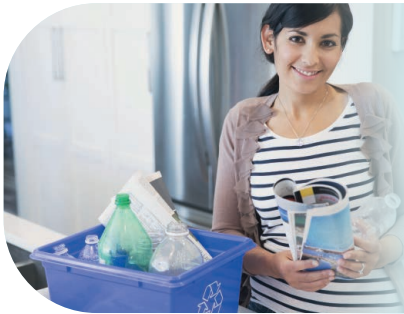


Avoid Recycling Contamination



Contamination happens when garbage or non-recyclable items are thrown into recycling containers, or when dirty containers leak food and liquid residue onto paper and cardboard.

4 Tips to Follow

1

Don't recycle items just because you hope they are recyclable.

2

Check the "What Goes Where" search tool on the Recycle Coach app.

3

Empty and clean your containers before recycling them.

4

Be aware of specialty recycling items that may require drop-offs to stores or depots.

What's the Issue?

- Across North America, municipalities pay hundreds of millions of dollars in extra sorting fees every year due to contamination. This increase in cost has put many recycling facilities at risk.
- The process of removing the contaminating items increases the cost of recycling programs and in turn, reduces the profitability of the program.
- Not only are costs increased, but contaminated items such as soiled paper can no longer be recycled, and these resources are lost forever.
- When a dirty container or greasy paper is placed in the recycling receptacle with the hope that the recycling facility can clean it themselves, the food and liquid residue can contaminate otherwise clean and recyclable items.
- Many people think that what is most important is to recycle everything. Unfortunately, this means that a lot of non-recyclable items end up in the recycling stream and contribute to contamination.



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Empty and Clean



Making sure you only recycle empty & clean materials will help avoid contamination, lower recycling cost, and keep workers safe.

Follow These 5 Tips!

- 1 Give a quick rinse and swish
- 2 Scoop out food residue with a spoon or spatula
- 3 Use leftover dishwater to save on water usage
- 4 Keep paper and cardboard away from wet containers
- 5 Let container dry on your counter if you can

What's the Issue?

- Recyclables are lightly compacted during transport and bottles burst under the pressure. Any remaining liquids or food residue spreads onto other materials.
- Any paper that gets soiled during transport will no longer be recyclable since the fibers will have been broken down.
- Recycling can sit for a long period of time before being sorted. Food residue can attract pests like wasps and rats making for an unpleasant working environment in the facility.
- Since recycling is charged by weight, the added weight of food and liquid in so many containers add to the cost of recovering those materials. This cost over time eventually ends up costing you money in your tax dollars.
- Leaving large amounts of food residue in a container can often be too much to burn off in the recycling process and that material will end up getting sent to landfill or end up contaminating an entire load of viable material.



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