

Single-Stream Recycling in Cuyahoga County

DO RECYCLE

Below are the common recyclables that all communities collect for recycling. Items should be commingled (single-stream) and then placed loose, not bagged, in the recycling container used by your community. Follow these simple guidelines to make sure you recycle correctly. Sometimes this means leaving certain items out of your recycle bin like the things on the “unacceptable” list below that contaminate the recycling stream. Please recycle often and recycle right.



Plastic food, beverage, and detergent containers



Milk & juice cartons, juice boxes



Aluminum cans



Metal food cans



Glass bottles and jars



Cardboard boxes, flattened



Mixed paper, junk mail, magazines, catalogs



Boxboard, cereal boxes, toilet paper tubes

DO NOT RECYCLE

These items cannot be included in your community's recycling program, though other recycling options may exist.

- Plastic bags or film
- Styrofoam™
- Plastic utensils or straws
- Food
- Pots & pans or ceramics
- Glassware
- Paper plates or cups
- Napkins or paper towels
- Plastic or metal hangers
- Bulky metals



Tips:

- Items should be placed loose in the recycling bin
- Empty and rinse all containers
- Leave the caps and lids on
- Guidelines apply to all Cuyahoga County communities

For more information
(216) 443-3749 • www.cuyahogaswd.org



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FAQS

Q: Where do my recyclables go?

A: Recyclables collected through community recycling programs go to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) to be sorted and baled before being shipping to a manufacturer and made into new products. The three MRF's that receive the commingled, single-stream recyclables from Cuyahoga County are owned and operated by private companies and located in Twinsburg, Akron, and Oberlin. These sophisticated facilities process thousands of tons of recyclables every day.

Q: How are the recycling materials recovered?

A: At the MRF, large objects and non-recoverable items are removed first. The recyclables then travel through an automated sorting system which uses a disk screen, magnets, optical sorters, and workers on the line to separate the materials. The sorted materials are baled and sold.

Q: Do I need to separate all of the recycling?

A: All recyclable items should be commingled, or mixed together. Items should be placed in your recycling cart or bin loose, not bagged.

Q: What items should go in the recycling bin or cart? Why can't I recycle everything?

A: Only the acceptable items listed on the front of this flier should be placed in your recycling cart or bin. These are the items that the MRF is designed to recover. Other items are not recoverable and are problematic and costly for the MRF.

DO NOT put clothing, household goods, food, plates, cups, utensils and plastics bags in your recycling cart or bin. DO NOT put electronics, toys, computers, and hazardous waste and bulky items in your recycling bin or cart. Some of these items may be recyclable in other ways so please contact the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District to find out other recycling options.

Q: If an item is not on my recycling list, and I think it could (or should) be recycled, should I put it in the bin?

A: Putting the wrong recyclables into your bin or bag will contaminate and cause the entire load to be thrown out as trash. The materials move quickly on the belts through the MRF. Machines and people cannot quickly sort all of the bad items, which can create contamination and the recovered items cannot be sold. It's best to follow the approved list on the front of this flyer. If there are still questions, call the Solid Waste District. It's important to recycle, but it's just as important to recycle correctly.

Q: Why am I being told not to use plastic bags or put them in the recycling bin?

A: Plastic bags are recyclable if you take them to a grocer or retailer that collects them for recycling. They should be left out of your single stream recycling because at the MRF, they contribute to high contamination rates and sorting machine failure. When bags get wrapped around the moving disks and screens, material sorting stops and the MRF is shutdown.

Q: What about hazardous items that shouldn't go in the trash?

A: Special waste items such as oil-base paints, pesticides, scrap tires, and e-waste are managed through special collection or recycling programs. Typically, these events are held seasonally in the community where you live.

Q: What is the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District?

A: The District is a public agency that works to support environmentally-sustainable and economical solid waste management practices within the communities, institutions and businesses of Cuyahoga County. We are your source for recycling information in Cuyahoga County. Visit cuyahogaswd.org or call (216) 443-3749.

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