, other participating retailers, athletic clubs, and schools around the country (check the website for locations), or mail them to Nike Recycling Center, c/o Reuse-a-Shoe, 26755 SW 95th Avenue, Wilsonville OR 97070. If your sneakers are still in reasonable shape, donate them to needy athletes in the United States and around the world through [oneworldrunning.com](http://oneworldrunning.com). Mail them to One World Running, P.O. Box 2223, Boulder CO 80306.

**Notebooks (spiral):** It may seem weird to toss a metal-bound notebook into the paper recycling, but worry not—the machinery will pull out smaller nonpaper items. One caveat: If the cover is plastic, rip that off, says Matsch. "It's a larger contaminant."

## O

### Office envelopes

- **Envelopes with plastic windows:** Recycle them with regular office paper. The filters will sieve out the plastic, and they'll even take out the glue strip on the envelope flaps.
- **FedEx:** Paper FedEx envelopes can be recycled, and there's no need to pull off the plastic sleeve. FedEx Paks made of Tyvek are also recyclable (see below).
- **Goldenrod:** Those ubiquitous mustard-colored envelopes are not recyclable, because goldenrod paper (as well as dark or fluorescent paper) is saturated with hard-to-remove dyes. "It's what we call 'designing for the dump,' not the environment," says Matsch.
- **Jiffy Paks:** Many Jiffy envelopes—even the paper-padded ones filled with that material resembling dryer lint—are recyclable with other mixed papers, like cereal boxes. The exception: Goldenrod-colored envelopes must be tossed.
- **Padded envelopes with Bubble Wrap:** These can't be recycled. The best thing you can do is reuse them.
- **Tyvek:** DuPont, the maker of Tyvek, takes these envelopes back and recycles them into plastic lumber. Turn one envelope inside out and stuff others inside it. Mail them to Tyvek Recycle, Attention: Shirley B. Wright, 2400 Ellingham Avenue #A, Richmond VA 23237. If you have large quantities (200 to 500), call 866-338-9835 to order a free pouch.

## P

**Packing materials:** Styrofoam peanuts cannot be recycled in most areas, but many packaging stores (like UPS and Mail Boxes Etc.) accept them. To find a peanut reuser near you, go to [loosefillpackaging.com](http://loosefillpackaging.com). Some towns recycle Styrofoam packing blocks; if yours doesn't, visit

## S

**Shopping bags (paper):** Even those with metal grommets and ribbon handles can usually be recycled with other paper.

**Shopping bags (plastic):** If your town doesn't recycle plastic, you may be able to drop them off at your local grocery store. Safeway, for example, accepts grocery and dry-cleaning bags and turns them into plastic lumber. (To find other stores, go to [plasticbagrecycling.org](http://plasticbagrecycling.org).) What's more, a range of retailers, like City Hardware, have begun to use biodegradable bags made of corn. (BioBags break down in compost heaps in 10 to 45 days.)

**Shower curtains and liners:** Most facilities do not recycle these because they're made of PVC. (If PVC gets in with other plastics, it can compromise the chemical makeup of the recycled material.)

**Six-pack rings:** See if your local school participates in the Ring Leader Recycling Program ([ringleader.com](http://ringleader.com)); kids collect six-pack rings to be recycled into other plastic items, including plastic lumber and plastic shipping pallets.

**Smoke detectors:** Some towns accept those that have beeped their last beep. If yours doesn't, try the manufacturer. First Alert takes back detectors (you pay for shipping); call 800-323-9005 for information.

**Soap dispensers (pump):** Most plastic ones are recyclable; toss them in with the other plastics.

**Stereos and VCRs:** Visit [earth911.org](http://earth911.org) for a list of recyclers, retail stores, and manufacturers near you that accept electronics. Small companies are popping up to handle electronic waste (or e-waste) as well: [Greencitizen.com](http://Greencitizen.com) in San Francisco will pull apart your electronics and recycle them at a cost ranging from nothing to 50 cents a pound. And the 10 nationwide locations of [freegeek.org](http://freegeek.org) offer a similar service.

## T

**Takeout-food containers:** Most are not recyclable. Paper ones (like Chinese-food containers) aren't accepted because remnants can contaminate the paper bale at the mill. Plastic versions (like those at the salad bar) are a no-go too.

**Tinfoil:** It's aluminum, not tin. So rinse it off, wad it up, and toss it in with the beer and soda cans.

**Tires:** You can often leave old tires with the dealer when you buy new ones (just check that they'll be recycled). Worn-out tires can be reused as highway paving, doormats, hoses, shoe soles, and more.

**Tissue boxes with plastic dispensers:** The plastic portion will be filtered out during the recycling process, so you can usually recycle tissue boxes with cardboard.

**Toothbrushes:** They're not recyclable, but if you buy certain brands, you can save on waste. Eco-Dent's Terradent models and Radius Source's toothbrushes have replaceable heads; once the bristles have worn out, snap on a new one.

**Toothpaste tubes:** Even with all that sticky paste inside, you can recycle aluminum tubes (put them with the aluminum cans), but not plastic ones.

**TVs:** Best Buy will remove and recycle a set when it delivers a new one. Or bring old ones to Office Depot to be recycled. Got a Sony TV? Take it to a drop-off center listed at [sony.com/recycle](http://sony.com/recycle).

## U

**Umbrellas:** If it's a broken metal one, drop the metal skeleton in with scrap metal (remove the fabric and the handle first). Plastic ones aren't accepted.

**Used clothing:** Some towns recycle clothing into seat stuffing, upholstery, or insulation. Also consider donating clothing to animal boarders and shelters, where it can be turned into pet bedding.

**Utensils (plastic):** “There is no program in the country recycling plastic flatware as far as I know,” says Matsch. “The package might even say ‘recyclable,’ but that doesn’t mean much.”

