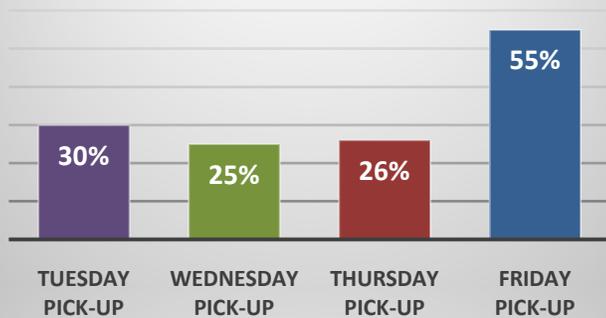


# RECYCLING UPDATE 2019



Effective waste management, including recycling, is a valuable tool in the fight against climate change. We need **YOUR HELP** to **REDUCE** the waste we generate, to **REUSE** the things we can, and to **RECYCLE** properly!

## Residential Recycling Contamination Rates



America is facing a resource conservation crisis and recycling programs around the country are in trouble. Due to rising costs, mixed, single-stream recycling programs are being cut back or eliminated altogether. The City's cost to process recyclable materials at Republic's Materials Recovery Facility increased from \$27.50/ton to \$70/ton in the last year.

To make matters worse, recycling contamination is at an all-time high. Last spring, the City participated in a series of recycling audits at Republic. The purpose was to identify contaminants and the rate of contamination for each daily route. The chart at the left shows our results. Beginning in July, we are now charged an additional fee when contamination exceeds 15%.

To improve our waste management efforts and to reduce costs, we need your help more than ever to **SORT SMART & RECYCLE WISE!** We encourage everyone to **Know What to Throw**— and only throw those items into your curbside recycling cart — and **When In Doubt, Leave It Out.**

With so many dos and don'ts in the recycling world, confusion is understandable. Let's review what goes into your recycling cart:

- **PLASTICS (Food-Grade Only – Empty and Rinse)**  
Includes bottles, jugs, and containers.  
*Examples: water, soda and shampoo bottles, detergent containers, milk jugs.*
- **METALS (Food-Grade Only – Empty and Rinse)**  
Includes aluminum, steel and bi-metal cans.  
*Examples: Any food can that can be opened with a pull-top ring or a can opener.*
- **GLASS (Food-Grade Only – Empty and Rinse)**  
Includes food and beverage bottles and jars.
- **CARTONS / BOXES (Food-Grade Only - Not Pouches – Empty and Rinse)**  
*Examples: milk, soup, wine cartons.*
- **MIXED PAPER / CARDBOARD (Empty and Break Down)**  
Includes newspaper, junk mail, phone books, magazines, catalogs, box-board, paper bags, file folders.

## Common Non-Recyclable Items Found in Recycling:

Trash and Food  
Plastic Bags and Wraps  
Styrofoam Cups and Containers  
Aluminum Foil  
Tanglers (Hoses, Lights, Cords)  
Aerosol Cans  
Nails and Needles  
Ammunition  
Plastic Toys  
Metal Pots and Pans  
Plastic Feed Bags  
Charcoal and Cigarette Butts  
Yard Waste

For information on how to properly dispose of these or any other items, please contact us:  
[Recycling@CityofOberlin.com](mailto:Recycling@CityofOberlin.com)  
(440) 935-0096

**REMEMBER: Do Not Place Recyclable Items in Plastic Bags in Your Recycling Cart – Items Should Be Loose in the Cart**



Paper Retriever Bin

Also, please remember that shredded paper is not accepted in curbside recycling. Shredded paper can be placed in your backyard composter or in a clear, plastic bag or paper bag and dropped off at any **Paper Retriever** bin. These are the large green and yellow bins behind the public library, local schools, etc. By recycling paper and cardboard in the **Paper Retriever** bins, the organization where the bin is placed earns money based on the amount of paper collected. You can support these local organizations simply by recycling!

While our desire to recycle everything may be well intentioned, placing non-recyclable items in recycling carts contaminates our clean recyclables. Please don't be a **Wish-Cycler.**

**Know What to Throw and When In Doubt, Leave It Out!**

To raise awareness and to help reduce recycling contamination, the City of Oberlin Recycling Program will soon launch a **NEW** online *Waste Wizard* tool to help you know how to recycle easily and efficiently. This useful and convenient tool will help you figure how to properly recycle or dispose of a range of items. From Aluminum cans to Ziploc bags, you'll be able to type in the name of the item and the *Waste Wizard* will tell you if the item is recyclable and how to do so properly. The *Waste Wizard* will also provide local options for recyclable items that cannot be collected in the City's service.

**Stay tuned for launch of the NEW Waste Wizard online tool!**



**MYTH: Recycling is hard.** No, it isn't! Recycling is just as easy as throwing something in the trash. Arm yourself with the list of what is accepted in curbside recycling and pair your trash cans with recycling containers. Place them side by side for success!



**MYTH: Recyclables need to be washed, which wastes water.** Don't waste water! Recyclables need to be emptied and quickly rinsed only if soiled. You do not need to fully wash recyclables with soap and water.



**MYTH: OK – but what about the transportation. Doesn't it take more energy to drive recyclables around?** Even with transportation, recycling saves energy. But there's more! Recycling also reduces the creation of greenhouse gases, generates US jobs and saves natural resources. When shopping, look for items made with recycled content to make the biggest energy-saving impact!



**MYTH: Recycling is so 1990 – doesn't everyone do it?** Only half of Americans can recycle at home as easily as they can throw something away.



**MYTH: Pizza boxes are not recyclable.** Pizza boxes are recyclable – crusts, toppings and grease are not! Make sure to remove crusts, toppings and scrape cheese off the inside of the box. If the box is too contaminated – remember, *When In Doubt, Leave It Out!*



**MYTH: If something has the recycling arrows on it, it's recyclable, right?** No, not always. Those arrows refer to the type of plastic the items were made from, not how recyclable they are. Refer to the guidelines on the front page for items accepted in curbside recycling. You can also recycle plastic bags at IGA, Walmart, Giant Eagle or other retailers that have a plastic bag recycling program.



**MYTH: If you put the cap on a plastic bottle it isn't recyclable.** Keep that cap on! Quickly rinse and empty bottle, flatten it, replace the lid, and then place the bottle in your curbside recycling cart.



**MYTH: Compostable items can be recycled, right?** No! Composting and recycling happen in different ways. Yard waste, food waste and compostable serviceware CANNOT be recycled curbside in Oberlin.



**MYTH: Bag Your Recyclables.** No, leave them loose and free! If you collect your recyclables in a plastic bag, remove them from the bag before placing them into your recycling cart.



**MYTH: I thought I saw the garbage truck pick up my recycling.** Maybe. The City uses similar trucks for all collections, which can be confusing to residents. Don't worry! Your recyclables are taken to the recycling center where they are separated and baled to sell back to manufacturers.

*Ultimately, the most important resource we have in combating climate change and eventually reaching the goal of zero waste is YOU. It is essential to have an awareness of our daily impact and to make a conscious effort to REDUCE the waste generated by opting to use fewer disposable materials; to REUSE any items and materials we can; and to properly RECYCLE all acceptable items.*

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions on the City of Oberlin's Recycling Program, please contact:

**Recycling Coordinator Lori Sprosty**

**(440) 935-0096 | Recycling@CityofOberlin.com**

**CityofOberlin**

**www.CityofOberlin.com**

**@CityofOberlin**