

Beyond the Bin

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Supplying industry with raw materials without destroying earth's environment is possible when citizens "recycle it all and recycle it right." Curbside recycling makes a huge impact on the environment by providing many thousands of tons of raw materials to local and distant manufacturing plants, which in turn allows them to use less energy and produce less pollution. However, curbside programs do not, and cannot be expected to, recycle it all.

In fact, the co-mingled curbside recycling program is experiencing significant problems due to contamination. Because the bins are so big and the instructions are so simple, many citizens are tempted to toss everything in the bin. But paper mills in the Pacific NW are encountering devastating increases in damage to their equipment due to glass incorrectly placed in co-mingled bins. A wide array of miscellaneous plastics and bags are incorrectly placed in curbside recycling bins. Bags clog the conveyor system at the sorting centers or get caught between papers and boxes, baled and sent to the paper plant, clogging filters and machines that would otherwise be making great paper from old paper.

The first rule to "recycle it all and recycle it right" is to give recyclers only what they collect for recycling. Next, make sure all food waste and other debris has been removed from the material. In a commingle system materials are sorted after collection. Avoid nesting materials with unlike materials because they will be less likely to be correctly sorted by automated or hand sorting processes. For example if several plastic yogurt tubs are jammed inside of a paperboard cereal box they may not get separated and would end up becoming a waste product of a paper recycling process.

Your curbside bin is for rigid plastic containers, not everything plastic under the sun. The only plastic that should go in your curbside bin is a bottle, tub, jug or jar. Look at the SHAPE first—no trays, no cups, no bags, no clear blister packaging, no deli or to-go containers—ONLY bottles tubs, jugs and jars are ok. Because mechanical equipment sorts flat papers from the containers, it is very important to keep tin cans, plastics and cartons in their original dimensional shape. If space allows do not flatten anything, if it does not, only flatten paper items. And remember, glass MUST be set out separately.

Here's a list that will help you recycle the rest of "it all."

Do NOT place the following in your curbside bin.

Plastic block Styrofoam and packing peanuts: Packing Peanuts can be taken to any mailing service stores or check various materials exchanges like craigslist or freecycle, that may list artists and nonprofits wanting packing peanuts. Saint Vincent de Paul accepts block foam at three locations: Seneca and Division stores in Eugene and the Thurston store on Main Street in Springfield. There is no cost for small residential quantities, for commercial quantities they may charge a small fee to cover costs. For more information about recycling larger quantities call (541) 687-5820. Styrofoam cups, meat trays and etc. are NOT recyclable.

Plastic Bag and film wraps: Includes plastic 6-pack rings. No zip top bags or "saran" type food wraps. Nothing with food contamination accepted. Most grocery stores have bag recycling programs, and Lane County Transfer Stations accept bags and film (541-682-4120 or www.lanecounty.org). International Paper is very interested in commercial quantities, call 541-744-4100. Reuse is always best, if you're a dog owner, leave some behind for other people to use next time you're at the dog park.

Durable Plastics: International Paper accepts durable plastics such as buckets and barrels, toys and play structures, patio furniture and Rubbermaid, greenhouse and garden plastics. Drop it off at their collection kiosk (right next door to the Glenwood Central Receiving Station).

Plastic CDs and jewel cases: Recycle these at the Glenwood Central Receiving Station, and NextStep Recycling (10th and Garfield Eugene). Please remove paper labels and separate the cases from CD before tossing them all in the bin. **Video and Cassette tapes** can be donated to any Saint Vincent de Paul location.

Small Appliances (i.e. toasters, vacuums, etc): Take all items (working or not) to St. Vincent de Paul, they will be processed for recycling if not appropriate for reuse. 541-687-5820. Lane County Transfer Stations have a scrap metal bin, that accepts such items as long as they are 75% metal and contain no fluids.

Shoes: Drop off at any Goodwill or St. Vincent de Paul collection center. Like clothing, shoes are recycled on international markets if not selected for reuse.

Fluorescent bulbs: Compact fluorescent bulbs and tubes less than 4 ft. can be returned to most lighting and hardware stores in the Eugene/Springfield area. Check the Household Hazardous Waste page of the lane county website for the current list of locations at <http://www.lanecounty.org/departments/pw/wmd/documents/cfloptionsfall2010.pdf> or call 541-682-3111 for a disposal appointment.

Oil and Grease: as biofuel use continues to grow, more and more independent makers of fuel will be eager to get a hold of the raw resource. Sequential Biofuels gas station on McVay Hwy near 30th Ave, will accept all liquid vegetable oils rancid or not; for more information at 541-736-5864, <http://www.sqbiofuels.com/>. For commercial quantities of cooking oil and grease contact EC Restaurant Supply at 541-995-6025.

Batteries: All Lane County transfer stations accept not only car batteries, but household button and all rechargeables. Many local electronics and Radio Shack stores will collect them as well. Keep in mind, *Alkaline Batteries (AAA - D) sold in Oregon after 1996 are ok as garbage*, but all others should be delivered to the above locations for recycling.

Windows: Window glass is not recyclable at this time. Windows in their frames along with other reusable construction materials are accepted at BRING Recycling www.bringrecycling.org (541) 746-3023 and the new Habitat for Humanity's Restore <http://www.sehabitatrestore.org> 541-344-4809.

Mattresses: St. Vincent de Paul recycles old mattresses into new mattresses, dog beds and wood, metal and fiber commodities. Small fee, (less than the cost to landfill) 541-687-5820.

Electronic equipment: It is against state law to dispose of TVs, computers, monitors and laptops in the garbage. Lane County participates in the state-wide collection program for E-Cycles, offering FREE recycling to anyone with 7 or fewer *intact* items at five Lane County's transfer sites: Glenwood, Cottage Grove, Veneta, Florence and Vida. Other miscellaneous electronics, such as VCRs, DVD players, video game units, phone related equipment, printers and other computer related equipment, are not banned from landfills, but are included in our collection program as a service to our citizens. All Goodwill stores also accept 7 or fewer items (541) 345-1801. Anyone with 8 or more units or have dismantled items, can contact one of the two local electronics processors: Garten Services (541) 868-1550, NextStep Recycling (541)

686-2366. NextStep <http://www.NextSteprecycling.org/> accepts miscellaneous electronics and computer related equipment including manuals and software. NextStep also offers computer repair services.

Cell Phones: Working Cell Phones are accepted by Woman Space (541) 485-8232. Phones are given to survivors of domestic violence for emergency 911 calls. Cell phones are also accepted at NextStep, all St. Vincent de Paul locations and at Lane County transfer stations that accept electronics.

Glasses and Hearing Aids: The Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation accepts donations of glasses and hearing aids at Key Bank, 725 A Street, Springfield <http://www.orlions.org/> (800-635-4667).

Carpet padding, old pillows, cushions and foam: Keep dry. St Vincent De Paul stores, 541-687-5820.

Books and magazines: Drop off at any St. Vincent de Paul collection center. Whatever they cannot reuse in their stores, they will recycle to local markets.

Art Supplies: Material Exchange Center for Community Arts (MECCA) accepts used art supplies and other used items including scrap fabrics, calendars, greeting cards, buttons, candles that may be repurposed in art work. Call (541) 302-1810 or visit the website for a comprehensive list of materials they will accept <http://www.materials-exchange.org/>.