

RECYCLE THIS, NOT THAT

WHAT IS THE RIGHT WAY TO RECYCLE AT HOME?

ONLY Bottles & Cans made of metal, glass and plastic + juice/milk cartons go in the commingled bin. These need to be emptied out of any residual food and rinsed just once.

Paper and cardboard go in Paper bin. Avoid putting greasy or wet paper.

For everything else, when in doubt, leave it out of recycle bin. DO NOT Wishcycle!

SHOULD I PUT MY RECYCLING IN A BAG?

Do not put your recycling in plastic bags. In fact, do not put any plastic films or bags in recycling bins. The only place where you can recycle plastic films and bags are at bag collection bins located in some big brand stores.

ARE PIZZA BOXES RECYCLABLE? CAN I RECYCLE ICE-CREAM CARTONS? CAN I RECYCLE BUSINESS CARDS?

Short answer No. Find all your recycling answers at Recycle Right's Recyclopeda.

DO I TAKE OFF THE CAPS AND LIDS OF THE BOTTLES AND CONTAINERS BEFORE RECYCLING?

No. Leave them on.

DO I NEED TO RINSE BEFORE RECYCLING?

Empty the bottles and cans and rinse just once, no washing required. However, if you cannot rinse out the stuck food then please put the container in trash bin.

RECYCLING IN WESTCHESTER

DUAL-STREAM RECYCLING, SINGLE-STREAM RECYCLING... WHAT DO THESE MEAN? WHICH ONE IS TRUE FOR WESTCHESTER?

DUAL STREAM:

Accepts only recyclables - Paper and cardboard in one bin, and Plastic + Metal + Glass in another bin.
Example : Westchester Refuse Disposal District (36 municipalities)

SINGLE STREAM:

Accepts only recyclables - Everything goes in the same bin.
Example: Westchester non- Refuse Disposal District (7 municipalities – Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem, New Castle, North Castle, Pound Ridge, and Somers.)

HOW DOES RECYCLING IN WESTCHESTER WORK? IS IT WORTH THE EFFORT?

IT WORKS WELL! Westchester has a very robust recycling infrastructure that was built with lot of foresight and planning. The municipalities in Refuse District send recyclables to a dual-stream recycling facility located in Yonkers, referred to as MRF - stands for Material Recovery Facility. The residents are required by law to separate household items into separate bins, one for commingled (metal, glass, plastic) and other for paper & cardboard. These are collected by respective municipal public works and eventually wind up at the MRF where they are sorted, baled and sold to domestic and international recycling buyers.

HOW DOES DUAL STREAM RECYCLING COMPARE WITH OTHER RECYCLING SYSTEMS?

Dual stream recycling mostly results in better recycling product compared to single stream recycling. The simple logic is that better sorted materials attract buyers because they are easier to remanufacture into new products. Imagine how well sorted Lego blocks are easier to build with than blocks of all shapes and sizes mixed up!

I AM SEEING IN THE NEWS THAT RECYCLING IS DEAD IN USA BECAUSE CHINA WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT WHAT WE WERE SENDING THEM AND ALL THE RECYCLABLES ARE BEING TAKEN TO LANDFILLS. WHY BOTHER RECYCLING THEN?

Recycling has been seriously hit by the import ban, albeit not everywhere, especially not in Westchester. Communities like ours source-separate paper and commingled into separate bins and are able to generate a much cleaner recyclable output. This output remains a highly marketable commodity and although the profit margins might've taken some hit due to recent Chinese import ban, Westchester is still able to sell it at some profit if not breaking even. Additionally, if we were to not recycle and simply treat everything as trash, then we would be spending millions more to dispose it at the incinerator.

In conclusion, Westchester's recycling is still very much alive and earning revenues and is also saving us millions in disposal cost.



TRASH DISPOSAL IN WESTCHESTER

DO WE SEND OUR TRASH TO LANDFILLS?

No. Westchester is one of the few counties in USA where we are sending most of our trash not to landfills but to an incinerator. The incinerator is located in Peekskill and was built and commissioned in the 1980's. Things that are not recovered, reused, resold, or recycled are sent to the incinerator where the high temperature combustion technology converts everything into ash, and steam is generated as a by-product. The ash is sent to be used as a landfill cover, and the steam is supplied to nearby laundry business for use in their operations.

