



OKALOOSA COUNTY REMAINS COMMITTED TO RECYCLING

I often get asked about recycling. Since 2017, Okaloosa County has **recycled 545,000 tons** of residential items. Last year alone, **9,651 tons** of material was collected for recycling. Okaloosa County continues to collect recycling materials from our customers through our contract for services with Waste Management, and all collected recyclable material is delivered to the Emerald Coast Utility Authority (ECUA) for processing. Materials are sorted, baled, and then sold as a commodity by ECUA where the commercial sector reuses the materials. Okaloosa County continues to seek ways to improve our recycling efficiency and thanks all that participate in the program!

There is a list on your trash can with the yellow lid, but, if yours is like mine, it may have worn off. The following items are acceptable: any glass items, newspaper, cardboard, aerosol cans (remove its plastic) and certain plastics (type 1 and type 2). Check plastics for this symbol. If it contains a 1 or a 2 – it's recyclable.



Research shows that commitment and convenience are necessary for a household to recycle. While all bottles, cans and containers should be clean, dry and free of most food waste before you place them in your recycling container, they do not need to be spotless. The goal is to make sure they are clean enough to avoid contaminating other materials, like paper or your un-lined kitchen recycling bin. Try using a spatula to scrape cans and jars, and putting recyclables in your sink among the dishes you are rinsing to share that same water to rinse and remove residue.

- Flatten all cardboard and paper board prior to recycling.
- Flexible packaging like chip bags, or juice and soup pouches cannot be recycled in curbside programs.
- Cups with plastic or waxed coatings are not recyclable.
- Plastic lids should be trashed as well.

- Polystyrene foam, such as “to-go” containers and coffee cups, are made of non-recyclable materials, and are not acceptable in the curbside recycling program.
- Zip-ties, twist-ties, ropes, wire, hoses and similar items can wrap around equipment, endanger materials facility recovery workers, and shut down the entire recycling center. If they are still in good condition, donate them to your favorite charity, such as Waterfront Mission, Good Will or Salvation Army.
- Clothing, textiles, shower curtains, mini-pools, fencing and furniture don't go in the recycling.
- Medical waste can pose a safety hazard and should never go in curbside recycling or waste bins.
- Car parts, scrap metal, tires, filters, propane cylinders and the like are safety hazards if put in curbside recycling or trash bins.
- Soiled or wet paper products should go to compost rather than recycling.

*If there is an important take-away from this newsletter it's this - **do not put anything into plastic trash bags or take-home grocery bags.** Recyclables stuck inside plastic bags are at risk for never making it through the recycling process.*

On a final good news note, Waste Management will soon announce a new recycling plant. This new facility is planned for Ready Avenue in Fort Walton Beach and is expected to cost \$30 million dollars. The expected opening date is 2024. This will be a regional facility and is important to Okaloosa County's commitment to recycling.

Remember there is no pick-up on Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year and if your trash day falls on one of these days, it will be the next scheduled service day.

Keep this number handy for questions such as a replacement trash can: 850-301-2822.

I hope you have found this newsletter interesting and informative.

Thanks for the privilege of serving as your commissioner.

Sincerely,

My Sincere Thanks,



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