

Spotlight on Plastic #2



Milk, Laundry and some Shampoo Bottles

Many plastic bottles are made of a resin known as #2 HDPE. This is an abbreviation for High Density Polyethylene.

HDPE is one of the two types of plastic that is recycled nationally in nearly every program that accepts containers.

It is ideal for detergents and bleaches as it resists chemical reactions and has a long shelf life. It is highly crack resistant and lighter than glass making it less costly and more energy efficient to ship.

Some #2 plastic is used in the production of bags or film plastic. These are not accepted in curbside programs but are taken at many retail locations to be recycled.

Happy "America Recycles Day"

America Recycles Day was started in Texas then went nationwide quickly. (This may explain why it is usually too cold here to have many outside recycling collection activities.) The celebration was created to bring more awareness to products made from recycled materials, as well as the activity of recycling.



Will County has partnered with Vintage Tech and WJOL to offer a contest in honor of Recycling. Please **submit a photo** of yourself or a friend (with permission) in the act of **recycling or composting**. You may post it on the [WJOL Facebook page](#) or email it to recycling@willcountygreen.com by **November 30**. The photo that appears the most inspiring or creative will be selected as the winner. The winner will receive a refurbished IPAD 3 with one-year warranty. (winner agrees to allow publication of the photo)

Recycled Content Products

Everyday we use recycled content products. Sometimes people believe these products will be a lower quality than similar products made from raw materials. However, just like their raw counterparts, there are great quality items and not-so-great. Since colonial times, newspapers were required to be made from recovered materials - that is why they were called "rags." Around your home and office, you have dozens of items made with recycled content that work wonderfully, to the point you may not even realize they have recycled content. Here is a few:



- Aluminum Cans are 52-54% recycled content.
- All Steel and Glass Containers have recycled content.
- Cereal boxes, tissue boxes, pasta boxes and more have recycled content.

The plastic is thin, lightweight and strong.

While the percentage of bags recycled is still very low, #2 bottles had a 29% recovery rate in 2011 according to the USEPA. PET Resin Association, the United States recovered 29% of the plastic used. Certainly, there is room for improvement.

On average, a U.S. household uses 45 pounds of PET plastic bottles and jars in a year. If all of them were recycled, it would yield enough recycled PET fiber to make 12 dozen adult T-shirts or enough carpet for a 12-by-15 foot room.

The next time you find yourself holding an empty plastic bottle or jar, consider replacing the lid and finding a recycling container. For one typical 20 ounce bottle recycled, there is enough energy saved to power a 60-watt bulb for one hour.

Save even more energy by using reusable bottles whenever possible. While plastic bottles can be refilled, for cleaning purposes, steel containers are dishwasher safe and recommended for long-term refilling

- Laundry bottles often have recycled content.
- Many cars have insulation made from recycled clothing, metal and plastic parts that have been made from recycled material.
- Electronics and rechargeable batteries often have recovered and recycled parts.
- Refurbished tires are used on many delivery trucks and semi-trucks.
- The County consistently uses copy paper made from 30% recycled paper.

Choose Carpet Wisely

Efforts are growing to increase carpet and carpet padding recycling. For years, some companies have been using plastic bottles to make polyester carpet. This often gets a giggle when you think about walking on soda-pop or ketchup bottles. but it creates a good market for the many used plastic bottles people use to hydrate on the run.



However, there is a downside. Polyester carpet made with or without recycled bottles, doesn't last as long and is very difficult to recycle when it is replaced. On the other hand, Nylon carpet, some of which has recycled content, can be recovered and recycled into new products. Nylon carpet is more durable, lasting nearly twice as long as polyester. If you are shopping for floor covering, consider the following:

- How long you want the carpet to last?
- Does it have recycled content?
- Can it be recycled when it is time to replace it?
- Will the company you're purchasing from recycle your current flooring?

Be an informed consumer and purchase wisely!

Look up Chemical Safety Information

The EPA launched a web-based tool, called [ChemView](#), to significantly improve access to chemical specific regulatory information. The website is intended to increase public awareness of ingredients of everyday products and help viewers choose safer items!



needs.

Save the Date

Thursday, Oct. 31

Halloween

Save money and resources by shopping garage sales and thrift stores for costumes

Sunday, Nov. 3
Daylight Savings
Time ends



Move your clocks one hour back and change your batteries in smoke detectors (use rechargeable batteries that can be recycled)

November 15
America
Recycles Day

Join Our Mailing List!



November 2013

Will County has a page of information on safer cleaning and other household products to help residents avoid hazardous products. This can reduce the need for household hazardous waste disposal if products are used as intended and safer, non-hazardous items replace them. The page is under the Green Guide, called [Cleaning Alternatives](#). Visit today!

Play and Learn!

The WillCountyGreen.com website has several games to teach waste reduction, reuse, recycling and energy efficiency. In few minutes, you can learn a few tips in a fun new way that could lead to money saving decisions later. The Green Home Difference is features several versions, so no two games in a row are exactly the same. Sign up for membership and earn points for playing all the games. Click <http://www.willcountygreen.com/education/games.aspx> to play!



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Avoid Burning!

Most municipalities restrict or ban the burning of leaves due to the health impacts of the pollution. While some wax nostalgic for the "old days" the density of the population and variety of air pollution sources make burning of leaves a much different situation today.



Will County encourages composting and mulching as viable, inexpensive ways to handle leaves. The bonus is that both these methods return nutrients to the soil making lawns and gardens more productive. If these options don't work, some waste haulers and landscapers collect leaves and commercially compost them for a fee. If you live in unincorporated Will County and want to learn the rules for burning, please visit our [webpage](#).

See more photos from events and learn more about area "green" efforts by becoming a fan of our [Facebook Page](#)