## V

**Videotapes, cassettes, and floppy disks:** These aren’t accepted. “Videotapes are a nightmare,” says Outerbridge. “They get tangled and caught on everything.” Instead, send tapes to the ACT ([actrecycling.org](http://actrecycling.org)) facility in Columbia, Missouri, which employs disabled people to clean, erase, and resell videotapes. You can also send videotapes, cassettes, and floppy disks to [greendisk.com](http://greendisk.com); recycling 20 pounds or less costs \$6.95, plus shipping.

## W

**Wheelchairs:** Go to [lifenets.org/wheelchair](http://lifenets.org/wheelchair), which acts as a matchmaker, uniting wheelchairs with those who need them.

**Wine corks:** To turn them into flooring and wall tiles, send them to Wine Cork Recycling, Yemm & Hart Ltd., 610 South Chamber Drive, Fredericktown MO 63645. Or put them in a compost bin. “They’re natural,” says Matsch, “so they’re biodegradable.” Plastic corks can’t be composted or recycled.

**Wipes and sponges:** These can’t be recycled. But sea sponges and natural sponges made from vegetable cellulose are biodegradable and can be tossed into a compost heap.

**Writing implements:** You can’t recycle pens, pencils, and markers, but you can donate usable ones to schools that are short on these supplies. At [iloveschools.com](http://iloveschools.com), teachers from around the United States specify their wish lists. And there’s always the option of buying refillable pencils and biodegradable pens made of corn (like those at [grassrootsstore.com](http://grassrootsstore.com)) so that less waste winds up in the landfill.

## X

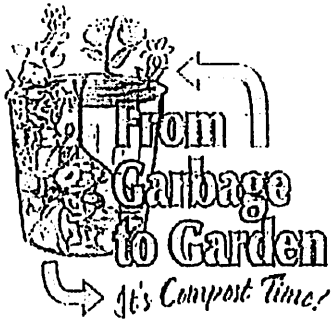
**Xmas lights:** Ship your old lights to [holidayleds.com](http://holidayleds.com), Attention: Recycling Program, 120 W. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1403, Jackson MI 49201. The company will send you a coupon for 10 percent off its LED lights, which use 80 percent less energy and last 10 years or more. And they’re safer, too. LEDs don’t generate much heat, whereas incandescents give off heat, which can cause a dry Christmas tree to catch fire.

## Y

**Yogurt cups:** Many towns don’t recycle these because they’re made of a plastic that can’t be processed with other plastics. But Stonyfield Farm has launched a program that turns its cups into toothbrushes, razors, and other products. Mail to Stonyfield Farm, 10 Burton Drive, Londonderry NH 03053. Or you can join TerraCycle’s Yogurt Brigade ([terracycle.net](http://terracycle.net)) to recycle Stonyfield containers and raise money for your favorite charity. For every cup collected, Stonyfield will donate 2 cents or 5 cents, depending on the cup size.

## Z

**Zippered plastic bags:** Venues that recycle plastic bags will also accept these items, as long as they are clean, dry, and the zip part has been snipped off (it’s a different type of plastic).



## *Passaic County Compost Bin & Rain Barrel Sale & Education Program*

*(Open to ALL - NO Residency Required)*

### Spring Event

**\*\*\*Saturday, May 11, 2019 - 9:00 AM Until 1:30 PM –RAIN OR SHINE  
Ringwood Public Library Parking Lot  
30 Cannici Drive  
Ringwood, NJ 07456**

Purchase a Compost Bin and get a FREE kitchen scrap bucket (with bin purchase – one per household) see information below.

### Fall Event

**\*\*\*Saturday, September 28, 2019- 9:00 AM UNTIL 1:30 PM –RAIN OR SHINE  
Passaic Valley Regional High School Parking Lot  
100 E. Main Street  
Little Falls, NJ 07424**

Purchase a Compost Bin and get a FREE kitchen scrap bucket (with bin purchase – one per household) see information below.

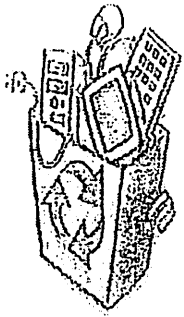
**Professional Instruction  
on how to compost  
throughout the day**

**Compost Bins \$55 Including tax (includes free scrap bucket)  
Rain Barrels \$65 Including tax**

To purchase a Compost Bin, Rain Barrel, or other items, please visit Passaic County's online store at [www.passaiccompostersale.ecwid.com](http://www.passaiccompostersale.ecwid.com). You will pick up your items on the day of the sale listed above.

**Sponsored by the Passaic County Office of Solid Waste and Recycling Programs 973-305-5738**

Another Program in Cooperation with the  
Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders



**Passaic County NJ  
2019 Computer and Electronics Collection Events  
for Residents & Small Businesses\***

Saturday, January 12  
Passaic County Para-Transit Facility  
1310 Route 23 North  
Wayne, NJ 07470  
(located behind Ski Barn)

Friday, March 29 & Saturday, March 30  
Passaic County Para-Transit Facility  
1310 Route 23 North  
Wayne, NJ 07470  
(located behind Ski Barn)

Friday, May 17 & Saturday, May 18  
Hawthorne Memorial Pool  
32 May Street (off Wagaraw Road)  
Hawthorne, NJ 07506

Friday, October 4 & Saturday, October 5  
Buhler's Cultural Center  
950 High Mountain Road  
North Haledon, NJ 07508

**FREE to ALL.**  
**Passaic County Residents**  
\*Pre-Registration Necessary For  
All Businesses and Institutions  
All business and institutions **MUST** call to  
determine if a separate pick-up is necessary

COLLECTION SITES WILL BE OPEN FROM  
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM **ONLY** – RAIN OR SHINE

**Almost All Types of Computer & Electronics Equipment Will Be Accepted  
For Demanufacturing, Recycling or Reuse – such as:**

