

Dear Recycle Lady



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Dear Readers,

Hurrah for recyclers in the Greenbrier Valley! You have made a big impact on our environment. According to the monthly recycling report given to the Solid Waste Board, more than 160 TONS of recyclables were collected at the Recycling Center in September. The largest amount of recyclables was 66 tons of cardboard, followed by 23 tons of office paper, 22 tons of both plastics and magazines, 12 tons of cans, 9 tons of scrap metal and 2 tons of electronics. What an accomplishment, thanks to everyone who recycles. Thank you, thank you, thank you. If you are considering recycling, please join us in our efforts to improve our environment, provide recyclable materials to be made into other products, and lessen the 125 to 150 tons of trash that goes into our landfill daily.

Dear Recycle Lady,

I keep reading that plastic straws are really bad for the environment. Are there straws available that are made of a product that is more eco-friendly? Likes Straws

Dear Likes Straws,

So glad you asked and are considering purchasing straws that are more environmentally friendly. According to Strawless Oceans, Americans use 500 million straws every day; enough plastic straws to wrap around the earth 25 times. Fortunately, there are now several alternatives to single-use plastic straws available. Bamboo straws are a good choice, durable and light, and made from sustainable plants. Pasta straws, made with wheat and water, and straws made with seaweed-based material are both edible and compostable. Flavored, edible straws are in the future. Acrylic straws are durable and are used by the coffeehouses and donut shops that use reusable cups. Silicone straws are made of food grade silicone. Stainless steel straws, glass straws, and striped or dotted paper straws are also available. Especially designed molds are available for freezing classy ice straws, and DIY directions for making them are available online. Whichever kind of reusable straw you use, be sure to clean it after each use. This is not always easy to do. When purchasing reusable straws, look for ones that are packaged with a handy, skinny brush. You will be glad you did. According to the website, [straws have been around since 3000 B.C.](#) Sumerians used straws made of gold and blue stone lapis lazuli. Eventually rye grass was used, and then paper. Straws were patented in 1888 by Marvin Chester Stone, considered the godfather of the straw.

Dear Recycle Lady,

Am I correct that pop cans go in the bin with aluminum cat food cans? We don't drink pop, so this is new to us. Recycler

Dear Recycler,

Yes, you are correct. Aluminum pop cans, cat food cans and other kinds of aluminum cans all go in the same bag/bin. Aluminum pans or aluminum foil must be placed in another bag/bin. Pop cans should always be rinsed before recycling. Cat food cans MUST be completely washed clean and the paper label removed. It only takes one dirty can to contaminate a load of recyclables.

The Greenbrier Recycling Center will be celebrating America Recycles Day today at the Recycling Center. America Recycles Day is a Keep America Beautiful national initiative. It is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to promoting and celebrating recycling in the U.S. Every-one is invited to celebrate America Recycles Day at the Recycling Center's Open House today, Friday, November 15 from 9:00 – 3:00. Tours of the facility will be available and free hot-dogs, chips and drinks will be served. Please join us and help us celebrate the day.

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.