

# RECYCLING'S MOST UNWANTED

Please keep these items out of household recycling. At the recycling facility, plastic bags, hoses and holiday lights cause safety hazards and shutdowns when they wrap around conveyor belts and equipment.



For a complete YES & NO list of what can be recycled, visit [www.springfieldmrf.org](http://www.springfieldmrf.org) or call the recycling hotline at 888-888-0784 ext. 52293 or 413-784-1100, ext. 52293 for more detailed information

All the items listed here are NOT able to be recycled through your curbside or drop-off recycling collections in Western MA. Below is an explanation of WHY they are not acceptable. Please bear in mind that all materials collected for recycling are sorted and then baled and sent to a vendor to be turned into new materials. It is very important for these vendors that the materials be clean and correctly sorted. If there is NO MARKET for a material, EVEN IF IT APPEARS to be recyclable, then that material cannot be collected. Materials are sorted both by machinery and also by hand. Adding materials which cannot be recycled means those materials will have to be sorted out from the proper recyclables and then THROWN AWAY. This adds both time and expense to the recycling process, so PLEASE DO NOT include any of the following items:





**Plastic Bags:** These cannot be recycled through your recycling program because they wrap around the conveyor belt at the recycling facility, which causes the line to be shut down in order to strip away all the bags. Bags CAN be recycled through your local grocery stores.



**Bagged Materials:** These cannot be recycled both because they include plastic bags (see above) but also because they would need to be opened by hand to sort materials. There is neither the time nor the personnel to accommodate this. Bagged materials will be THROWN AWAY.



**Items that Wrap and Tangle:** Includes items such as hoses, light strings, anything which could wrap around a conveyor belt (think of materials which clog up a lawnmower, for instance). These materials are both non-recyclable and cause the line to be shut down at the recycling facility.



**Syringes:** These are a bio hazard and pose a danger to workers. Needles of any kind should be disposed of properly through a municipal or other safe SHARPS disposal program. Contact your local municipality for options.



**Food Waste:** Food Waste should never be left inside of recyclables, nor placed in a recycling collection bin. Think of the icky mess and the sorters having to handle the waste! Food waste CAN BE COMPOSTED. Check with your municipality for options including compost bin purchase programs.



**Hazardous Waste Containers:** Hazardous chemicals leach into plastics, rendering the plastic unfit for other uses. Please deposit empty containers which have held hazardous chemicals into the trash.



**Styrofoam:** Expanded polystyrene (EPS, trademarked 'Styrofoam') is not accepted at local recycling facilities, as its light weight makes it too costly to ship. However, EPS can be shredded and compressed into blocks to be transformed into pellets for recycling into picture frames and car bumpers. Please check the Springfield MRF website for Styrofoam recycling options.



**Plastic cups:** Such as Solo cups are categorized as a # 6 plastic. This is the same category as Styrofoam, polystyrene, and expanded polystyrene. There is no market for these items, please deposit in trash.



**Light bulbs:** Incandescent light bulbs have a different type of glass from regular bottles and jars, which makes them unrecyclable, plus they invariably break making them a hazard for workers. These should be deposited in the trash. Fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury and should be properly recycled. Several large home improvement stores accept fluorescent bulbs free of charge. Please also check with your municipality to see if they collect fluorescent light bulbs.



**Pots, pans and scrap metal:** These items get caught in the conveyor belts at the recycling facility. Please check your municipality for scrap metal and swap shop options.



**Dishes:** Ceramics and other materials which make up dishware is not recyclable. Please check with your municipality for swap shop options; otherwise please place in the trash.



**Electronics:** Electronics contain some hazardous chemicals and sometimes leaded glass. Electronics should be properly recycled; please check with your municipality for electronics recycling options.