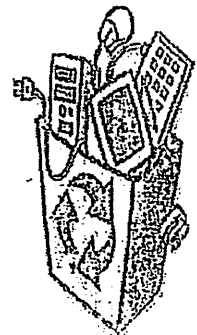
- |                                                  |                                    |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| * Computer systems (monitors, hard drives, etc.) | * Ink Jet & Laser Toner Cartridges | * Cell Phones      |
| * Modems                                         | * Video Games & Systems            | * DVDs & Players   |
| * Telephones & Telephone systems                 | * Stereo Systems                   | * VCRs & VHS Tapes |
| * Copiers                                        | * Televisions                      | * Floppy Discs     |
| * Printers                                       | * CDs & Players                    | * Radios           |
| * Fax machines                                   | * Computer Games                   | * Phonographs      |

**NOT ACCEPTED**

Refrigerators, Freezers, Air Conditioners, Washers & Dryers

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL THE PASSAIC COUNTY OFFICE OF  
SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING PROGRAMS AT 973-305-5738**  
Service Provided By: Advanced Recovery, Inc., Newark, New Jersey & Port Jervis, New York  
Passaic County Office of Solid Waste and Recycling

Division of Passaic County Dept. of Health  
Programs in cooperation with the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders





# Passaic County 2019



## Household Hazardous Waste Collection

COLLECTION SITES OPEN FROM 7:30 am UNTIL 2:00 pm -- RAIN OR SHINE

Sunday -- April 7	Saturday -- June 8	Sunday -- September 8	Saturday -- November 9
Passaic County Para-Transit Facility 1310 Route 23 North Wayne, N.J. 07470 (located behind Ski Barn)	West Milford Recycling Ctr. 30 Lycosky Drive West Milford, N.J. 07480 (off of Marshall Hill Rd.)	Passaic County Community College (Wanaque Campus) 500 Union Avenue Wanaque, NJ 07465	City of Passaic Borough Hall 333 Passaic Street (Parking Lot on corner of Passaic Street & State Street) Passaic, NJ 07055

Small Quantity Generators (CESQG's) must call to make special arrangements.  
A disposal fee will be charged. Call 973-305-5738 for additional information.

This program is available **FREE OF CHARGE** to Passaic County residents **ONLY**.  
Proof of residency will be required.

**NO UNKNOWN OR UNIDENTIFIED MATERIALS CAN BE ACCEPTED**

### Acceptable Materials for Disposal

*The following items must be delivered in marked containers with original labels:*

- \* Pesticides & Herbicides
- \* Propane Tanks
- \* Solvents & Thinners
- \* Varnishes & Waxes
- \* Corrosives & Cleaners
- \* Pool Chemicals
- \* Oil Based Paints
- \* Aerosol Cans
- \* Kerosene
- \* Photographic Chemicals
- \* Fluorescent Light Bulbs
- \* Car Batteries
- \* Used Motor Oil & Oil Filters
- \* Antifreeze
- \* Old Gasoline/Oil Mix
- \* Flares
- \* Fire Extinguishers
- \* Mercury Switches & Thermometers

### Unacceptable Materials

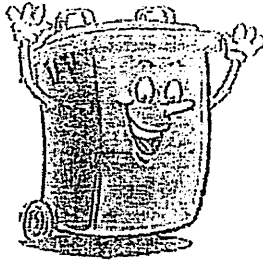
*The following items will NOT be accepted*

- \* Explosives
- \* Dioxins
- \* Medical Waste
- \* Silvex
- \* Infectious Waste
- \* Radioactive Material
- \* Computers & Electronics
- \* Tires & Appliances
- \* Latex Paint
- \* Household Batteries

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL THE PASSAIC COUNTY RECYCLING DEPT.  
073-305-5738

Passaic County Office of Solid Waste and Recycling Programs  
Division of Passaic County Dept. of Health

Program in cooperation with the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders



Want to Dispose of Your Documents Securely?

## SHRED IT & FORGET IT

WITH PASSAIC COUNTY'S  
PAPER RECYCLING COLLECTION PROGRAM

The Passaic County Office of Solid Waste & Recycling Programs is offering free on-site confidential document destruction & recycling services for Passaic County residents (proof of residency required)

COLLECTION SITES OPEN FROM 9:00 AM UNTIL 1:00 PM - RAIN OR SHINE

Sunday - March 31

Passaic County  
Para-Transit  
1310 Route 23 North  
Wayne, NJ 07470  
(Located behind Ski Barn)

Sunday - June 2

Passaic County Community College  
(Wanaque Campus)  
500 Union Avenue  
Wanaque, NJ 07465

Saturday - September 14

Passaic County Dept.  
Of Senior Services  
930 Riverview Drive  
Totowa, NJ 07512

Saturday - November 23

Paterson Museum  
2 Market Street  
Paterson, NJ 07501

Up to 6 "Banker Boxes" worth of paper documents (10"x13"x16")\*

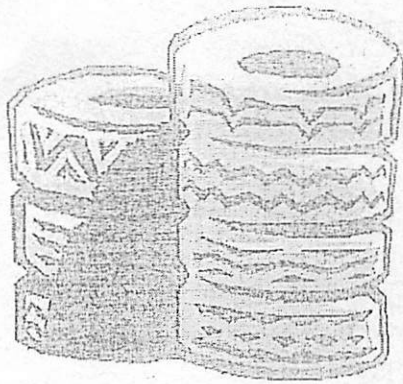
**ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS:** Old checks, Tax returns, Bank Statements, Utility Bills, Computer Printouts, Medical Information (no x-rays), Copy Paper (white and with color), Envelopes, Letterhead and Stationery, and any other personal documents. Staples accepted.

**UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS:** Metal Binders, Plastics, Overnight Shipping Envelopes (FedEx, UPS, etc.), Photographs, Carbon Paper, and any other non-paper items.

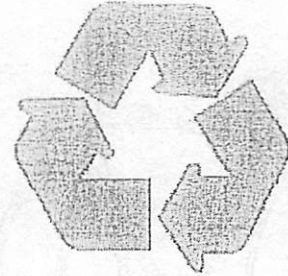
\*Participants must take back containers that documents were brought in.

For further information, please call the Passaic County Office of Solid Waste & Recycling Programs at (973)305-5738

Shredding & Recycling Services Provided by All-Shred, Inc. of Paterson, NJ  
Another Program in Cooperation with the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders



**PASSAIC COUNTY  
2019  
TIRE RECYCLING  
COLLECTION EVENTS  
FREE  
FOR RESIDENTS!**



Collection sites open from 8:00 AM until 2:00 PM. RAIN OR SHINE

Saturday - April 27  
Maledon Municipal Complex  
510 Belmont Avenue  
Maledon, NJ 07506

Sunday - September 15  
Clifton Boys & Girls  
181 Colfax Avenue  
Clifton, NJ 07013

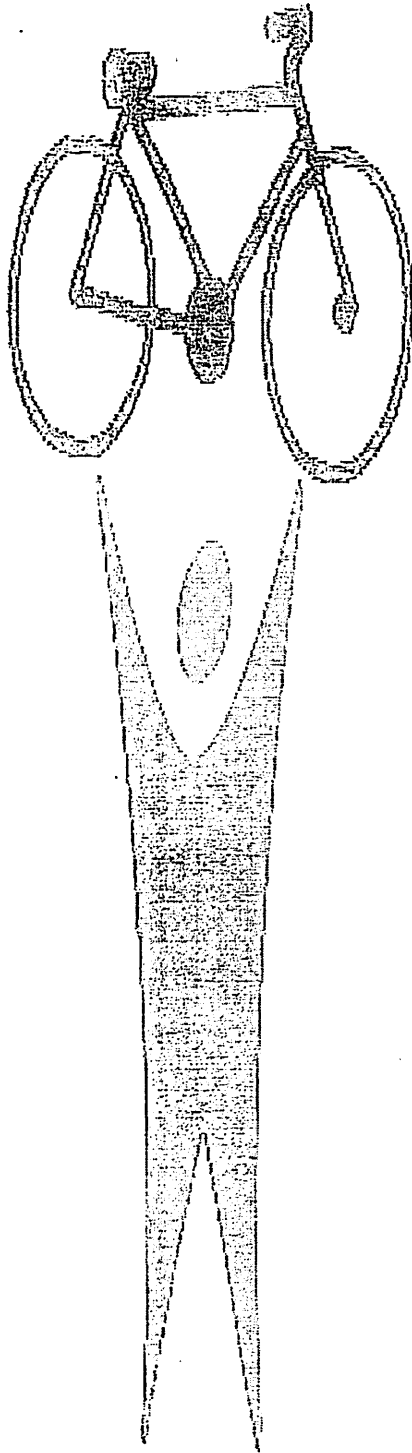
Sunday - December 8  
Bloomingdale Municipal Complex  
101 Hamburg Turnpike  
Bloomingdale, NJ 07403

Accepting: Up to 8 tires (with or without rims)  
Per household

For further information, please call the Passaic County Office of Solid  
Waste & Recycling Programs at 973-305-5738

*No Commercially Generated Tires. Proof of Residency Required.*  
Recycling Services Provided by Tire Management, Paterson, NJ  
Another Program in Cooperation with the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders





Passaic County  
Used Bicycle &  
Sewing Machine  
Collection Event!  
(RAIN or SHINE)

Saturday October 26, 2019  
9 am - 12 pm

Woodland Park Municipal Complex  
Parking Lot  
5 Brophy Lane  
Woodland Park, NJ 07424

We're collecting bikes and sewing machines to put to good use in the developing world in countries like Ghana, Tanzania, Albania, Fiji and Guatemala!

- Bikes should be rust free.
- No Children's tricycles.
- Bikes w/flat tires or needing repairs accepted.
- Portable sewing machines must be working.

Donations are tax deductible and a receipt will be provided on site.

SPONSORED BY: Passaic County  
Office of Solid Waste & Recycling Programs

For more information call:  
(973) 305-5738

pedals for progress™  
Putting used bikes to good use™  
[www.p4p.org](http://www.p4p.org)

*Most of us are pretty familiar with the concept of recycling our paper and plastic materials. But what about their hybrid counterpart: the carton? Despite the second-life value, many cartons do not get recycled. In 2009, at least half a million tons of carton waste ended up in landfills. Here's some helpful information that will help demystify the carton.*

## **What makes up a milk/juice carton?**

Cartons are a type of packaging for food and beverage products you can purchase at the store. They are easy to recognize and are available in two types – shelf-stable (or aseptic) and refrigerated (gable-top).

Shelf-stable cartons, as the name suggests, are found on store shelves and are used mostly for juice, milk, soy milk, soup and broth and wine. Refrigerated cartons are found in chilled sections of grocery stores and contain products like milk, juice, cream and egg substitutes.

There are other products that are also called cartons – ice cream cartons and take-out cartons. From a recycling standing point, these are not the same as shelf-stable and refrigerated and are not included in the definition of cartons.

Paper, plastic and aluminum are the three materials layered together to make cartons. A typical shelf-stable carton averages 74 percent paper, 22 percent plastic and 4 percent aluminum. The refrigerated cartons skip the aluminum and usually stick to an 80 percent paper, 20 percent plastic combo.

