

REUSING / RECYCLING PACKING MATERIALS

What do air pillows, brown paper packaging, bubble wrap, corrugated cardboard boxes, ExpandOS, foam sheeting, and packing “peanuts” all have in common?

They can all be reused locally.

In a community graced by a multitude of businesses and galleries dealing in Native Arts and other artistic endeavors, the packing material companies do a lively trade.

It may not be common knowledge that packing materials that come with a gift from Grandma, an Amazon book order, a new electronic device – can (and should be) reused, or possibly recycled. Before you throw away any of the packing and packaging from an ordered item check with your favorite Native trader or gallery, and/or the local UPS Store about “gifting” them your packing and packaging materials.

AIR PILLOWS – Those air filled pillows (pouches) are becoming more common in packing of fragile items. They are usually a #4 plastic. If they are deflated they can be deposited at Albertson’s Grocery. The store’s plastic recycling bag bins include #2 and #4 plastic bags.

BOXES -- Many items are shipped in corrugated cardboard boxes. These boxes can be re-used unless they are dented or soiled. If you have a corrugated box in good shape consider making a donation to a local trader or the UPS Store.

BROWN PAPER – Sturdy brown paper is often used as a filler in boxes that are shipped with books and other items. This item is welcomed by traders and the UPS Store. However, it can be combined with corrugated cardboard to be recycled. The recycling bins at the Larry Brian Mitchell Recreation Center, the Train Station, and the Transfer Station accept this item.

BUBBLE WRAP / BUBBLE OR FOAM SHEETING – Used primarily for wrapping fragile items and/or large items, these materials are highly reuseable.

PEANUTS -- This item is used mostly as loose fill. The Styrofoam variety (expanded Polystyrene) will probably never go away, but more and more companies are using the anti-static Biodegradable Peanuts. The latter decompose in water leaving no toxic waste. They are made from static free organic starch.

EXPANDOS — Probably one of the newest items in packing materials, these paper pyramids are specifically designed to cling together using all three sides, all six corners, and all thirty-eight fingers! They include a network of circular holes that minimize added weight and allow the elements to interlock. Not only do they protect your packages, but it is an environmentally friendly packaging solution made from sustainably manufactured paper and 100% recyclable.

www.expandos.com

The USA Environmental Protection Agency noted that in 2012*, the United States generated almost 14 million tons of plastics as containers and packaging, about 11 million tons as durable goods such as appliances, and almost 7 million tons as nondurable goods, such as plates and cups. Only 9 percent of the total plastic waste generated in 2012 was recovered for recycling.

Let's do our part Gallup-McKinley County to keep the *14 million tons of plastic* statistic from growing. Our actions to find places to reuse and recycle packing materials can help to reduce those numbers.

*The latest year for which plastic statistics are available.

***LOCAL RECYCLING CENTERS IN GALLUP**

Location and Hours of Operation

MWF	8-Noon	Train Station
MWF	Noon-4	Larry Brian Mitchell Recreation Center
SAT	10-2	Larry Brian Mitchell Recreation Center
M-SAT	8-4:30	Gallup Transfer Station on Hasler Valley Road

For More Information about recycling in Gallup-McKinley County or how you can volunteer contact the McKinley Citizens' Recycling Council (MCRC) by

calling 722-5142, via www.recyclegallup.org, or send a message to betsywindisch@yahoo.com.

The June meeting will be held at 508 Sandstone Place (Indian Hills-Gallup) on Saturday, June 7 at 2 pm. Our time together will be spent painting and stenciling recycling bins donated by UNM-Albuquerque. Join us for this activity and refreshments.

Regular MCRC meetings are held at 2 pm on first Saturdays at The Red Mesa Center, Downtown Gallup.