IS INCINERATING TRASH A GOOD STRATEGY?

While incineration is not ideal, the only other alternative method would be landfilling which is certainly worse. Incineration technology varies among communities that use them depending on how effectively they treat the garbage input and resulting ash and emissions output. Westchester's incineration plant is equipped with industry's best pollution control measures, for example - the incinerator's tall stack allows emissions to be diluted. Thus incineration as is currently practiced in Westchester, does not require a lot of land-use, does not pollute the underground water, and does not release

greenhouse gases, all of which are common attributes of landfills. In conclusion, no garbage technology available today is absolutely emissions-free, therefore proper understanding of alternatives and their related pollution control measures is vital.

WHAT ABOUT THE ADVERSE HEALTH IMPACTS OF TRASH INCINERATION?

The concerns surrounding release of toxins from burning of our trash into the air is a valid one. From the chemistry point of view, incineration breaks down the organic and inorganic components of our garbage and ultimately results into a toxic mix of gases such as dioxins and particulate matter. These if released into the air would be detrimental to health and environment of the surrounding communities.

However, Wheelabrator's incineration plant operates under very strict operating and emission limits driven by federal and NY state air quality regulations designed specifically to protect public health, and is governed under a permit with strict monitoring and testing requirements. It is therefore critical to appreciate, track and constantly monitor the pollution control steps being undertaken at the incineration. Here is the copy of permit obtained by Wheelabrator after meeting required emission standards. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6WlyOkiKQEmNEpZWUt4TFJsTS11RTFMSnUyY1Nxx3JKnkZZ/view>

ZERO WASTE AND RECYCLING CONCEPTS

WHAT IS ZERO WASTE?

An official definition as adopted by Zero Waste International Alliance in December 2018 is as follows:

“The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.” Simply put, it means that we as consumers and inhabitants of the planet ought to use the natural resources in the most frugal and responsible way because it is limited in supply.

WHAT IS A CIRCULAR ECONOMY? IS IT DIFFERENT FROM ZERO WASTE?

Both concepts essentially mean the same. Zero Waste is a philosophy, whereas, Circular Economy refers to the blueprint to achieve the Zero Waste goal.

IS RECYCLING REALLY BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT? HOW?

The more we recycle, the less garbage winds up in our landfills and incineration plants. By reusing aluminum, paper, glass, plastics, and other materials, we can save production and energy costs, and reduce the negative impacts that the extraction and processing of virgin materials has on the environment. It all comes back to you. Recycling gets down to one person taking action.

New products can be made from your recyclable waste material. When a recycled material, rather than a raw material, is used to make a new product, natural resources and energy are conserved. This is because recycled materials have already been refined and processed once; manufacturing the second time is much cleaner and less energy-intensive than the first. For example, manufacturing with recycled aluminum cans uses 95 percent less energy than creating the same amount of aluminum with bauxite. Recycling results in cleaner air and water, less pollution, more forested land and open space, and reduced greenhouse gases.

DOES RECYCLING MAKE ECONOMICAL SENSE? LET'S COMPARE THE COST OF RECYCLING VERSUS TRASH DISPOSAL IN WESTCHESTER.

Say you have collected 1 ton of soda cans from a huge party, and the next day you want to get rid of it.

- **IF YOU PUT IN A RECYCLING BIN**, it will reach the Yonker's recycling center.
- They will sort it and sell it on recycling market for say \$150.
- 100% of your aluminum cans will be recycled into new aluminum products.
- Total cost to you: \$0.00 (because recycling is free in Westchester)
- Jobs created 0.023 per 1 ton of your soda cans (collection + recycling + remanufacturing from recycled materials)

- **IF YOU PUT IT IN TRASH BIN**, it will reach the Peekskill incineration plant.
- There it will be combusted and turned into molten slag.
- ~60% of original aluminum content is now trapped in this slag and needs to be further treated to extract the aluminum out.
- Total cost to you: \$90.00 (because disposal cost \$90/ton in Westchester)
- Jobs created 0.018 per 1 ton of your soda cans (collection + incineration + manufacturing from virgin materials)

Once you do this math, for bigger volumes and a wider variety of materials like paper, plastic etc, you will start seeing the economic benefit of recycling over disposal.