## **Why should I recycle cartons?**

Recycling your cartons is a great way to keep unnecessary waste out of landfills, but your green contribution doesn't stop there. The paper in cartons comes from a renewable resource that is responsibly replenished – trees! This means you are conserving energy by choosing a sustainable product package in the first place.

On top of that, cartons require fewer natural resources to transport due to their efficient product to packaging ratio. On average, a product sold in a shelf stable carton is 94 percent product and 6 percent packaging. This means fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions are reduced since they can be shipped using fewer trucks.

Also, once they have been recycled, the high quality of the materials used in cartons makes them very desirable for remanufacturing into new products. All three materials used to make cartons can be repurposed.

Finally, carton manufacturers are committed to increasing access to carton recycling in the United States, avoiding disposal in landfills and ensuring cartons continue to live on once the contents are gone.

## **Common misconceptions about cartons**

### **Cartons are not recyclable.**

False! Cartons are indeed recyclable. Made from mostly paper, cartons are in high demand to be made into new products. Manufacturers of cartons have joined forces as the Carton Council to increase access to carton recycling across the U.S. So far, carton recycling has increased from 18 percent of households in 2008 to 37 percent in 2011.

How did this happen? The Carton Council worked with all the key players in the recycling world from the recycling facilities to mills to make sure that cartons could be handled properly at recycling facilities and recycled into new products. By investing financial and technical resources, the Carton Council has made cartons a reality in over 2000 programs nationwide. Carton recycling may be coming to your program soon!

I cannot recycle cartons because they don't have a symbol on them.

False! In order for any packaging to be able to feature the recycle symbol, recycling of that packaging must be available to a majority of households in the United States. This process is regulated by the Federal Trade Commission. While cartons are making progress towards placing the recycle symbol on packages, the goal is to reach that majority by 2015.

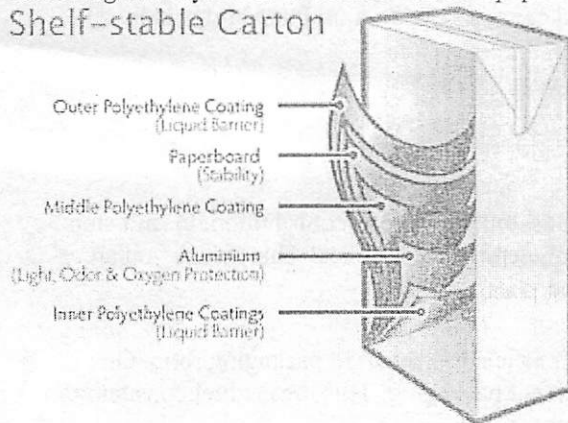
So for now, many cartons do not feature the recycle symbol. Consumers can determine if cartons are recyclable in their program by visiting [www.recyclecartons.com](http://www.recyclecartons.com) or [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com).

**Cartons are wax coated.**

False! Cartons do not contain any wax and have not for many years. All cartons are made mainly from paper. Gable-top (or refrigerated) cartons contain additional layers of plastic, while aseptic (or shelf-stable) cartons contain additional layers of plastic and aluminum.

Cartons were designed to keep the product inside as fresh as possible, blocking out light and odors that may cause products to spoil. A cool fact about cartons – the colorful labeling on the outside is printed on the thin plastic layer. When recycled, removing that layer leaves behind valuable paper fibers that are used to make new paper products.

### Shelf-stable Carton



## How does it work?

So, what happens to that carton once you empty it out of your recycling bin? Typically, its journey begins at a materials recovery facility where it gets separated from other waste and types of recyclables. From there, the cartons get shipped to paper mills where they are mixed with water in a giant blender called a hydra-pulper. This process separates the paper from the plastic and aluminum. Once this is complete the paper fiber is ready to be transformed into other products such as tissues, office paper and even building materials depending on the area of the country and the mill.

The plastic and aluminum are collected from the hydra-pulping process as well. The plastic, when re-purposed separately, is often used for shipping crates and building materials. However, in North America it is left in a combined state with the aluminum creating a material called a poly/al mix. The poly/al mix has a limited secondary use market, but some mills have been able to use it to generate energy for their facilities.

## What do I need to know?

Always check your local program for guidelines in your community. Curbside pick up is gaining popularity, but is still not available everywhere.

Be sure to remove any lids, straws, or fancy extras that come with your packaging.

Only recycle empty cartons. Rinsing isn't required for recycling them, but it does help ensure that the container is empty, as well as help reduce potential odor issues if you plan to store your recyclables.





Flatten your cartons to aide storage and ease of handling.

When in doubt, keep it out. This rule of thumb is important with all recycling practices. Rather than risk contaminating your local recycling stream, keep materials that you aren't sure about out.

# Smart Plastics Guide

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S STRANGEDAYS ON PLANET EARTH

Plastic products are typically labeled with a number surrounded by the recycling symbol. These numbers and labels identify both the type of resin used to make the plastic and the products' recyclability. Associated with the different types of resin are potential health risks. The following table summarizes seven different types of commonly used plastics, product examples, recyclability, and potential health risks.

