

Dear Recycle Lady



Dear Recycle Lady

Dear Recycle Lady,

I just purchased some Beeswax Wraps to wrap my lunch sandwiches in. They are amazing. Take My Lunch

Dear Take My Lunch,

Believe it or not, I just ordered some wraps from Amazon. Beeswax wraps are made using “all national beeswax, organic cotton, jojoba oil and tree resin.” Not only can Beeswax wraps be used to wrap sandwiches. They can also be used to fold around foods or to cover bowls of leftovers instead of using cling wrap or plastic baggies, both of which go in the trash. After using a Beeswax wrap, rinse it clean with cold water and mild soap and it is ready to reuse time and time again. Be careful not to use hot water as that would melt the wax! These wraps aren’t recommended for highly perishable items, like raw meat, or for storage over several days. Incidentally, thanks to you, I just learned some new, which is always fun: What is Global Organic Textile certification or GOTS. Only textile products that contain a minimum of 70% organic fibers and chemicals that meet certain environmental and toxicological criteria can become GOTS certified. Definitely good for the environment.

Dear Recycle Lady,

What is polystyrene? I just read an article about Maine being the first state to ban food containers made of polystyrene, effective 2021. The ban prohibits businesses from selling or distributing disposable food service containers made of polystyrene. Curious

Dear Curious,

Polystyrene is actually a type of plastic, better known as Styrofoam. When you buy a cup of coffee, it probably comes in a white cup made of Styrofoam. Takeout containers, plates, bowls, and packing peanuts are very often made of Styrofoam. It is estimated that Americans alone go through 25 billion (25,000,000, 000) polystyrene coffee cups each year. Styrofoam is one of the worst forms of plastic waste because it never totally decomposes. It just breaks down in to smaller and smaller pieces, which are harmful to wildlife, marine life and the environment. Maryland has also just banned containers made of polystyrene, effective July 1, 2020, as have many cities around the country. New York City, Washington, D.C., San Francisco & El Cerrito, California, Seattle, Portland, Oregon, and Amherst, Mass all have bans in place. Before you buy that next package of Styrofoam cups or plates, please consider how harmful polystyrene is and choose pressed cardboard items instead, which are recyclable and decomposable. The health of our oceans, the safety of marine life and wildlife, as well as our environment, are depending on us.

Dear Recycle Lady,

When cleaning out drawers this week, I found lots of old greetings cards that I must do something with. Some of the cards are glossy and others are made of heavy paper. They are all very colorful. Can they be recycled?

Cleaning Out

Dear Cleaning Out,

Greeting cards can definitely be recycled. Whether they are glossy or not, recycle all cards with magazines. Good question. Everyone probably has old valentines or Christmas cards tucked away somewhere.

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.