

Recycler's Guide to Plastics Recycling



The value of plastics recycling is growing by leaps and bounds but not all plastic can be recycled in our area. Please help recycle more by following the guidelines inside.



Lane County Public Works
Waste Management Division

Plastics: Numbers alone don't work to determine recyclability.

Please follow these instructions

If it's not a **BOTTLE, TUB, JAR OR JUG**, then it's **NOT** recyclable in mixed plastic collections.

There is value in plastics, however one-third of all plastics put in recycling bins are not recyclable and end up damaging sorting systems.

Remember:

for curbside and transfer station collections.

- Identify if it is a bottle, tub, jar or jug shape. If it is NOT one of these shapes, look for a recycler under "Where to Take Other Plastics" in this brochure, or toss it in the garbage.
- Remove and throw away caps, lids, spray pumps, or any other attachments. These items contaminate the recycling.
- Rinse the container! You don't need to remove labels.
- Do NOT crush. Do not nest containers (unless they are same thing).



The Recycle Symbol does **NOT** indicate that an item is recyclable in your area.



It only indicates what an item is made of.

YES!

RECYCLE these plastic containers. Rinse before recycling.

- Soft drink bottles
- Milk, juice, & water jugs
- Margarine tubs
- Liquid detergent bottles
- Shampoo & conditioner bottles
- Windshield fluid bottles

• Bags & film, recyclable at transfer stations & grocery stores only!

NO!

DON'T RECYCLE See next page for recycle options.

- Meat trays
- Loose lids, caps, & spray pumps
- Food storage containers
- Tray or flexible plastics
- Toys
- Garden hose
- Lawn furniture
- Motor oil bottles
- Pesticide containers
- Prescription bottles
- Plastic labeled "Bio" or #7

Lane County Public Works
Waste Management Division
3100 East 17th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97403



Recycling Plastic in Lane County

Why Only Bottles, Tubs, Jars and Jugs?



The chasing arrows numbering system for plastic containers was introduced over 20 years ago to help recyclers sort plastics by their main ingredient (resin) type, which is necessary to recycle it.



Each number represents a different type of plastic resin. **Plastic resin is only recyclable IF it is desired by a manufacturer who can re-use it to make new products.**

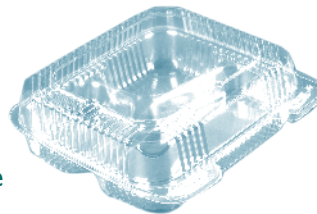
The number system worked well for many years. Until, manufacturers began inventing so many new ways to change and shape plastics into new product packaging options.

The science and mechanics of shaping plastic resins into product shapes are such that **once a resin is manipulated into a shape it is changed forever and it cannot be combined with other shapes to be recycled, even if the resin is the same!** (Much like a fried egg cannot be recycled into a hard-boiled egg).

So the numbers alone are not enough—**shape is now important** to describe what can and cannot be recycled.

Here's an example:

PET #1 plastic resin is made into water bottles by heating it to high temperatures and injection molding it. But the same resin can be melted to a lower temperature in the thermoforming process to make trays or other shapes. These two plastic items are made from the same base resin (#1 PET) but are **not** both equally recyclable because the different shaping processes create different plastic.



Many manufacturers use #1 bottles to make new

products, but fewer facilities accept #1 trays at this time.

Manufacturers need very large quantities of a single material in a consistent supply to make their products. In order to supply this, recyclers must separate by resin types **and** shape. When plastic trays contaminate the bottles that a manufacturer purchases as their raw material, their products will have flaws and will not be marketable.

Compostable Plastics are NOT Recyclable.

If your container has a #7 or the PLA marking, it should **NOT** be recycled with any plastic recycling program listed here—regardless of its shape.

This new type of plastic may have composting options when delivered to a commercial compost facility, but it is a terrible contaminant to recycling other plastics.



Where to Take Other Plastics That Are Recyclable

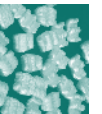
Do NOT place the following items in the curbside bins or mixed plastic collections!

Plastic bags—MUST be clean and dry. Recyclable at most grocery chains and Lane County disposal sites (www.plasticbagrecycling.org). For commercial quantities call International Paper Recycling at 541-744-4100 or Agriplas Recycling, 503-390-2381.



Plastic buckets, toys, structures, furniture, Rubbermaid type containers—Call: International Paper at 541-744-4100.

Packing peanuts—Must be clean and dry. Accepted for reuse at packaging and mailing stores. Or, call The Peanut Hotline at 800-828-2214.



Block foam (Styrofoam™)—Households can recycle **small** quantities of Styrofoam™ at no charge. St. Vincent de Paul accepts block foam and peanuts, NO food containers, trays or cups. Small fee for businesses. Call: 541-345-0595

Flower pots and trays—Reusable at BRING Recycling, 541-746-3023 and ReStore, 541-344-4809. For commercial quantities call: International Paper Recycling at 541-744-4100 or Agriplas Recycling at 503-390-2381



Media plastics—CDs, DVDs and Clear Jewel Cases only. Cases must be separated from media. Check with NextStep, 541-686-2366 and Garten Services 541-868-1550. For commercial quantities, inquire with International Paper, 541-744-4100 and Agriplas Recycling, 503-390-2381

Contact Lane County's Waste Reduction Specialist if you have questions regarding plastics recycling in Lane County: 541-682-4339.