USED FOR	RECYCLABILITY	HEALTH	NOTES
<b>PLASTIC #1 - POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE (PET)</b>			
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soft drink, water, and other beverage bottles</li> <li>• detergent and cleaning containers</li> <li>• peanut butter and other food containers and bottles</li> </ul>	PET is recycled into: new bottles, polyester for fabrics and carpet, fill for bumper cars and fiberfill for sleeping bags and jackets.	No known health issues.	PET is one of the most easily recycled plastic.
<b>PLASTIC #2 - HIGH DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (HDPE)</b>			
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• milk and water jugs</li> <li>• laundry detergents, shampoo, and motor oil containers</li> <li>• shampoo bottles</li> <li>• some plastic bags</li> </ul>	Clear HDPE containers are easily recycled back into new containers. Colored HDPE are converted into plastic lumber, lawn and garden edging, pipes, rope, and toys.	No known health issues.	HDPE is easily recycled.
<b>PLASTIC #3 - POLYVINYL CHLORIDE (PVC OR V)</b>			
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear food packaging, cling wrap</li> <li>• detergents and window cleaner bottles</li> <li>• some plastic squeeze bottles, cooking oil and peanut butter jars</li> <li>• vinyl pipes</li> <li>• shower curtains</li> <li>• flooring, home siding, and window and door frames</li> </ul>	PVC is one of the least recyclable plastic due to additives. Potentially harmful substances are also created by its disposal.	Many harmful chemicals are produced in the manufacturing, disposal, or destruction of PVC including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead</li> <li>• DEHA (di(2ethylhexyl)adipate)</li> <li>• Dioxins</li> <li>• Ethylene dichloride</li> <li>• Vinyl chloride</li> </ul> Effects of exposure to these chemicals may include: decreased birth weight, learning and behavioral problems in children, suppressed immune function and disruption of hormones in the body, cancer and birth defects, genetic changes.	Harmful chemicals created as a byproduct of PVC can also settle on grassland, where they can be consumed by livestock, and accumulate in meat and dairy products that are directly ingested by us.
<b>PLASTIC #4 - LOW DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (LDPE)</b>			
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bread, frozen food, and grocery bags</li> <li>• most plastic wraps</li> <li>• some bottles</li> </ul>	LDPE is not usually recycled.	No known health issues.	While no known health effects associated with the use of this plastic are known, organic pollutants are formed during manufacturing.

Just because the recycling number on a plastic object indicates that it is potentially recyclable doesn't necessarily mean that it is. Normally, only #1 and #2 plastic bottles with narrow necks are recycled. Check to see what plastics your local waste management organization recycles. The Earth911 Web site is a good place to start your search: [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org)

# Smart Plastics Guide

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S STRANGEDAYS ON PLANET EARTH

## PLASTIC #5 - POLYPROPYLENE (PP)



- deli soups, syrup, yogurt and margarine containers
- disposable diapers
- outdoor carpet
- house wrap
- clouded plastic containers, e.g. baby bottles, straws

PP is not easily recycled. Differences in the varieties of type and grade, mean achieving consistent quality during recycling is difficult.

No known health issues.

## PLASTIC #6 - POLYSTYRENE (PS)



- Rigid Polystyrene**
- CD cases
  - disposable cutlery
- Formed Polystyrene (Styrofoam)**
- food containers
  - packaging
  - insulation
  - egg cartons
  - building insulation

Recycling PS is possible, but not normally economically viable.

Styrene can leach from polystyrene. Over the long term, this can act as a neurotoxin. Studies on animals report harmful effects of styrene on red-blood cells, the liver, kidney, and stomach organs<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency (1992) "Styrene". Air Toxics Website. Retrieved on 31/1/2008 from <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/hlthef/styrene.html>

Styrene can be absorbed by food, and once ingested can be stored in body fat. It is thought that repeated exposure could lead to bioaccumulation<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> WHO International Programme On Chemical Safety. "Styrene". Environmental Health Criteria 26. Retrieved on 31/1/2008 <http://www.inchem.org/documents/ehc/ehc/ehc26.htm>

Try reusing styrofoam packing peanuts, and polystyrene cutlery where practical.

## PLASTIC #7 - MIXED (OTHER)



- lids
- medical storage containers
- electronics
- most plastic baby bottles
- 5-gallon water bottles
- "sport" water bottles
- metal food can liners
- clear plastic "sippy" cups
- some clear plastic cutlery

Mixed resin plastics like #7 are difficult, if not impossible, to recycle.

Health effects vary depending on the resin and plasticizers in this plastic that often includes polycarbonates. Polycarbonate plastic leaches bisphenol A (BPA) a known endocrine disruptor. By mimicking the action of the hormone, estrogen, bisphenol A has been found to: effect the development of young animals; play a role in certain types of cancer; create genetic damage and behavioral changes in a variety of species.

bisphenol A is widespread--one study found BPA in 95% of American adults sampled<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Calafat, A.M., Kuklenyik, Z., Reidy, J.A., Caudill, S.P., Ekong, J. & Needham, L.L. (2005) "Urinary Concentrations of Bisphenol A and 4-Nonylphenol in a Human Reference Population" Environmental Health Perspectives 113: 391-395. Retrieved 31/1/2008 from <http://www.ehponline.org/members/2004/7534/7534.html>

The number of studies documenting the detrimental effects between BPA and health are increasing.

## TIPS FOR USE OF PLASTIC CONTAINERS WITH FOOD

- **Avoid heating food in plastic containers.** Heat can release chemicals so avoid heating food in plastic containers. For the same reason, only drink cold liquids from plastic containers.
- **Wash plastic containers in mild detergents.** Harsh detergents help liberate chemical from plastics making the container much more likely to leach chemicals into food.
- **Avoid using plastic packaging where you can.** For example, bring reusable bags when grocery shopping, and your own "to-go" containers when dining out.
- **Select safe plastics for food storage.** Only use plastic containers with the recycling #1, #2, #4 and #5 for food storage. Consider switching to glass storage containers since plastic containers can leach chemicals into the environment and your food as they age and become used.



