

# Gallatin County, Montana Recycling FAQs



## What materials are collected for recycling?

Due to our rural location in a sparsely populated state, we can't recycle as many materials as major urban areas. However, we do recycle basic materials like cardboard, paper, cans, plastic #1 bottles and plastic #2 jugs.

## Where does our recycling go?

Regardless of who collects your recycling, all recyclables in Gallatin County are sent to Four Corners Recycling, where materials are sorted into like piles and compacted into large bales. The bales are then shipped to various recycling facilities around the U.S., in locations ranging from Washington to Wisconsin to Kentucky.

## Plastics are so confusing! Which plastics can we recycle?

It's actually pretty simple: the only plastics we recycle are plastic #1 bottles and plastic #2 jugs. If it is not a #1 bottle or a #2 jug, it can't be recycled. This means that a LOT of the plastics we use (berry containers, bags, utensils, dairy tubs, etc.) should go in the garbage.

## Are caps and lids recyclable?

Caps and lids can cause damage to the machines that sort our recycling. The ideal place to put them is in the trash. However, Four Corners Recycling will accept plastic bottles with caps as long as the cap is screwed on tightly.

## Do I need to rinse my bottles and cans before putting them in the bin?

Any container put in the recycling needs to be EMPTY, CLEAN, and DRY. Empty is pretty straightforward. "Clean" means that it passes the "yuck test"- if you touch it and say "yuck!" or want to wipe or wash your hands, it is NOT clean. "Dry" means that a container should not have more than a teaspoon of residual liquid (i.e. water droplets) inside.

## Why don't we recycle glass?

There is no glass recycling facility in Montana. All glass has to be shipped to Salt Lake City for recycling. Because glass is so heavy, the economics of recycling glass just don't work out. Try to reduce your consumption of glass by choosing alternative packaging materials when possible.

## What if I'm not sure whether something can be recycled?

Check out our local recycling guidelines at [RepublicServices.com/montana](https://www.RepublicServices.com/montana) The worst thing you can do is to put non-recyclable materials in your recycling bin. This "wish-cycling" causes contamination. If recycling has too much contamination mixed in, it has to go to the landfill because it's too difficult to sort out. **When in doubt, throw it out.** We would rather you produce a small bin of materials that actually can be recycled, rather than a large bin of recyclables filled with mostly garbage.