

Recycling in Minnesota



What to Recycle



Plastic Bottles & Jugs

Water, soda and juice bottles, dish soap bottles, shampoo bottles, soap and lotion bottles, and detergent jugs (empty and clean/rinsed, and dry; caps on)



Plastic Cups & Containers

Yogurt cups, pudding and fruit cups, clear disposable cups (no straws), margarine/whipped cream tubs, cottage cheese and similar containers, clear produce, deli and take-out containers (empty and rinsed; lids on)



Boxes (flattened)

Cardboard, cereal, cracker, pasta and tissue boxes, shoe, gift and electronics boxes, toothpaste and other toiletry boxes



Cartons

Milk cartons, juice cartons, juice boxes and soup and broth cartons (empty and clean/rinsed, and dry; caps on)



Paper

Mail, office and school papers, magazines and catalogs, newspapers and inserts, phone books (clean; staples OK)



Metal

Food and beverage cans (empty and rinsed; labels OK)



Glass

Brown, green and clear bottles, jars (empty and rinsed; no lids)

Not recycling costs money. In 2021, a million tons of recyclable material was thrown away, but could have been recycled for an additional estimated value of \$142.1 million. Instead, it cost Minnesotans millions of dollars to put it in landfills. Recycling saves energy. It takes 90% less energy to make a can from recycled aluminum compared to virgin material. Recycled glass? About 50% less energy. Recycled paper? About 75% less energy, plus 74% less air pollution and 35% less water pollution. Lower energy use means reduced air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

What You Can Do to Optimize Sorting at Our Facility

Do not bag: For the safety of our employees and for the efficiency of our system, Republic Services asks that you place recyclables in the bin loose and individually. We can't be sure what is in the bags that we receive. For example, it could contain a sharp object and harm our employees. Plastic bags can also get caught in the recycling machinery, which can cause delays and significant damage. Therefore, bagged plastics are removed from the line and are processed as residual trash.

Empty, rinse and leave lids on: If items in your recycling cart aren't clean and empty, they are likely to be considered contaminated and will not be recycled. This is because food residue and liquids can damage the recycling process and

contaminate other recyclable materials in the cart, making them unsuitable for reuse.

If you leave a dollop of mayo in the jar or a big swig of soda at the bottom of a bottle, it might not make a huge difference. But imagine if everyone did the same thing? The cumulative effect can ruin otherwise perfect recyclable items. Instead of being recycled, contaminated items will likely end up in a landfill and all the efforts truly, went to waste.

Flatten boxes: It makes them easier to process and saves space in your recycling cart. Flattening boxes also prevents clogs. Other recyclables can get stuck in your bin if a box is lodged.

Leave caps on your plastic bottles: It helps with the sorting process at recycling facilities, ensuring the cap stays attached to the bottle and is recycled together, rather than potentially falling through the sorting machinery.

Batteries: Never recycle or throw away batteries at home. Putting them in your recycling or trash harms the environment and can be dangerous. Instead, dispose of them at a designated recycling site. This prevents fires, protects the environment, and keeps our community safe.

The recycling calendar is available on your city's website. A larger 95-gallon recycling cart can be requested. Extra recycling carts are available, if needed.

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Sustainability in Action



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