



Recycling in the City of Oak Ridge

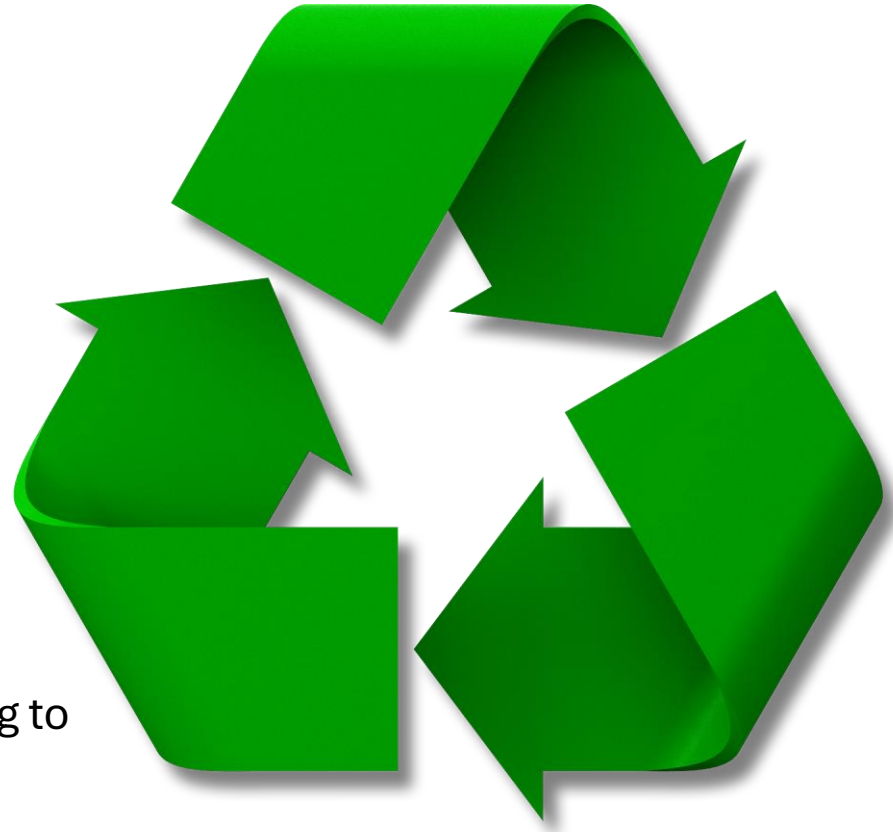
July 28, 2025

Yes!

The stuff in your Oak Ridge recycle bin is really recycled

85 to 90% (by weight)
of the stuff in your
recycling bin is
actually sold to
industry to be turned
into new products

10-15% of what is collected ends up going to
the landfill



What happens to your stuff?



Scott Hayes



WASTE CONNECTIONS
Connect with the Future®



Smurfit WestRock recycle center
Procter St, Knoxville

- Cardboard
- Paper
- Plastic
- Aluminum
- Ferrous metal (cans)
- Unusable - to landfill

