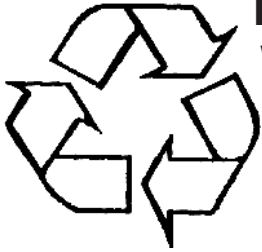


Recycling plastics

why are only **some** recycled



A message from
Metro Waste Authority
Your Partner in Environmental Solutions



Breaking it down:

What the chasing arrows and numbers **really** mean on plastics

The recycling symbol (the chasing arrows), is misleading to consumers. The symbol with a number is placed on plastics from the manufacturing company in order to mark what types of chemical compounds were used in creating the product. This is called a resin code. Consumers have been taught to watch for the recycling symbol, so when they see it marked on plastic items, it is often assumed that those items can always be recycled – this is not the case.

Why can't **all** my plastics be recycled?

The types of plastics that can be recycled varies throughout the United States due to differences in regional recycling markets. For recycling to work, groups and organizations like Metro Waste Authority (MWA) must collect what the recycling processors will accept. What can be recycled depends on what recyclables the recycling processors and their purchasers' demand. If there is no market for certain recycled plastics, processors will not find it cost-effective to accept them from organizations like MWA; thus, some plastics may not be collected from our service area at the request of our processor. Another reason why not all plastics can be recycled is that scientific developments have not yet allowed for certain plastics to be successfully processed into a durable material that is desired in the market.

For these reasons, MWA currently accepts plastic bottles, one of the most common uses of plastics, in the Curb It! program.



What is **Curb It!**?

MWA's Curb It! program is a curbside recycling program provided to MWA's service area residents. Recyclables are placed in a Curb It! bin and picked up weekly by a recycling hauler. Accepted items include: necked plastic bottles, newspaper, mixed paper, cardboard, tin/aluminum cans and clear glass food jars.

Which plastics can you recycle in **Curb It!**?




Necked bottles along with margarine and yogurt tubs

- Medicine and vitamin bottles
- Plastic Food Jars
- Detergent and fabric softener bottles
- Hairspray, shampoo and conditioner bottles (take out the pumps)
- Milk, juice, water and soda bottles



Remember - when in doubt, throw it out.

Reference Chart for Plastic Resin Codes

Symbol	Name	Description	Examples
 1 PETE	Polyethylene Terephthalate	Clear, tough, resistant to heat	Plastic soft drink, water, sports drink, mouthwash, ketchup and salad dressing bottles; peanut butter, pickle and jam jars
 2 HDPE	High Density Polyethylene	Stiff, strong, resistant to chemicals and moisture	Milk, water, juice, cosmetic, shampoo, dish and laundry detergent bottles; bathroom and kitchen cleaning containers; yogurt and margarine tubs
 3 V	Polyvinyl Chloride	Versatile, clear, resistant to grease, oil and chemicals	Clear rigid food packaging
 4 LDPE	Low Density Polyethylene	Flexible, barrier to moisture	Squeezable bottles (like honey or mustard)
 5 PP	Polypropylene	Resistant to heat, chemicals, grease oil	Ketchup bottles, yogurt containers and margarine tubs
 6 PS	Polystyrene	Versatile, clear, rigid or foamed	Bakery trays
 7 OTHER	Other	Made with resin(s) not specified above	Some citrus juice and ketchup bottles



Resin codes were adopted by the Society of the Plastics Industry in 1988. Their website, www.plasticsindustry.org, states that the symbols are used only to identify resin content. The symbols do not claim that any particular item can be recycled.