# Plastic

Recycling one ton of plastic:

Saves 5,774 kWh energy

Saves 16.3 barrels (685 gallons) of oil

Saves 98 million Btu's of energy

Saves 30 cubic yards of landfill space

## Plastic Recycling Tips

Prepare plastic containers for recycling by ensuring first that they are either:

1. (PETE): soda-pop bottles, cooking-oil bottles and peanut-butter jars
2. (HDPE): milk, water and juice bottles, bleach and detergent bottles, margarine tubs and some grocery sacks
3. (PVC): window cleaner bottles, cooking-oil containers and detergent powder containers
4. (LDPE): food packaging, shrink-wrap, carryout bags and heavy-duty bags
5. (PP): butter and margarine tubs, yogurt containers, screw-on caps and drinking straws
6. (PS): often incorrectly referred to as Polystyrene foam, a Dow Chemical brand trademark, the category includes cutlery and plates, foam coffee cups, egg cartons, meat trays and yogurt containers
7. (Other): squeezable syrup and condiment bottles and some microwave food trays

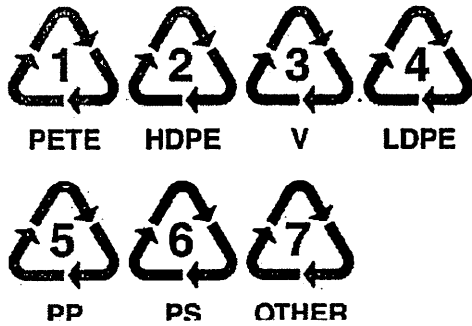
These identification codes are often on the bottom of the plastic container encircled by three chasing arrows and tell you what type of plastic was used to manufacture the item. For more information about the codes - called resin identification codes - consult the [American Plastics Council Web site](#) and view the Plastic Packaging Resins Chart.

- Remove plastic tops from the plastic containers being recycled and rinse containers with water.
- Crushing containers will help save space while storing them.

Did You Know?

- Enough plastic bottles are thrown away each year to circle the earth four times.
- Approximately 88% of the energy is saved by producing plastic from plastic as opposed to manufacturing plastic from the raw materials of oil and gas.

- For every seven trucks needed to deliver paper grocery bags to the store - only one truck is needed to carry the same number of plastic grocery bags.
- The number of plastics recycling businesses has nearly tripled over the past several years, with more than 1,700 businesses handling and reclaiming post-consumer plastics.
- By using plastic in packaging, American product manufacturers save enough energy each year to power a city of 1 million homes for three and a half years.
- Since 1977, the 2-liter plastic soft drink bottle has gone from weighing 68 grams to just 51 grams today, representing a 25% reduction per bottle. That saves more than 206 million pounds of packaging each year. The 1-gallon plastic milk jug has undergone an even greater reduction, weighing 30% less than what it did 20 years ago.
- The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that using plastic foam insulation in homes and buildings will save close to 60 million barrels of oil each year vs. other kinds of insulation.
- Approximately 80% of the U.S. population has access to some kind of plastics recycling program. The number of companies handling and reclaiming post-consumer plastics is nearly six times greater than in 1986, growing from 310 companies to 1,792 in 1998.
- The lives of more than 1,900 police officers have been saved through the use of protective vests made from plastic fibers.
- Improvements in energy efficiency made through the use of plastics in the last decade save more than 53 billion kilowatt hours of electricity annually. This saves American consumers a total of more than \$4 billion each year.



## The Recycling Symbols

### Plastic #1 – PETE or PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate)

- Picked up by most curbside recycling programs, plastic #1 is usually clear and used to make soda and water bottles. Some consider it safe, but this plastic is known to allow bacteria and flavor to accumulate.
- It's found mostly in soda bottles, water bottles, beer bottles, salad dressing containers, mouthwash bottles, and peanut butter containers.
- Plastic #1 is recycled into tote bags, furniture, carpet, paneling, fiber, and polar fleece.

### Plastic #2 – HDPE (High Density Polyethylene)

- Plastic #2 is typically opaque and picked up by most curbside recycling programs. This plastic is one of the 3 plastics considered to be safe, and has a lower risk of leaching.
- It's found mostly in milk jugs, household cleaner containers, juice bottles, shampoo bottles, cereal box liners, detergent bottles, motor oil bottles, yogurt tubs, and butter tubs.ilk jugs, detergent bottles, juice bottles, butter tubs, and toiletries bottles are made of this. It is usually opaque. This plastic is considered safe and has low risk of leaching.
- Plastic #2 is recycled into pens, recycling containers, picnic tables, lumber, benches, fencing, and detergent bottles, to name a few.

### Plastic #3 – V or PVC (Vinyl)

- Plastic #3 is used to make food wrap, plumbing pipes, and detergent bottles, and is seldom accepted by curbside recycling programs. These plastics used to, and still may, contain phthalates, which are linked to numerous health issues ranging from developmental problems to miscarriages. They also contain DEHA, which can be carcinogenic with long-term exposure. DEHA has also been linked to loss of bone mass and liver problems. Don't cook with or burn this plastic.
- It's found in shampoo bottles, clear food packaging, cooking oil bottles, medical equipment, piping, and windows.
- This plastic is recycled into paneling, flooring, speed bumps, decks, and roadway gutters.

## Plastic #4 – LDPE (Low Density Polyethylene)

- Low density polyethylene is most found in squeezable bottles, shopping bags, clothing, carpet, frozen food, bread bags, and some food wraps. Curbside recycling programs haven't been known to pick up this plastic, but more are starting to accept it: Plastic #4 rests among the recycling symbols considered to be safe.
- This plastic is recycled into compost bins, paneling, trash can liners and cans, floor tiles, and shipping envelopes.