Sorted and bundled for shipping
To industrial users

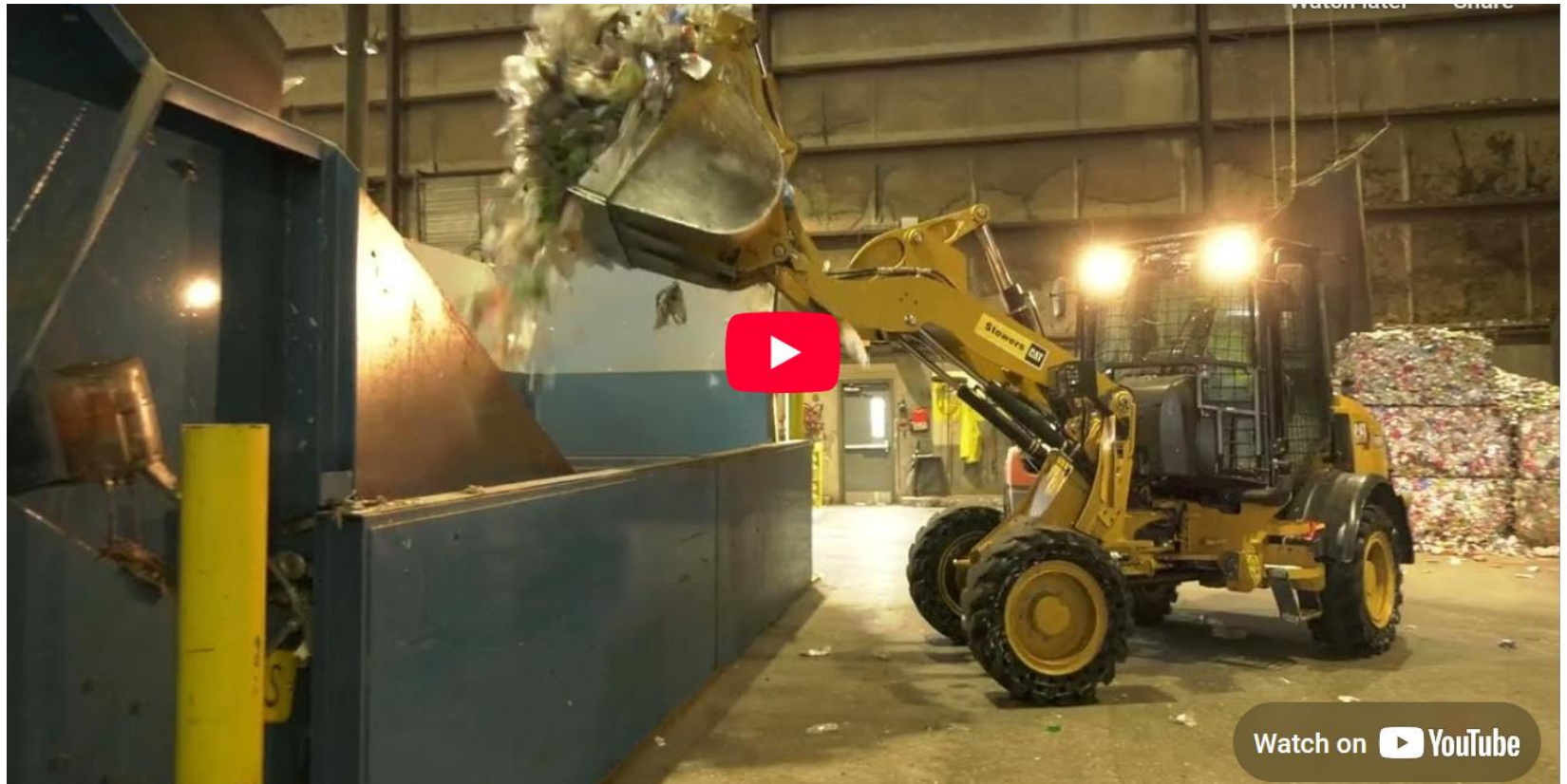
Jan-Mar -Oak Ridge recycled

Single stream (what you put in your recycling bin)	722 tons
Old corrugated containers (boxes)	17 tons
Mixed office paper	11.5 tons
Steel food cans	24.7 tons

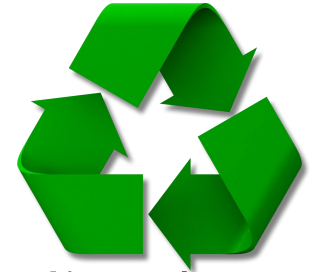
Aluminum cans	24.7 tons
Lead acid Batteries	15 tons
Used automotive oil	250 gallons
Residential municipal wood waste	396 tons

