

If bottles should keep the cap on to make them easier to sort, is that true of other materials like glass?

Plastic Bottles- yes keep the cap on.

Glass Bottles/Jars- metal lids are to be removed and placed into the recycle bin separately.

Metal Cans- lids can be left on cans or removed and recycled separately in the bin.

Easy rule to follow for lids- "Keep plastic on plastic"

Should we crush plastic bottles prior to recycling?

No, please keep bottles as 3D as possible to make the sorting process easier.

What happens to the recycling materials after it is baled?

All recyclables are marketed/sold by Republic Services. Each material will go somewhere different depending upon where the buyers processing facilities are located. Much of the material stays inside the U.S for reprocessing but some does go overseas.

Is there a market or does it stay put for a long time?

Currently, markets are stable. Current values for each commodity can always be found through an internet search. Commodity values differ among paper, metal, plastic and glass. Most materials are moved weekly. Paper may sit longer due to its lower value and saturated paper markets (too much paper, not enough processors).

How much contamination of recyclables is acceptable? At what point will recyclables be thrown away due to contamination?

Our contamination rate can be around 20%. Recyclables are discarded when they are dirty or contain food waste. Some buyers, like for paper and cardboard do have a slight leniency on contamination because this material is more susceptible but these have become stricter in recent years.

Does DE make money for selling recyclables?

The State of Delaware does not profit off of recyclables. DSWA is a private company that was created by the state. DSWA is not state or federally funded. Republic Services is contracted by DSWA to process and market all recyclables. DSWA does get a small % from recyclables sold because DSWA covers transportation of material to New Castle, but all is put back into managing landfills, creating free recycling programs, and education programs.

I heard recently that the market for glass has disappeared? Can you confirm whether glass is actually getting recycled?

Glass does get recycled in Delaware. Many states stopped accepting glass because recycling it comes at a cost. It's heavy, so transportation costs are high. Glass recyclers are far and few between. Glass is easily contaminated and can become a contaminate itself as small pieces can

end up stuck in paper and cardboard during the transport and sorting process. In order to keep glass out of the landfill DSWA covers the cost to send glass to a recycler.

Are there any plans to have the Styrofoam recycled in Sussex county?

Right now there is not a plan to place Styrofoam bins at the Rt. 5 Transfer Station in Harbeson.

DSWA has free Styrofoam drop off in all three counties:

NCC- Delaware Recycling Center and Newark Recycling Center

Kent- Milford Transfer Station

Sussex- Jones Crossroads Landfill

To confirm - Styrofoam from mailing boxes, aka Amazon, should NOT be put in recycle bin?

Styrofoam of any kind should never be placed into the recycle bin. DSWA has free Styrofoam drop off but if you cannot access these drop offs, Styrofoam should go into the trash.

Where should I be looking for the most accurate and up-to-date information on recycling policy and acceptable items?

DSWA always has the list of acceptable items on it's website as well as the current schedule for statewide collection events for Household Hazardous Waste, Electronics, and Paper Shredding.

www.DSWA.com

DNREC has also created a Recyclopedia which covers a lot of specific materials that residents have questions about.

<https://recyclopedia.org/de/state>

There is a lot we can do as individuals, but how are the manufacturers being held accountable, too, for generating non-reusable/non-recyclable materials?

Some states, like Maine and Oregon have passed laws to somewhat hold manufactures accountable with incentives or EPR, extended producer responsibility concepts. Other states have tried and failed to do the same.

How do we advocate in our communities (with homeowners associations) to allow backyard Composting?

Some helpful information could be gained by contacting the Master Gardener group through UD. This could be a start as to gaining insight as to why restrictions are in place and ways for deeds to be amended as communities work towards decreasing waste through composting.

<https://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/canr/cooperative-extension/environmental-stewardship/master-gardeners/>

Are there any plans for trash and recycling bins at busy beaches? The CARRY OUT rule is often not honored.

DSWA does not provide bins or trash/recycling hauling services in Delaware. This concern should be raised through the beach town municipality or State Parks.

Mattress dumping along highways/roadways is a major issue, are there any plans for mattress recycling in the future?

DSWA was hosting mattress recycling at its 3 landfills prior to COVID-19. This service is currently on hold. For the best update call DSWA mainline: 800-404-7080.

Is there a community education effort to reach people who aren't seeking this information?

DSWA in partnership with DNREC are always trying to circulate this information in new ways.