## Plastic #5 – PP (Polypropylene)

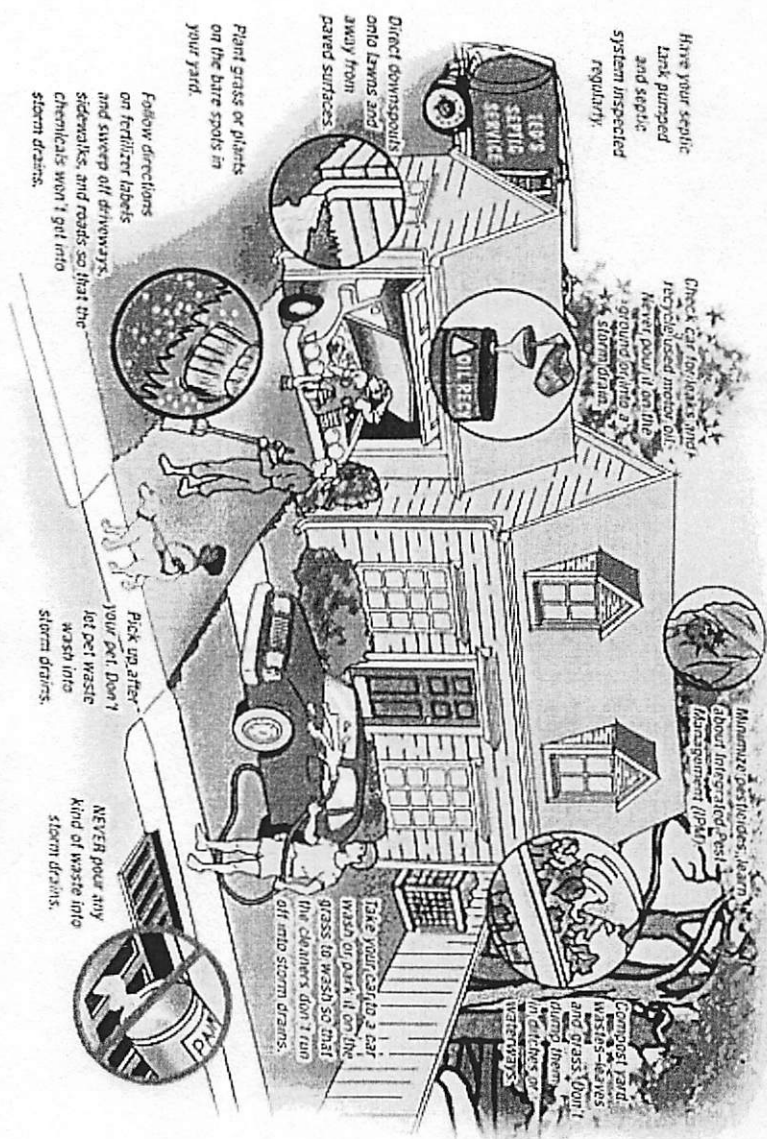
- Increasingly becoming accepted by curbside recycle programs, plastic #5 is also one of the safer plastics to look for.
- It is typically found in yogurt containers, ketchup bottles, syrup bottles, and medicine bottles.
- Polypropylene is recycled into brooms, auto battery cases, bins, pallets, signal lights, ice scrapers, and bicycle racks.

## Plastic #6 – PS (Polystyrene)

- Polystyrene is Styrofoam, which is notorious for being difficult to recycle, and thus, bad for the environment. This kind of plastic also poses a health risk, leaching potentially toxic chemicals, especially when heated. Most recycling programs won't accept it.
- Plastic #6 is found in compact disc cases, egg cartons, meat trays, and disposable plates and cups.
- It is recycled into egg cartons, vents, foam packing, and insulation.

## Plastic #7 – Other, Miscellaneous

- All of the plastic resins that don't fit into the other categories are placed in the number 7 category. It's a mix bag of plastics that includes polycarbonate, which contains the toxic bisphenol-A (BPA). These plastics should be avoided due to possibly containing hormone disruptors like BPA, which has been linked to infertility, hyperactivity, reproductive problems, and other health issues.
- Plastic #7 is found in sunglasses, iPod cases, computer cases, nylon, 3- and 5-gallon water bottles, and bullet-proof materials.
- It is recycled into plastic lumber and other custom-made products.



Have your septic tank pumped and septic system inspected regularly.

Check car for leaks and never pour oil on the ground or into a storm drain.

Direct downspouts onto lawns and away from paved surfaces.

Plant grass or plants on the bare spots in your yard.

Follow directions on fertilizer labels and sweep off driveways, sidewalks, and roads so that the chemicals won't get into storm drains.

Mimimize pesticides, learn about Integrated Pest Management (IPM).








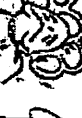
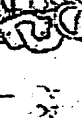

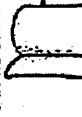
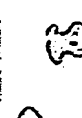




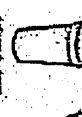
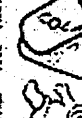
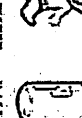

Take your car to a car wash or park it on the grass to wash so that the cleaners don't run off into storm drains.

Pick up after your pet. Don't let pet waste wash into storm drains.

NEVER pour any kind of waste into storm drains.

# Clean water begins at home...

# MARINE DEBRIS TIMELINE

NEWSPAPER 6 WEEKS	CARDBOARD BOX 2 MONTHS	MAILED MILK CARTON 3 MONTHS	HYPODERMIC 6-PR. SYR. 6 MONTHS	BOOTS/DIAPERS DIAPER 1 YEAR	PAINTED WOODEN STAKE 15 YEARS	STYROFOAM BOWL 50 YEARS	PLASTIC 6-PR. RING 400 YEARS	PLASTIC BOTTLE 450 YEARS	NON-BLIND FISHING LINE 600 YEARS
									
PAPER TOWELS 2-4 WEEKS	APRIL DARE 2 MONTHS	STAINLESS STEEL CUP 15 MONTHS	WAX 3-14 MONTHS	PLYWOOD 13 YEARS	TIN CAN 50 YEARS	STEEL CUP 50 YEARS	ALUM. CAN 200 YEARS	DYE DYE 450 YEARS	GLASS BOTTLES UNDETERMINED
									

Leave nothing on the beach except your footprints - Take care of our land and seas.

1967