

Are You Wishcycling?



Wishcycling, or wishful recycling, is when you toss something you hope to be recyclable into the recycling bin. Many fall victim to the promises of wishcycling, thinking that if something looks like it can be recycled, it probably can be. But the truth is that many things look recyclable but really aren't, or the other way around!

Problems with Wishcycling

Accidentally mixing up what goes in the recycling bin or the trash might be an honest mistake with good intentions behind it, but wishcycling causes problems for Easton and the recycling stream, which can lead to potential harm.

When something non-recyclable ends up in the recycling stream, it can contaminate the load. The more contaminated our recycling stream, the more expensive it is for Easton as well; the town pays extra fees for unusable loads. "Wishcycling costs the municipality money because the Materials Recovery Facility has to take time to clean and remove contamination before they can sell the recyclable materials," says Sherill Baldwin, with the Sustainable Materials Management team at the CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP).

Wishcycled items may prevent other items from being able to process through the system properly and may even damage the recycling facilities' machinery. These

damages may cause production to stop for repair, make the workers' jobs more difficult as they seek to find and remove any non-recyclable items, and even potentially put workers' safety at risk.

How Can You Avoid Wishcycling?

By learning what can and cannot go into the recycling bin, we can all avoid wishcycling and instead make more informed recycling decisions. An excellent resource for this is <https://www.recyclect.com/>, which provides the most up-to-date information on what goes in the bin. There is also a helpful feature on the site (and the **RecycleCT app**) where you can input an item and it will tell you if it is recyclable! Finally, as Baldwin notes, another helpful guideline is: "When in doubt, it really is better to throw it out." It's better to throw something away than risk contamination.

Be on the lookout for new stickers coming to your recycling bins this summer! They'll be a great resource to help avoid wishcycling and other problematic recycling practices.

RECYCLE RIGHT. EVERY TIME.

Use this guide to learn **What's IN** and **What's OUT** of your bin.

What's IN?

DO: empty, clean, rinse, and dry items.



PAPER & CARDBOARD



Newspapers & magazines, food and beverage cartons, mixed paper and flattened boxes



GLASS



Bottles and jars



METAL



Food and beverage cans, aluminum foil and foil containers



PLASTIC



Jugs, tubs and lids

What's OUT?

DON'T: shred, box, or bag items.



No plastic bags or plastic wrap
(Return to retailer)



No styrofoam
(No food, drink, or product foam packaging)



No clothing or linens
(use donation programs)



No tangles
(No hoses, wires, chains or electronics)



No food or liquid
(Empty all containers)



No combustibles
(No propane tanks, batteries, and non-food grade aerosol cans like spray paint and pesticides)



To learn more about What's In and What's Out of your bin, ask the **RecycleCT Wizard** at RecycleCT.com or **download our new app.**
© 2021 RecycleCT Foundation



Recycling Bin Label