

How to Be Sure: Tips on Confusing Items

Many of us pause before deciding where to dispose of an item properly. Does it go in the compost? Recycling? Garbage? As we try to cut back on the amount of waste sent to the landfill, it's just as important to make sure that items that aren't compostable or recyclable are put in their proper place. Many of you are familiar with the common phrase, "If in doubt, leave it out!"



Today we hope to cut back on some of that doubt by offering simple tips for disposing of confusing items.

Spotlight on Hot Drink Cups

When you grab a coffee drink to-go, the cup is most likely not compostable because the inside is coated in plastic.



If rinsed clean, it can be recycled, sleeve included. If dirty, it goes in the garbage.

To find out which paper cups are compostable, visit Cedar Grove's [hot drink cups page](#) for accepted brands.



Compostable

Egg Cartons No Added Labels



Recently companies have begun adding a plastic-coated label to the top of the carton. Before you add it to your compost container, peel off any labels and throw them away.

Not Compostable

Egg Cartons With Labels



With the label intact, this would go in the garbage.

Pizza Box Delivery



At Waste Management, we refer to "greasy" pizza

Pizza Box Frozen



Frozen pizza boxes are NOT compostable. The

Reusable coffee mugs come in a variety of colors, sizes and styles and cut back on daily waste. The best choice!

Taco Time's Compostable Packaging Program

One stand-out, local fast food chain that offers almost all compostable packaging is [Taco Time](#).

When you eat in the restaurant, you'll notice that the usual garbage bin has been replaced with a compost bin and the nearby garbage is tiny and usually empty.



If you order take-out, the packaging can be composted in your curbside cart!

delivery boxes as the type that can be composted. These are made of paper fibers that make great compost.

paper used to make frozen pizza boxes is coated in plastic and has a shiny finish. It is recyclable, but not compostable.

However, when you open the frozen pizza box, the flat cardboard circle that keeps the pizza flat is compostable - as are any leftover crusts!

Paper Plates Non-Coated



These plates have a matte paper texture, no shiny coating and typically lack decoration. Some brands will even specify on the label that they don't have a coating.

Some plates are labeled as biodegradable but this doesn't mean they're compostable. To double-check brands that are accepted for composting, visit [Cedar Grove's plate's page](#).

Paper Plates Coated



These plates have a shiny finish and are usually decorated with bright colors and patterns. They need to go into the garbage after use if soiled in any way.

Leftovers Dairy, Meat and Bones



Leftovers Fats, Oils and Grease



Dairy, meat and bones, including fish carcasses, cannot be added to a backyard composting system but can go in your curbside cart.

In regular home compost piles, they won't break down and will attract undesirable pests. However, in industrial composting facilities, the compost is processed differently. Therefore, all of these items can be added to your cart, worry-free.



Fats, oils and grease are not compostable and should not be poured down the drain.

Soak up any grease after frying with paper towels and put them in the garbage.

For large amounts, pour them into a container with a lid or a plastic baggy. Allow the grease to harden and then throw it into the garbage.

Shredded Paper Loose



Make sure it doesn't include any plastics like credit cards, sticker or cellophane from envelope windows.

Simply layer it with food scraps and yard clippings in your curbside cart.

Shredded Paper Bagged, containing plastics



You can reuse shredded paper for packing material or animal bedding.

If those options don't work for you, or, if you have plastics mixed in, please bag your shredded paper and put it in the garbage.

Questions?

Are there items that you're not quite sure about how to dispose of? [Email us](#) to let us know and we'll address them in a future Foodcycler email.

Keep up the great work!

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