

Recycling Review from EcoRI

Keep This Stuff Out of Recycling Bins

The following is a top-10 list of things to keep out of your recycling bins:

WEEKLY TIP

1. **Filled Plastics Bags.** The sorters at Rhode Island Resource Recovery (RIRRC) like to keep things loose. So don't stash your newspapers or bottles in plastics bags — grocery or garbage — otherwise they end up in the landfill.
2. **Empty Plastic Grocery Store Bags.** They don't belong in the blue or green bin. Bring them back to the store, along with other stretchy plastic, and use their bins.
3. **Napkins and Paper Towels (Clean or Dirty).** The quality of the paper is too low for paper mills to convert to pulp. Try throwing them in your compost bin instead.
4. **Oil Cans.** They're made of plastic, but don't recycle those quart oil jugs. Throw them in the trash, if empty. Otherwise call RIRRC's Eco-Depot to set up a drop off: 401-942-1430, ext. 241.
5. **Pizza Boxes.** Tear off the parts with grease and food residue and throw them away. Only clean parts of the box can go in the green recycling bin.
6. **Frozen Food Boxes.** Unless the box containing chicken nuggets and waffles has a recycle symbol on it they need to go in the trash. Ditto for cardboard six-pack carriers. They contain a chemical that keeps them from disintegrating when wet, which also means they can't be turned into pulp.
7. **Filled Bottles and Jugs.** They should be empty before going in the bin. And go ahead and leave the cap on.
8. **Disposable Coffee Cups (Styrofoam or Paper).** They go in the trash. Friendly Tip: Keep spare reusable mugs along with reusable water bottles in a reusable bag in your vehicle.
9. **Syringes/Needles.** They should be placed in a hard container such as a coffee can or laundry detergent bottle, labeled "Sharps," and thrown in the trash.
10. **Most Plastic Containers.** Sadly, only Nos. 1 and 2 and only those bottles with a narrower mouth than body go in the recycling bin. Therefore all plastic coffee cups, plastic takeout and food containers go in the trash — even if they have a Nos. 1 or 2. Some stores, such as Whole Foods, accept No. 5 plastics. Nos. 3-7 are trash.