

Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Policy

School Recycling: Milk Carton and Milk Bottle Collection and Delivery Specifications

Milk cartons and plastic milk bottles collected in school lunch programs are recyclable at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) on Birnie Avenue (a dual stream MRF) and at Automated on Tremont Street (a single stream MRF). Given the nature of these containers and the potential for odors, we have developed these delivery specifications to ensure that they are handled correctly.

- Most importantly – all the milk containers (gable top containers) must be empty and free of all liquids.
- All caps, straws and straw wrappers should be removed from the containers and properly disposed with your solid waste. Labels may remain on the containers.
- **For dual stream collections:** empty gable top milk and juice cartons (only) should be placed into a minimum 0.63 ml CLEAR plastic bag in the cafeteria at the site of collection.
 - Put the closed plastic bag of empty gable top milk cartons in your bottles and cans recycling container - NOT with the paper and cardboard. *(Delivering these containers in clear plastic bags will allow the sorters to see what is in the bag and assist in the sorting effort)*
 - *If the milk containers are delivered in anything other than clear bags, these items will be discarded as solid waste. It is a policy of the MRF that black or opaque plastic bags are not opened due to safety concerns.*
 - Empty plastic milk bottles may be added “loose” (do not use bags for plastic bottles) with the bottles and cans recyclables.
- **For single stream collections:** empty milk containers, both milk cartons (gable tops) and plastic milk bottles, are to be recycled with the bottles and cans recyclables. NO PLASTIC BAGS should ever be used in single stream recycling.
- The Springfield MRF reserves the right to reject deliveries if they contain excessive liquid, or create odors at the facility.
- It is important for the marketability of these items that they are free of contamination, so we ask that you be vigilant in removing milk from the containers. These measures will also be important for storage at the school, as well as at the MRF.

Prior to commencing any milk carton collection program at your schools, please notify Arlene Miller (MassDEP Municipal Recycling Coordinator for western MA) at 413-567-5027. If your school cannot meet the requirements of this collection and delivery policy, please contact Arlene to discuss approval of a modified collection program that would meet the goals of your schools, as well as the MRF.