



## Roanoke's Recycling Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Where does the recycled product go after it is collected?** The recycling vendor has contracted with manufacturers to purchase the product after it is prepared and baled. This is why it is important to look for recycled content in your new products; it keeps the demand for the recycled materials high.

**My styrofoam is labeled as a # 6 recyclable, are you sure I can't recycle it?**

Technically # 6 styrofoam is recyclable; *however*, there are challenges with processing styrofoam and there is no market for the recycled product, therefore it is not collected.

**What is a MRF?** A Material Recovery Facility (pronounced "merf") is the manufacturing facility that sorts and bales the recycled material. This sophisticated equipment can sort and separate the majority of the materials that come into the building. Recycling & Disposal Solutions (RDS) has a nice video on their website: <http://www.rds-virginia.com/roanoke.html> that shows how the MRF works.

**Can I recycle aluminum foil?** No, only aluminum cans. The sorting equipment is designed to handle only aluminum cans.

**Can I put compost in my bin?** No food, please. There are numerous resources on composting if you are interested in composting at home.

**I see that plastic bags have a recycling emblem but my magnet says "No." Why not collect the bags?** The bags cause a big problem for the equipment; the bags get caught in the machinery and damage the equipment. You can return the bags to the stores--most stores are happy to take back the bags.

**I have bags of shredded paper; can I put that in a paper bag?** No paper bags please, they tend to tear and lose their contents. Plastic bags work best; a tall kitchen garbage bag tied securely works well.

**I remember hearing that glass often got contaminated and then thrown away. Does that still happen?** Not any more. The buyer for the glass can use the product with mixed colors, so contamination is not a problem. All recycling has some level of contamination, generally this is removed early in the process and the unacceptable waste goes to the landfill.

I have heard some recycling facilities like the plastic bottles caps off, some say to leave it on. What should I do? Every MRF has different capabilities. In our case, we ask that you empty any liquid and REMOVE THE CAP.

I have a milk carton that has a plastic spout; do I need to remove it? Please remove the cap but you can leave the spout. There is a special piece of equipment that handles the cartons and can remove the plastic spout.

We have a plastic bike that our son has outgrown. I see a #2 recycling emblem; can you take that too? No, toys, lawn furniture and other household plastic items are not compatible with the equipment. We can recycle any plastic bottles and food containers, and remember NO PLASTIC WRAP PLEASE!

I have some old spiral notebooks. They are mostly paper, are they ok? Whenever you have more than one product combined IT IS NOT RECYCLABLE. The equipment cannot separate the two materials. Of course, if you remove the spiral you can recycle the paper and throw the spiral away.

Remember it is a good to recycle as much as you can but ***when in doubt, throw it out! Help us deliver the best recycled product!***

# RoanokeVA.gov/Recycles

or CALL: (540) 853-2000



Mail, Magazines, Newspaper  
Flattened Cardboard  
Cartons  
Cereal, Pasta & Tissue Boxes  
Aluminum & Metal Cans  
Plastic Tubs & Containers  
Plastic Jugs & Bottles  
Glass



## NOT RECYCLABLE IN CART:



NO Food Waste

NO Styrofoam

NO Plastic Bags OR Packing Material

NO Cords, Hoses OR Wires

See website for other items: Household Hazardous Waste, Electronics, etc