

# The Dos and Don'ts of Recycling and Composting: Read carefully! You may be doing it wrong.

Like your fellow Provo residents, you want to do the right thing to conserve our natural resources. However, this can be confusing when it comes to household waste. We're here to clarify this for you.

## Recycling

Recent analysis of our recycling stream has found that up to 40% of the material going into Provo City recycle bins is not recyclable. Placing trash in recycling bins contaminates the stream, complicates the recycling process, and makes it more expensive to run. You can do your part by recycling properly.

### WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?

**TOP 10 IN THE BIN**

- 1 - CARDBOARD
- 2 - MIXED PAPER
- 3 - FOOD BOXES
- 4 - MAIL
- 5 - ALUMINUM CANS
- 6 - STEEL CANS
- 7 - DRINKING BOTTLES
- 8 - MILK JUGS
- 9 - PLASTIC CONTAINERS
- 10 - PAPER BAGS AND PAPER PACKAGING

**NOT IN THE BIN**

- PLASTIC BAGS AND WRAPS
- GLASS BOTTLES AND JARS
- ELECTRONICS
- TEXTILES
- WAX COATED CARTONS

**NOT RECYCLABLE**

- WET MATERIALS
- FROZEN FOOD CONTAINERS
- PAPER MILK & JUICE JUGS
- FOOD CONTAMINATED ITEMS
- STYROFOAM
- DIAPERS / MEDICAL WASTE

**PROGRAM SUPPORTERS:**

**RCU**  
Recycling Coalition of Utah

## Place in Recycling Bin

### 1. Cardboard

Prepare cardboard for recycling by removing all other materials in the box such as plastic wrap, polystyrene peanuts and other packing materials. Break down cardboard boxes to save storage space. Try to keep cardboard dry and free from food waste.

### 2. Mixed Paper

Recyclable paper includes magazines/catalogs, telephone books, printer, notebooks and newspaper.

### 3. Food Boxes

Cereal, cake, chip and cracker boxes. Be sure to remove the liner and all food from the box, flatten the box and place the flattened box in recycling bin.

### 4. Mail

Paper items such as junk mail, miscellaneous flyers, post cards, direct mail, brochures, pamphlets and booklets.

### 5. Aluminum Cans

Prepare aluminum cans for recycling by either crushing the cans to save space or leaving them uncrushed. Cans that are rinsed out will have little or no odor and are less likely to attract bugs.

### 6. Steel/Tin Cans

Prepare steel cans for recycling by rinsing them with water to remove any food residue. To save space, remove both ends of the steel can and crush flat. Labels on the steel cans do not have to be removed since they are burned off during the melting process.

### 7. Drinking Bottles

First insure they are either Plastic 1 or 2. Prepare plastic containers for recycling by removing plastic tops from the plastic containers being recycled and rinse containers with water. Crushing containers will help save space while storing them.

#1 (PETE): soda-pop bottles, cooking-oil bottles and peanut-butter jars

#2 (HDPF): milk, water and juice bottles, bleach and detergent bottles, margarine tubs

### 8. Milk Jugs

See #7

### 9. Plastic Containers

See #7

### 10. Paper Bags /Paper Packaging

Paper grocery bags and paper packing material often found as replacement for bubble pack in shipping boxes.

## Do Not Place in Recycling Bin

### 1. Plastic Bags

Plastic and grocery bags are recyclable **but may not be placed in the recycling bin**. They are damaging to the recycling machinery and are a major factor in increased recycling costs. Grocery bags can be taken to grocery stores that participate in plastic bag collections.

### 2. Trash Bags

Bagging of recycle material in a trash bag results in higher costs for material handlers having to open bags and costs associated with damage to machinery. Material should be placed in containers free of

bags. Material placed in trash bags will most likely be placed directly in the garbage by recycling companies, due to the inability to see what is inside the bag and to avoid opening bags of pure garbage on the sorting belt.

### 3. **Glass Containers**

Glass contamination of recycling material can affect surrounding material by imbedding itself in other materials resulting in other material being thrown out at the sorting center. Glass can be recycled by taking these items to the Glass Recycling bin located at 300 W and 50 S in the City Hall Parking lot.

**\*\*Please do not place bags or boxes in the Glass Recycling bin\*\***

### 4. **Electronics**

Electronics must not be placed in the recycling bin. Small appliances may be placed in the trash bin. TV's and large electronic items can be recycled during the Spring and Fall clean up at locations throughout the city or taken directly to SUVSWD transfer station throughout the year.

### 5. **Textiles**

Donate to local charities.

### 6. **Wax Coated Boxes**

Place in the garbage can.

### 7. **Non-recyclable Items**

- Tissue
- Carbon Paper
- Diapers
- Styrofoam
- Wet Material
- Paper, Milk & Juice boxes

### 8. **Plastics 3-7**

These items currently do not have a market and should be placed in the trash bin. These items can be identified by their identification codes which are often found on the bottom of the plastic container encircled by three chasing arrows.

- #3 (PVC): window cleaner bottles, cooking-oil containers and detergent powder containers
  - #4 (LDPE): food packaging, shrink-wrap, carryout bags and heavy-duty bags
  - #5 (PP): butter and margarine tubs, yogurt containers, screw-on caps and drinking straws
  - #6 (PS)\*: Compact disk cases, aspirin bottles, clean plates, cutlery
  - #7 (Other): squeezable syrup and condiment bottles and some microwave food trays
- \*Note - Polystyrene foam including foam cups, plates, and packing materials are non-recyclable.

### 9. **Shredded Paper**

Shredded paper is recyclable through professional shredding companies for a fee. Residential shredded paper cannot be placed in the recycling bin. Due to its small size, it falls between the rollers and machinery belts at the recycling plant. Placing the shredded paper in plastic bags presents the same problems that accompany grocery and trash bags.

## **Yard Waste / Composting**

For just \$6.40 more per month, you can have your yard waste composted through a Provo City green bin. Materials in the green bins are picked up weekly, March through November, and composted locally at our East Bay compost yard. The product is a fine, rich mulch that people can purchase and use for gardening, farming, and landscaping.

The following materials are allowed in green bins:

- Yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, weeds, branches, wood, etc.)
- Uncooked fruits, vegetables and grains as well as coffee grounds and eggshells; all other animal products do not break down in our composting process and should be thrown in the trash

## **Reducing Waste**

Reducing waste is more economical and sustainable than recycling. Reducing and reusing should always come before recycling. Avoid purchasing or using products you will use only once; opt for reusable goods instead. For tips on how you can reduce waste see the EPA's guide at [epa.gov/recycle/reducing-waste-what-you-can-do](https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-waste-what-you-can-do)