

## Top Business Recycling Questions

*The following materials are accepted by Allied Waste, the City of Bellevue's contracted solid waste and recycling hauler. If your business or property manager uses a different recycling hauler, please contact them directly for the specific requirements of your recycling program.*

### 1. Can all paper, mail, brochures, catalogs, file folders, sticky notes, phone books, and cardboard be recycled in the same container?

Generally, yes. Do not recycle paper that's coated with plastic - a good test is if you can easily tear it, it's recyclable. Window envelopes are OK. Staples in paper are OK. Remove larger pieces of metal, such as paper clips and metal runners on hanging file folders.

### 2. What plastic containers can be recycled?

Look at the shape. Recycle plastic bottles, jars, jugs, and tubs. No lids. Ignore the number inside the triangle, which indicates the type of plastic, not whether it's recyclable. Clear plastic containers like cake domes, clam shells, beverage cups, and trays are polystyrene, which splinters during the recycling process. Put polystyrene containers in the garbage.

### 3. Why can't I recycle plastic lids? Some look as if they are made out of the same material as the container, like yogurt.

That's true, but it's even more confusing to list plastic lids that are acceptable and those that are not. Some lids are made of a different type of plastic than their container. Also, lids often get caught in the sorting machinery at the recycling facility and cause expensive breakdowns. (Aluminum and tin can lids can be recycled, however. Paper labels on cans are also OK.)

### 4. You say to rinse containers before recycling. How clean do they have to be?

Just rinse or wipe them enough so food doesn't get on other materials in the recycling container.

### 5. Can I recycle bubblewrap, shrink wrap, and plastic newspaper and drycleaner bags?

Yes. Put all plastic bags in a similar plastic bag and tie shut. This will prevent the bags from flying about everywhere in the recycling facility. Tie large quantities of bubblewrap or shrink wrap together with a smaller strand of similar material to keep it compact and manageable.

### 6. Can aluminum foil be recycled?

Yes, if it is clean and free of food.

### 7. Can I recycle shredded paper?

Yes, place it in a clear plastic bag and tie securely so it doesn't blow about.

### 8. Can I recycle glass bottles and aluminum cans in my deskside container?

Yes.

#### 9. Can I recycle Styrofoam or packing peanuts?

Not in Bellevue's program. Check King County's "What Do I Do With" list for recycling options at <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/wdidw/material.asp>

#### 10. Is recycling really worth the effort?

Recycling is one of the best environmental success stories of the late 20th century. Today, the U.S. recycles 32.5% of its waste, a rate that has almost doubled in the last 15 years. Recycling saves limited natural resources, such as timber, water, and minerals. Recycling also saves energy and prevents pollution caused by harvesting, extracting, and processing raw materials to manufacture new products. Plus, it is less expensive to recycle than to put millions of tons of additional materials into a landfill. For more facts on recycling:

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/consERVE/rrr/recycle.htm>

**Do you have other recycling questions? Please call the City of Bellevue Utilities at 425-452-6932.**

**For items not accepted in Bellevue's program, check King County's website "What Do I Do With" at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/wdidw/index.asp>**