



Dear Recycle Lady

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Dear Recycle Lady,

Yesterday I opened an 80% chocolate bar and the aluminum foil wrapping the chocolate was silver on the inside and gold on the outside. Is colored aluminum foil recyclable? Love Chocolate

**Dear Love Chocolate,**

**Aluminum foil of any color will recycle. Just be sure it is clean and dry. You may need to combine it with several other pieces of aluminum foil to have a larger ball, one that is large enough that it won't fall out during processing. Interestingly, there is no difference between the shiny side and the dull side of aluminum. It is manufactured that way and has no special significance.**

Dear Recycle Lady,

What is the difference between compost and mulch? I thought they both encouraged plant growth.

Weekend Gardner

**Dear Weekend Gardner,**

**Compost and mulch both do encourage plant growth, but in different ways. Compost is your garden's best friend. It is made up of decomposing organic matter, such as leaves, kitchen scraps, and grass clippings, all of which are rich in nutrients that feed your garden. Mulch is made up of both organic, such as leaves and grass clippings and inorganic matter, such as straw, recycled rubber, gravel, crushed seashells, or nut shells. Mulch helps soil retain moisture and limits weed growth. Compost is mixed into your soil, while mulch is spread on top of the soil. Another difference is that compost is made of organic matter that has decomposed and mulch is made of inorganic matter that has not decomposed. Both compost and mulch are used by gardeners to have healthy plants. To make things confusing, compost can sometimes be used as mulch and mulch can sometimes be used as compost. The website, [www.installitdirect.com/learn/mulch-vs-compost](http://www.installitdirect.com/learn/mulch-vs-compost) gives some excellent information on both compost and mulch.**

Dear Recycle Lady,

Can used alcohol wipes be recycled after they have dried out? Clean My Glasses

**Dear Clean My Glasses**

**Alcohol wipes, or wet wipes, including baby wipes, moist towelettes, and all single-use moist paper products used for personal hygiene or household cleaning, are all made from synthetic fibers that keep them from being recyclable or compostable. While they are very convenient, 1.2 billion of them are used daily, they are harmful for the environment. In a landfill, these wipes take hundreds of years to fully break down. Congealed masses that block drains and clog sewer systems can be formed by these wipes. Thus, wet wipes should never be thrown in toilets, even those that are advertised as being flushable, as wet wipes don't disintegrate in the same way that toilet paper does. According to earth911.com, wastewater officials everywhere have contested disposing of wet wipes of any kind into sewer systems. Used wet wipes tossed into the environment can find their way into our waterways and can be fatal for marine animals as the wipes settle in their stomach,**

**leading to starvation. Who knew that these small, handy, convenient go-to wipes would become a leading environmental pollutant?**

**Good News:** Chile's legislature has unanimously passed a plastic regulation law that will reduce the country's plastic waste by more than 23,000 tons every year! The new law targets single-use plastics in the food industry and introduces a certification for compostable plastics, among other things. (fto.com)

**Have questions about recycling, or interesting information about recycling? Send questions or requests to [recyclelady@greenbrier-swa.com](mailto:recyclelady@greenbrier-swa.com). Dear Recycle Lady is sponsored jointly by the Greenbrier Recycling Center and Greenworks Recycling.**