

Are You a Wishful Recycler?

Many of us toss items in recycling bins even though we're unsure if those items are indeed recyclable. We think they're recyclable for various reasons including that the item has a recycling triangle on it, it's plastic, it has only some food residue on it, and more. However, if unacceptable items are mixed in with acceptable items, it may cause the entire load to get rejected and thrown in the trash – exactly what we're trying to avoid!

If, for example, the mixed recyclables bin at the transfer station gets unacceptable items such as plastic bags, the wrong kinds of containers, or unrinsed food containers, the whole load may be rejected and thrown away (which costs the town extra money). If we really want items to be recycled, we must do more than "wish" they're recyclable, we must follow guidelines established by recycling companies. Luckily there's an easy website and app where you can simply type in the item and you'll learn if it goes in recycling or the trash.

Go to www.recyclect.com and enter an item. Example: "black plastic container". The website says, "Put this item in your trash" and gives additional information, "Initially the range of black plastic containers we generate were acceptable in CT's mixed recycling program, but due to market conditions, CT Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) have removed these items from our "IN" list. Thanks for adjusting to this change."

One thing to keep in mind for all recyclables is that containers must be empty and free of food residue. Partly filled beverage containers can soak or contaminate a load, which wastes resources at the recycling center and nullifies good intentions. Pet food cans, peanut butter jars, and other containers with food stuck inside are also problematic, so it's important to take a few minutes to clean these out.

Plastic bags have unique requirements – they can never be put in with mixed recyclables, even if they're filled with cans and bottles. Luckily, grocery stores and big box stores (i.e., Target, Lowe's, etc.) have receptacles for plastic bags near their entrance or exit. Just collect bags, films, and packaging, and drop in the bin when you go shopping.

RecycleCT.com provides easy-to-use materials that people can reference for household use and education. See "What's In" and more here: www.recyclect.com/resources.html. For more on what can be disposed of or recycled at the Orange Transfer Station & Recycling Center, visit orangerecycles.com/transfer-station and follow the Orange Recycling Committee at facebook.com/ORCinCT.

RECYCLE RIGHT. EVERY TIME.

Use this guide to learn **What's IN** and **What's OUT** of your bin.

What's IN?

Follow these steps before placing acceptable items into your recycling bin.
DO: empty, clean, rinse, and repeat for each item. | **DON'T: shred, box, or bag items.**

 <p>PAPER & CARDBOARD</p>  <p>Newspapers & magazines, food and beverage cartons, mixed paper and flattened boxes</p>	 <p>GLASS</p>  <p>Bottles and jars</p>	 <p>METAL</p>  <p>Food and beverage cans, aluminum foil and foil containers</p>	 <p>PLASTIC</p>  <p>Jugs, tubs and lids</p>
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What's OUT?

 <p>No plastic bags or plastic wrap (Return to retailer)</p>	 <p>No food or liquid (Empty all containers)</p>	 <p>No clothing or linens (use donation programs)</p>	 <p>No tanglers (No hoses, wires, chains or electronics)</p>	 <p>No combustibles (No propane tanks, batteries, and non-food grade aerosol cans like spray paint and pesticides)</p>
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To learn more about What's In and What's Out of your bin, ask the RecycleCT Wizard at RecycleCT.com or download our new app.





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