No glass recycling at all

Inside the Smurfit WestRock facility



City of Knoxville also uses the Smurfit WestRock facility



What can be recycled

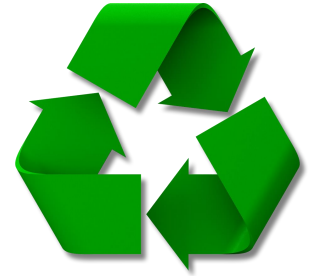
- boxes – especially corrugated ones, slightly dirty (like a pizza box) is OK and staples are OK
- Paper – any kind, staples and envelopes with windows
- Aluminum (but not foil) – most valuable, if you recycle only 1 thing- recycle aluminum cans
- Plastic – Only type 1 or 2. NO plastics bags or ropes!!!!!!!!!!!!!! – leave on caps if the bottle has it
- Paper containers – paper coffee cups, juice boxes, milk cartons – just a quick rinse. These are new!!
- Cans – but not if they contain paint or toxics – food cans, Olive oil cans

What to avoid

- Please, please don't put recyclables in garbage bags. The bags gum up the system. Stuff in bags is likely to end up in a landfill!!!! Very sad

If in doubt about a plastic item, toss the item in the garbage. There is almost no market for any plastics that are labeled 3, 4, 5 or 6. They just pollute as they breakdown into micro plastics. Try to avoid using.

- Glass – the system can't handle it and it is dangerous for the workers at the recycling plant
- Dirty items – pose a health risk to workers



Enlarge

Things that can be recycled but not in your Bin or at the City recycling facility



is a super place to recycle!!!!

- All things Tech – chargers, printers, hard drives, labelmakers, mobile phones, shredders, scanners etc, etc
- Printer cartridges
- Batteries – rechargable and single use
- School supplies –
- Luggage and tech cases , watch bands
- Monitors up to 49” (\$19.99 each)

Things that can be recycled but not in your Bin or at the City recycling facility

Plastic Bags

- Plastic bags- Krogers, Walmart, Food City all collect plastic bags. You can include with your clean plastic bags almost all flexible clean plastic (e.g., bubble wrap, dry cleaning bags, plastic bags that held items you bought via mail).
- Cut out paper labels that are on plastic bags before recycling.

