



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

Recycler's Guide to Plastics Recycling



The value of plastics recycling is growing by leaps and bounds but not all plastic can be set out at the curb. One-third of all plastics put in recycling bins are not recyclable curbside. Please help recycle more by following the guidelines inside.



**Lane County Public Works
 Waste Management Division**

Plastics:
Numbers don't work to determine recyclability.

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

(This includes curbside collections, contact your hauler for details)

The value of plastics recycling is growing by leaps and bounds but not all plastic can be recycled. One-third of all plastics put in recycling bins are not recyclable. Please help recycle more by following the guidelines:

- 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" on this page, 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 material type).



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



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, in separate bin at transfer stations

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

Recycling Plastic in Lane County

Why Only Bottles, Tubs, Jars and Jugs?



The numbering system for plastic containers was introduced by the Society of the Plastics Industry (SPI) over 20 years ago to help recyclers sort plastics by their resin type which is necessary for recycling. Since then, so many new packages made with so many process technologies of resins have been invented that the numbers alone do not successfully describe what can and cannot be recycled.

The science and mechanics of manipulating resins into products are such that once a resin is manipulated, it is changed forever (kind of like baking a cake changes the batter forever) and cannot be combined with others to 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 is melted to a lower temperature in the thermoforming process to make a tray. These two plastic items are made



from the same base resin (#1 PET) but can't be combined because each different process changes the molecular structure of the plastic forever.

To recycle successfully, very large quantities of a single material must be collected on a consistent basis to provide industry with a raw material. While many facilities have high-tech equipment that can detect resin types, they cannot sort by molding process. To get the cleanest most successful raw material for industry, collection programs ask for "Bottles, Tubs, Jars and Jugs" only!

Other areas of the country may have other options, but recyclers across the Pacific Northwest agree, "Bottles, Tubs, Jars and Jugs" is the best instruction that works to gather the plastics that we can recycle.

Compostable Plastics

PLA and other bio-based plastics made from corn or other plant materials should **NOT be recycled with any plastic recycling** listed here regardless of its shape.



These plastics are labeled with a #7 or the code PLA. This new type of plastic may have recycling or composting options when collected into large quantities but are a terrible contaminant to recycling other plastics. Contact Lane County's Waste Reduction Specialist if you wish to explore these options at 541-682-4339.

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 many Lane County disposal sites (www.plasticbagrecycling.org). Commercial quantities should 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 in Eugene and Springfield can recycle small quantities of Styrofoam at no charge. St Vincent de Paul accepts block foam and peanuts at their Seneca, Division and Thurston stores. NO food containers, trays or cups. Small fee for businesses. Call 541-687-5820.



Flower pots and trays—Recyclable at Glenwood Disposal Site only and reusable at BRING Recycling, 541-746-3023. Commercial quantities should call International Paper Recycling at 541-744-4100 or Agriplas Recycling, 503-390-2381



Media plastics—CDs, DVDs and Clear Jewel Cases only. Cases must be separated from media. Recyclable at Glenwood Disposal Site, NextStep, 541-686-2366, and International Paper, 541-744-4119. Agriplas Recycling, 503-390-2381, commercial quantities only.



For more information about plastic recycling, call Lane County Waste Reduction Specialist, 541-682-4339.