

Recycling Myths: Learn the Truth (Part 2)

There are a lot of myths about recycling. With some help from the City of Denver web site a few of these mistaken beliefs will be discussed so you can be an informed recycler and citizen.

[Myth: All containers need to be rinsed, washed and have their labels removed.](#)

FALSE. In many cases, no rinsing is required. Soda, water, shampoo and soap bottles need to be **fully emptied** before placing them in with your recycling. Milk and orange juice bottles require a light rinsing to help prevent odors. Soup cans require a little more rinsing, and “stickier” food containers such as mayonnaise or peanut butter jars, **need to be scraped or wiped clean** to remove as much food residue as possible.

Labels can remain on bottles, cans and jars - no need to be peeled-off or removed. The heat generated in the remanufacturing process of plastic, glass and metal containers results in the labels simply being burned off. When rinsing out a container, be sure to save water and energy by pouring only a small amount of cold water into the container. Then put the lid back on, shake the container and pour out the water. This process will loosen up food particles inside the container and avoid the unnecessary use of hot water. Or better yet, use your dishwasher.

[Myth: Recycling should pay for itself. Cities get rich off the sale of materials.](#)

FALSE. It is a misperception that the revenue generated from the sale of recovered materials should be enough to off-set the collection and processing costs and even make a profit for a city. This is not true. Recycling is one option for managing waste - waste costs money. When a material enters the waste stream, whether trash, recycling, yard waste or household hazardous waste, there is an associated cost.

The goal is to keep the cost of recycling below the cost of trash collection and disposal. This is possible when the city is paid more for a ton (for example) of recyclables than the cost of the tipping fee for the same ton of trash taken to the landfill. This means a city is able to save money every time someone takes recyclable material out of their trash and recycles it. Consequently, less of your tax dollars are used for solid waste services.

Though the market for recyclables fluctuates, there remains a demand for this material. Since recycling is a commodities market (that is the demand for recyclable materials is based on the demand for recycled content products). Recycling is a closed loop system and consumers must **purchase recycled content products to ensure the cycle continues.** When buying paper products (paper towels, toilet paper, tissue, paper plates, etc.) check the recycled content. Look for the recycle symbol. If you can't find a recycled product at a favorite store, go to another, but first inform the management that you are taking your business elsewhere. Complete a request card for products made from recycled materials.

[Myth: Someone told me pizza delivery boxes cannot be recycled.](#)

FALSE. Pizza delivery boxes can be recycled **IF** food waste has been scrapped out and a **minimum amount of grease has soaked into the cardboard.** However, pizza boxes soiled with grease and food debris **should not** be placed with other recyclable materials. Heavily soiled pizza boxes can be composted in your backyard compost bin (cut them up first). Remember, even if the bottom of the pizza delivery box is contaminated with grease or food, you can still rip off the top of the box and recycle that part with other Mixed Paper.

RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE RECYCLING MEETING UPDATE

Public comment is being solicited as the City of Gallup continues to explore the possibility of initiating a Residential Curbside Recycling Program. The next public meetings will be held on Thursday, **February 26** at Tobe Turpen Elementary School, 3310 Manuelito Drive (Mentmore) at 6 pm and on Tuesday, **March 3** at the Eastside Fire Station, 3700 Churchrock Street (Indian Hills) at 6:30 pm. The citizenry is encouraged to attend to find out more about the curbside recycling initiative and what it means for Gallup. One more public meeting is still to be scheduled. For that date call the Mayor's Office (863-1223).

For more general information about recycling in Gallup-McKinley County go to the McKinley Citizens' Recycling Council web site www.recyclegallup.org or call a MCRC volunteer at 722-5142, 722-9257, or 905-5966.