



You **OTTER** Recycle!

How **SINGLE-SORT** Recycling Works

Once recyclables are placed in curbside bins, collection trucks bring the materials to the floor of an MRF. Sorting methods can vary between different facilities, but conveyor belts, screens, forced air, magnets and scanners are all used to identify and group materials together.

1. Materials are unloaded from trucks and placed onto a conveyor belt, where employees remove all non-recyclable items manually.
2. Recyclable items are transferred onto a series of deck screens. Here, heavier items drop through to the bottom screens and leave paper, cardboard and lighter materials at the top.
3. Heavy materials are sent under a magnet to remove metal items like cans or tins.
4. Staff at the recovery facility double-check no items have mistakenly crossed paths and been sorted into the wrong category.
5. Workers sort everything on the light layer of screens into separate containers for paper, cardboard and newsprint.
6. Once all recyclable items are in their assigned bins, they are shipped to a recycling facility to be processed into new material.

“Single-stream recycling definitely leads to more material being collected, but there are issues with contamination. People are often confused about what exactly they should put in their cart, and if items are highly contaminated they can’t always be recycled. Package design is also an issue. Many packaging components can affect recyclability.”

Kara Pochiro:
The Association of Plastic Recyclers



CURBSIDE RECYCLING



Advantages

- Easy for consumers to participate in recycling programs.
- Increases diversion and recycling rates.
- Efficient collection as trucks accept all items.
- Allows MRFs to process more materials in a shorter period of time with the help of technology.
- Decreased garbage collection costs – as there’s typically less to dispose of.

Disadvantages

- Increase in contamination of recyclables at recovery facilities.
 - Manual sorting process and equipment required at MRFs.
 - Lower quality of recycled materials due to mixed collection.
- Difficulties recycling all items, ex. glass bottles often break during collection and sorting.
 - Increased cost to sort co-mingled material.

Resources:

2017 MPCA Environmental Assistance Grant: Successful Single Sorting in Small Towns. Otter Tail County, <https://ottertailcountymn.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Solid-Waste-Single-Sort-Grant-Final-Report-062618.pdf>.

“Do You Really Know How to Recycle?” *One-Stop Guide to the Rules of Recycling* / *Dumpsters.com*, <https://www.dumpsters.com/blog/recycling-information-guide>.

LeBlanc, Rick. “Single-Stream Recycling Offers Benefits, Creates Challenges.” *The Balance Small Business*, 3 Feb. 2020, <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/an-overview-of-single-stream-recycling-2877728>.

“National Overview: Facts and Figures on Materials, Wastes and Recycling.” *EPA*, Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>.

“Although mixed recycling (single-stream) isn’t ideal for the porous recyclables such as paper, cardboard and glass materials, it isn’t the reason for the crisis with recycling.

Mixed recycling can work, when people are recycling properly. The greatest amount of contamination comes from ‘garbage’ being thrown in recycling bins in general.”

Mitch Hedlund:
Executive Director,
Recycle Across America

What Should I Put in the Recycle Bin?

While it's possible to find a way to recycle nearly any type of material, curbside recycling programs and many city-sponsored collection events typically accept only the most common recyclable materials. Why? Simply because the machines often used by these companies are designed for only the following list of recyclable materials:

- Paper
- Cardboard
- Plastic bottles and containers
- Aluminum cans
- Steel cans
- Glass



Public Drop-off locations

Sort your recycling at home and visit our public drop-off locations.
This increases the value of the recycled product!



In Ottertail County, we accept the following:
Plastic | Glass | Paper | Cans | Cardboard

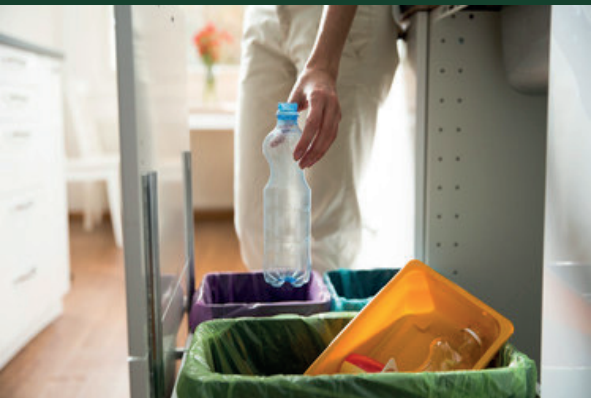


Let's Recycle Right!

Fergus Falls Recycling Redemption Center
1115 N Tower Rd, Fergus Falls, MN 56537, USA
Phone: 218-998-8950
OtterTail County
Solid Waste Department
www.co.otter-tail.mn.us

Recycling

Balancing Convenience and Quality



The good news is that Americans recycle 94 million tons of waste each year.

The bad news is that, even with 94% of the U.S. having access to recycling programs, there is still 139 million tons of waste landfilled.