



# Recycling Program UPDATE

From Waste Reduction Specialist, Sarah Grimm  
July 1, 2018

As this disruption in global recycling markets continues, we want to keep you informed of what we know.

There are two different recycling companies that receive recycling from Lane County and collection services and then transport it to the sorting facilities up north. Each company uses differing business relationships and systems to get collected materials to manufacturers, and each makes its own decisions on how to protect itself from financial ruin in these struggling times.

The result is that there is NOT one single message for all of Lane County about what goes in the recycling and what does not. In fact, currently there are four different sets of instructions in use in Lane County. We offer this description to help our community understand and act with compassion and cooperation to recycle it right so our recycling can in fact be useful/marketable.

## **Recycling Instruction CHANGES in Lane County:**

### **1. Lane County Rural Transfer Stations:**

- No milk cartons & aseptic cartons (juice, soup, milk boxes)
- No plastic bags (bins for this have been removed at all sites)
- No plastics at all EXCEPT for the milk jug plastic ( #2 HDPE, not colored, i.e. transparent )
- No shredded paper (bits of paper stick to bottles and cans contaminating good recyclables)

### **2. Lane County Glenwood Central Receiving Station:**

The change instruction is the same as #1 above, except for one item: the segregated materials collection system here makes it possible for shredded paper to be recycled in our mixed paper recycling bin.

### **3. Cities of Eugene, Springfield, Florence, Veneta, Creswell and all Sanipac services areas**

- No milk cartons & aseptic cartons (juice, soup, milk boxes)
- No shredded paper
- No plastics at all EXCEPT for milk jugs (including white) and transparent drink bottles

### **4. Cities of Junction City, Oakridge, Cottage Grove, Coburg, Vida and small Rural Haulers**

- No milk cartons & aseptic cartons (juice, soup, milk boxes)
- No shredded paper
- No plastics at all

While this is not a change, it is important to note that the following items are NOT allowed in the mixed recycling collections anywhere in Lane County: plastic bags; clear plastic bakery, deli and produce containers; and any paper constructed to stay strong when wet (e.g., napkins, towels, cups, to-go and frozen food boxes). These are all serious contaminants to the recycling stream and damage the system.

**THE GOOD NEWS IS .....**

Lane County recently unveiled a web-based tool that anybody can use to find out if something is recyclable in Lane County:

[www.lanecounty.org/garbageguru](http://www.lanecounty.org/garbageguru)

Enter the items you want to learn about and select from drop down options or click search. If you do not see the item after clicking search you will see an option to request that item be added to the database. This webpage has achieved the most visits of all Public Works webpages. Check it out! And share the good news.

## Successful recycling options still exist:

Please remember that the materials collected separately at transfer stations and throughout the community make up the bulk of our recycling and are very successfully recycled.

Be sure to use these great opportunities that are solid and effective:

**Recycle plastic bags at local grocery stores.** Safeway, Albertsons, Fred Meyer and others participate in a national program to recycle plastic bags into composite lumber at factories in the United States.

**Recycle #6 packaging Styrofoam** through St. Vincent de Paul. Residential quantities are free; commercial quantities must set up an account.

**Recycle ALL beverage containers at grocery stores or the Bottle Drop Redemption Centers.** Oregon's bottle deposit system now refunds 10 cents for all beverage containers except milk, meal replacement and wine/spirits (sizes 4oz. to 1.5 liter).

**Businesses that generate large quantities of a single material free of contamination may find willing buyers if quantities are 500-2000 pounds per pick up. Call 541-682-4339 for referral.**

**Reduce & Reuse!** Recycling is not the only, nor the best, action you can take. Reducing the products and packaging you buy conserves far more energy and natural resources. Look for bulk options and reuse your plastic containers. It will often save you money.

**Recycle right!** Wishful recycling does more harm than good. Do not recycle anything other than what is described as recyclable on signs or instructions.

If in doubt, **find out** or leave it out! Contact your collection service provider or find out at [www.lanecounty.org/garbageguru](http://www.lanecounty.org/garbageguru).

Please feel free to give us a call with additional questions or for additional talking points.

Lane County Waste Reduction Specialist: 541-682-4339.

