

Dear Recycle Lady



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Dear Recycle Lady,

I am trying to recycle an empty can of cleanser. It is made of cardboard and has a metal top and bottom., both of which I cut off with a sharp knife. I was able to remove the cardboard remaining on the metal bottom, but not the cardboard on the metal top. Now what? Housecleaner

Dear Housecleaner,

Good job preparing an item for recycling. The cardboard can is recyclable with cardboard. Be sure to wipe out the inside of the can with a dry cloth to remove any remnants of the cleanser. Before recycling the metal bottom, determine whether it is steel or aluminum and place it in the appropriate recycling bin. Unfortunately, the metal top with the cardboard stuck in it goes in the trash.

Dear Recycle Lady,

In today's mail I received a very small, not-breakable item wrapped in lots and lots of bubble wrap and packed in a very large box. Why is so much packaging used for such a small item? Such excessive packaging can't be good for the environment? Environmentalist

Dear Environmentalist,

That is an excellent question and one that the American Institute for Packaging and the Environment, Seventh Generation, Inc, and other environmental organizations are working to solve. Increases in the amount of packaging and the disposal of post-consumer packaging have generated a great deal of study, especially at the local and state level. To date, there hasn't been much information coming from the government. The most common method for disposal of the packaging is to it in the trash where it becomes a problem because it takes so long to decompose.

Dear Recycle Lady,

Is bubble wrap recyclable? If not, how does one get rid of it. Popper

Dear Popper,

Bubble wrap is recyclable with plastic film, but only after all the bubbles have been popped. You might need to find a kid to help you out with this! Bubble wrap and bubble pillows are highly useful for packaging medical and fragile items. However, each year enough bubble wrap is used for all kinds of packaging to wrap around the Earth's equator 20 times - a distance of five million miles! Disposing of this much bubble wrap is a problem, especially since it takes up to 1,000 years for it to decompose. Fortunately, there are several alternatives to putting bubble wrap in the trash. It can be saved to use for future packages, for protecting stored items, or for art and DIY projects. It can also be used for insulation. Place it in your grocery bag to help keep cold foods cold or use it to protect plants from frost damage or to insulate outdoor plants during the winter. Businesses or organizations that ship packages will appreciate it or post it online for donation. The worst choice, of course, is to put it in the trash.

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)

Monday is Memorial Day. Let us all remember and honor our U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States armed forces. It is a holiday that has been commemorated since 1868.

Don't forget that curbside pickup in Lewisburg will be Tuesday, May 31, instead of Monday.

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