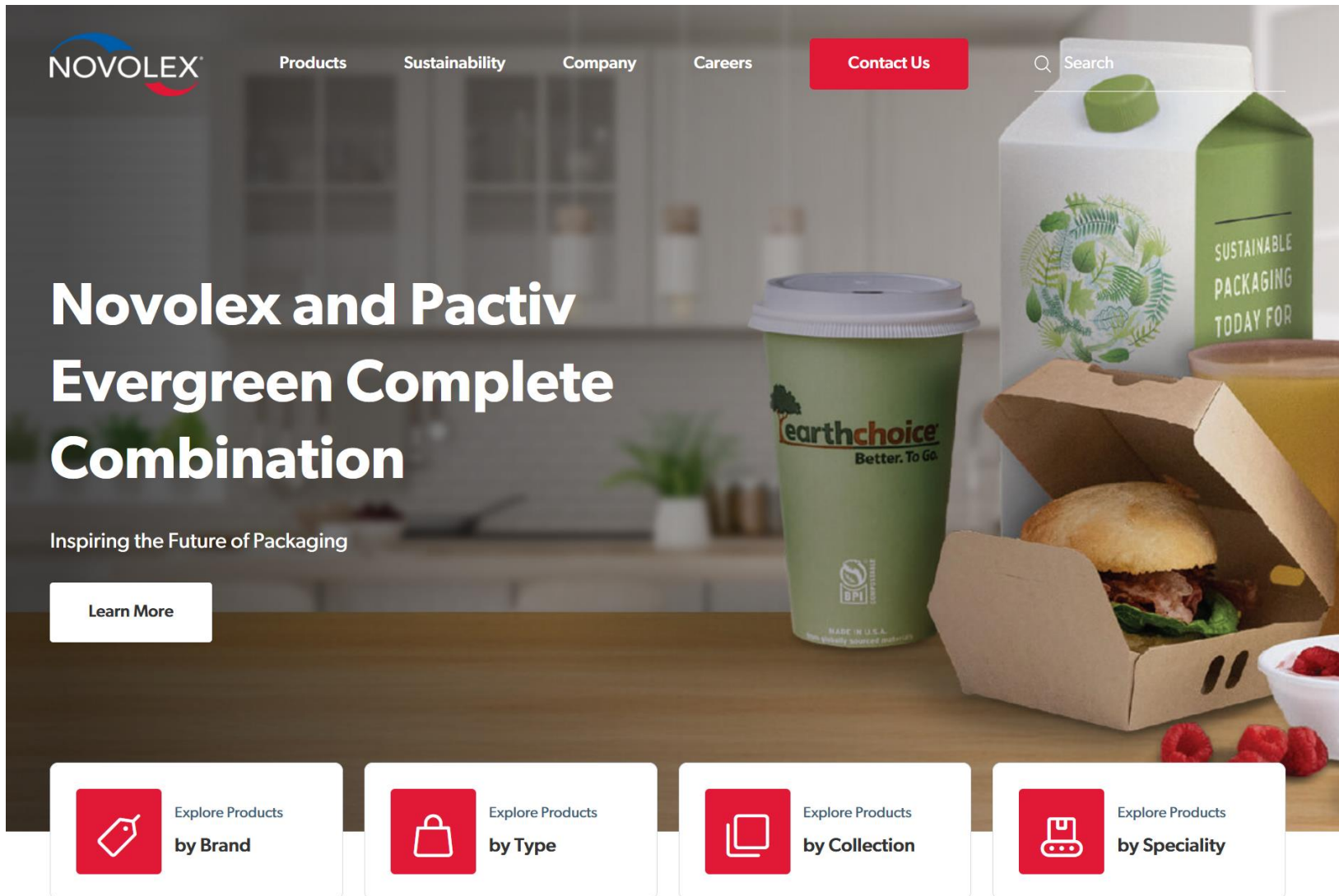
Plastic bags – trickier....



International packaging companies need post consumer raw materials !



Where your bags at Food City go




NOVOLEX


Products Sustainability Company Careers [Contact Us](#)


Novolex and Pactiv Evergreen Complete Combination


Inspiring the Future of Packaging

[Learn More](#)

 Explore Products by Brand

 Explore Products by Type

 Explore Products by Collection

 Explore Products by Speciality

Proposed TN Waste to Jobs Act

www.tnwastetojobs.com

- Objective is to create TN jobs thru recycling packaging waste and reducing taxpayer burden
- Approach is to require producers of packaging to pay for the TN infrastructure needed to capture and recycle packaging
 - Provides companies with resources (paper, glass, plastic, metals) that are now going to landfills
 - Shifts the cost of recycling from taxpayers to the companies producing packaging.
 - Has bi-partisan support
 - Has considerable industry support (big international companies)
- Still in development. Proposers hope to bring to the legislature next year.



Current system in TN



Proposed system for TN



Companies supporting proposed TN system

Why do companies want to tax themselves to pay for recycling?



Need the material –
paper packaging

Recycled materials are
less expensive than the
raw material– e.g.
aluminum

Competes in an
international market that
requires recyclable
materials-

A tale of packaging of erasers



Packaging mostly can't be recycled – most US markets don't care



Packaging easy to recycle and can be made with recycled materials – EU markets demand it

Support the TN Waste to Jobs Act (TWTJ)

www.tnwastetojobs.com



Proposed TN legislation that was withdrawn this year
but will be proposed again in the 2026 session

Challenges

TN Bottlers – already pay a 3% tax that funds litter collection
Companies that build and run landfills



Be a Good Ancestor!

Contribute to the Future!

Recycle!!

Produce Jobs
Save resources for
the next generation
Save Trees!
Save Water!
Save Energy!
Reduce Mining!
Reduce Landfills!

