

## COMMITTEE: ENERGY COMMITTEE

### YCC323 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Source: Viewpoint 50 Year in Review for 2014; City of Toronto website

Subject: Recycling Plastic

#### The Ins and Outs of Recyclable Items: Plastic

Despite the increased number of recyclable items, there are still some plastic items Toronto can't currently recycle. The wrong item can contaminate the recycling stream, damage equipment and cause workplace injuries. If you don't recycle properly, we can't either.

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#### **Top Plastic Bin Sins**

These items **do not** go in recycling:

- Takeout containers with black bottom or tops (such as for roast chicken)
- Plastic blister packs
- Toys
- Cassettes, CDs and DVDs
- Plastic pails, plastic paint pails (with metal handles)
- Plastic over-wrap on pop/water cartons, toilet paper, paper towels

Use the Waste Wizard an online search tool to help you learn what to do with your waste materials. ([see below](#))



#### **The Mobius loop**

Just because an item has a Mobius loop mark on it, it doesn't mean it's recyclable everywhere. There has to be a market to take the item, so that's why referring to Mobius loops as an indicator of recyclability isn't a good idea.

The number system is misleading - not all are recyclable

Some reasons why the number system doesn't work in identifying recyclable plastics:

Plastic products with the same numbers may not be compatible: PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate), shown with #1 symbol, is used in a wide variety of packaging applications from bottles to egg cartons to food trays. Although the base material is PET, the manufacturers can alter the composition depending on the designed end-use. The result is that the various products can no longer be mixed for recycling purposes (e.g. there can be variations in viscosity levels (molecular), they may contain chlorine and/or be coated with silicone or glycol, which are not compatible with the bottle grade PET). To date, we have not been able to find secure markets for the non-bottle grades of PET.

A #2 HDPE (High Density Polyethylene) food tub is injection moulded and a #2 HDPE bottle is blow moulded. They both have the same number but one cannot work with the other. We accept both in our program but have two separate markets for these material types.

What plastics the City accepts in recycling:

- Items must be solely made out of plastic (no metal, wood, etc. parts or content)
- All plastic jugs and bottles; tubs and their lids

Plastic grocery and retail bags (through processing, items will be sorted according to established markets and unwanted items will be removed)

Set out tips for plastic items:

- No need to flatten jugs, bottles, or tubs
- Tighten lids on jugs and bottles

Foam polystyrene and plastic retail shopping bags

Rinse clean and recycle

- Foam food and protective packaging (e.g. drinking cups, egg cartons, meat trays, takeout food containers, electronics packaging)
- Plastic grocery and retail shopping bags without drawstrings, metal detailing or hard plastic handles (remove receipts: place all plastic bags in one retail or grocery plastic bag and tie handles together)

## Online **WASTE WIZARD** has the answers!

# WASTE WIZARD

Learn what to do with  
your waste materials.

Search



We all want to recycle all we can, but many plastics and metals can't go in recycling. The wrong items can contaminate the recycling stream, damage equipment and cause workplace injuries.

Use **WASTE WIZARD** at [toronto.ca/recycle](https://toronto.ca/recycle) to learn how to properly recycle and dispose of waste items. This online search tool currently lists over 1,500 items with proper disposal instructions.

**If you don't recycle properly, we can't either.**



Call **3-1-1**

