

## RECYCLE WISELY!

When was the last time you felt good about putting something in the trash can? Maybe you even felt guilty for having to throw something away? Did you put it in the recycling bin, hoping it would be recycled? You want something to be recyclable, it's still good, it's still usable, you just can't use it anymore, but in fact, the item isn't accepted in Maine's curbside recycling program. This is known as Wish-cycling.



There are many items showing up in Recycling carts that are not accepted through the City's curbside program and is costing the City additional disposal fees. We are finding grocery bags, Styrofoam, plant pots, Christmas lights, small propane tanks, shoes and clothing. Some items we are finding CAN be recycled, just not through your curbside cart. We have compiled a list of alternative recycling solutions to help wish away your recycling blues! Please consider some of these options:

You can bring your items to Goodwill or Salvation Army, get a receipt and use the items as a tax write off! Consider donating to local shelters and often churches. Animal Welfare also accepts used blankets and sheets. Habitat for Humanity (located in Portland and Kennebunk) will take most any household item. Used Doors, Windows, Counters, Lights, Appliances,

Cabinets and flooring. Metal is recyclable, however large metal needs to go to the Transfer Station, or to AIM Recycling in Arundel. Large metal can clog the machines at Eco-Maine and become very costly. Why not bring it to AIM Recycling and get paid for it! This can include lawn mowers, gas grills and bikes! Why throw it out if they can be used to help someone else or even sometimes yourself!

Some items that seem like they could get recycled, don't. Did you know that bottle caps are only recyclable if they are left ON bottles? If off, they are too small and often fall between the belts. Also, receipts! They are paper but are typically thermal paper which is not recyclable. Nuts and bolts are metal, and are recyclable, but again, not through your curbside cart. Most metal recycling accepted in your cart and be categorized as things found in the grocery store. What about that bag full of AA batteries you have been holding on to, those must be recyclable right? Alkaline batteries haven't contained mercury for nearly two decades and contain a small amount of metal -- such as nickel, cobalt, zinc, manganese or silver. The core is zinc chloride. To say they're not recyclable isn't true, but at this point, there is no cost-effective method for de-manufacturing them. Because of this, there is no alkaline battery recycling program set in the state of Maine, or nationwide.

If you use alkaline batteries, the best disposal option is to throw them away with your weekly trash. Don't collect them in a separate container. They contain no hazardous materials and, pound for pound, would be 10 to 12 times more expensive to recycle than some of the most toxic wastes generated in Maine. Separating alkaline batteries from your trash might be worse for the environment. In higher concentrations they could cause problems at incinerators. **Is there an alternative? Best Advice:** If you don't like the idea of throwing away alkaline batteries, don't buy them and stop generating the waste. Instead, buy rechargeable batteries and commit to using them. They're more expensive than one-use batteries, and users must monitor them a little more closely. But they do the job, and you can use the same batteries for several years at a time.