

## Eco-Leader Frequently Asked Questions from Guidelines Training

- **What is the rule for whether or not they can put the recycling symbol on a product?**
  - There's no rule, but this is changing. There are now some reputable third party certification organizations that actually confirm the recyclability of some products and their packaging. But for now, you still need to go by the guidelines in a community and whether an item is included in that local program and facility, rather than going by the symbol on the package.
- **Usually the plastic tops are made from different plastic than the plastic bottle, right?**
  - That's okay! The American Plastics Council accepts screw-top lids when it is a plastic lid on a plastic bottle or jug. We're worried about a different material (like Snapple), where it is, for example, a metal lid and a glass bottle.
- **When you have a "Zero Waste" event, I see plastic cups that aren't souvenir cups.**
  - They're compostable! There ARE times when a vendor shows up with a plastic cup and we do our best to figure out how to keep it from contaminating our recycle and compost streams.
- **So, those corn plastics aren't recyclable?**
  - That's correct. They are a major contaminant in the recycling, but they're designed to be compostable!
- **Why don't you want to flatten plastic containers?**
  - Materials are sorted by shape-- if you flatten it, it may get sorted as a fiber. We ask that you leave 3-D materials in their 3-D shape whenever possible so the automatic sorting equipment doesn't wrongly identify it as a piece of paper.
- **What about metal on glass?**
  - Separate the metal and place it in the recycle bin-- we have magnets!
- **Are metal bottle caps recyclable?**
  - Yes, you can put it in and hope the magnet gets it. If it's a plastic cap, please replace it on an empty plastic bottle or jug.
- **What about if I'm out and see a can that's been flattened?**
  - You can put it in and hope we can sort it. But we don't want you to flatten it on purpose.
- **What about shredded paper?**
  - Compost! It's technically recyclable but you can't put it into single stream. To recycle it, you can take it the Boulder County Drop-off Center and put it in the box designated for shred, or you can take it to the Eco-Cycle CHaRM where it can be shredded and then recycled.
- **What about the foil lids on yogurts?**
  - Landfill. They have a plastic lining.
- **Why leave the metal on the bucket but not the trike?**
  - The market is okay with the exterior metal on buckets. But interior metal, like an axle, is not allowed.
- **What about the plastic window on the envelopes?**

- Don't worry about it! When it's made into a pulp, the plastic rises to the top and it gets skimmed off along with things like paper clips.
- **What about spiral-bound notebooks?**
  - The spiral does NOT need to be removed! However, please do remove plastic covers.
- **What about tissue paper for gifts?**
  - Compost but not recycle.
- **What about manila envelopes?**
  - This one is confusing, as people define "manila" differently. A "manila" file folder that is kind of an off white is just fine. An envelope that is more of an orange-brown color is beater-dyed! Not recyclable! (but is compostable)
- **Can I put a bread bag into the bag recycling?**
  - Yes! We just ask that they be empty of food and moisture.
- **What about the pumps from lotion bottles?**
  - We would prefer that you remove it.
- **Coat hangers (hard plastic)?**
  - They are not accepted. Wire hangers can be recycled at the CHaRM with scrap metal.
- **How much of material that is sent to BCRC gets recycled?**
  - 93%! That's compared to a national average of 83%
- **What do they do about the rats at the BCRC?**
  - The county does do a pest control service. For the sake of the rats and workers at the BCRC who handle the material, we strongly encourage residents to clean out food waste before putting material in their recycling bin.