

THE RECYCLING BIN'S

DIRTY DOZEN



1 NO Plastic Bags

Plastic bags are the **WORST** contaminant in the recycling bin. They get tangled in the Single-Stream sorting equipment, breaking or stopping machinery. The ezGreen committee has marked specific Plastic Bag Collection sites in all kitchens; bags there are available for anyone's use.



7 NO Paper Cups or Plates

Paper cups and plates have polyethylene coating on the inside that does not break down during the re-pulping process at paper mills. The plastic lids typically used on hot beverage paper cups are not recyclable either (even if they have the recycling symbol on them). **Pro-Tip:** Starbucks discounts \$0.10 if you reuse a cup!



2 NO Paper Napkins, Paper Towels, or Tissues

Papermaking fibers can typically be recycled five to seven times before they become too short to be recycled again, and paper towels and napkins are the last stop in the recycling chain. **Pro-Tip:** If your office has a compost program, you can compost these low-grade fibers instead.



8 NO Chip Bags, Wrappers for Candy, Condiment or Nutritional Bars

There is no real end market for these hybrid materials. In fact, there are only a couple of niche markets for it. These items cause serious problems in the Single-Stream Recycling system, and should be placed in the trash. **Pro Tip:** Ask your company about getting a TerraCycle unit which does accept these materials.



3 NO Food or Liquids

All containers must be cleaned and free of food or liquid contaminants (imagine what recycling would look like if food was on each item ready to mold!). **Pro-Tip:** If your office has a compost program, you can compost food scraps instead.



9 NO Plastic Eatery: Utensils, Straws, Plates, Cups

Plastic straws, utensils, plates and cups come in such a wide variety of non-usable, low-grade plastics that it is impossible to identify and separate the recyclables from the non-recyclable look-alikes (same as the clamshell packaging). **Pro-Tip:** Use the kitchen's re-usable utensils and plates and cups! Or, take your own re-usable tumbler to Starbucks for a \$.10 discount for bringing your own cup!



4 NO Non-Recyclable Plastics

The recycling arrows with a number (called "Mobius") is not a reliable indicator of whether something gets recycled. There are thousands of plastic types and each one has its own unique chemical recipe. Many plastics cannot be made into a new product at this time due to unstable markets. Therefore, recycle plastics by shapes. Accepted plastic shapes are bottles, jars, jugs and tubs. Unacceptable is all other shapes such as clamshell packaging, lids, wraps, etc.



10 NO Styrofoam

Foam and styrofoam and polystyrene foam are not recyclable in Single-Stream Recycling at this time. Polystyrene products like styrofoam cups, to-go containers and packing peanuts can't be turned back into new items in what's known as "closed loop recycling". **Pro-Tip:** Bring a re-usable food container when you go for take out. Also, some post offices will accept packing peanuts for reuse!



5 NO Plastic Film or Packaging Materials

Plastic stretch wrap, ziplock bags, bubble wrap, string cheese wrappers, etc. get tangled in machinery breaking or stopping the production line. **Pro-Tip:** Plastic film and packaging materials should go to a participating grocery store for recycling. Ask your ezGreen committee where the separate collection is for plastic film.



11 NO Hardcover Books, 3-Ring Binders

Single-Stream Recycling cannot take these items. **Pro-Tip:** If binders are not reusable, bring to a Staples near you for their special recycling collection. If the book is in good shape, donate to a library or a secondhand store.



6 NO Greasy Cardboard or Dirty Paper

If paper food materials like pizza boxes or cardboard to-go boxes have food residue or are soaked through with grease, then they are not recyclable. **Pro-Tip:** Tear off the clean lids to recycle and put the greasy bottoms into the compost (if you have access to compost).



12 NO Electronics, Cables, Headphones, Lightbulbs

Electronics (cables, adapters, headphones, etc.), CDs, DVDs, USB drives, etc. cannot go into Single-Stream Recycling. Your ezCater office has separate electronic recycling bins in the kitchens that is sent to a special E-Waste re-purposing site.

Below is our Dirty Dozen hit list of the worst recycling contaminants that should **NEVER** go in the recycling bin.

Please help make Single-Stream recycling a success by keeping these materials **OUT** of the bin.

ez cater Single-Stream Recycling



Plastic Containers,
with Lids Attached (Rinsed)



Glass Containers,
with Lids Separated (Rinsed)



Cardboard
(Flattened, Clean)



Metal Cans and Aluminum Foil (Rinsed)



Food and Beverage Cartons (Rinsed)

**Clean All
Containers!**
Rinse Out or
Wipe Down



Paper: Bags, Folders, Mail,
Newspaper, Post-its, Notebooks,
Catalogs, Paperback Books

No Need To Remove:
paper clips, stamps,
address labels, staples,
tape, wire, metal
fasteners, plastic bindings,
or plastic tabs

Common Contaminants

No Food and No Liquids
(Yes Compostable)



No Paper Towels, Napkins, Tissues
(Yes Compostable)



No Greasy Cardboard
(Yes Compostable)



No Chip, Candy, Condiment
or Nutritional Bar Wrappers,
Straws, Chopsticks,
or Plastic Utensils



No Styrofoam



No Plastic Bags, Ziplocs,
Clamshell Packaging or
Plastic Shipping Materials



No Paper Cups,
Plates, or Bowls

