



Relearning Recycling

We're all learning about the impact of placing the wrong items in our recycling bins as the world's recycling processes are experiencing lots of challenges, including contamination. Recycling properly is more important now than ever.

There are only five items that belong in your curbside recycling collection: cans, cartons, glass bottles and jars, paper and boxes, and plastic bottles and jugs. Empty, rinse, and replace caps on cans, cartons, jars, bottles, and jugs. All recyclable items should be commingled, or mixed together. Items should be placed loose (not in bags) in your bin or cart before being taken to the curb.

Some items don't belong in your curbside recycling but can still be recycled, reused, or donated elsewhere. Visit cuyahogarecycles.org/how_to_recycle to learn what to do with items like clothing, household electronics (like TVs and laptops), shredded paper, plastic bags, furniture, small appliances, light strings used for holiday decorations, and more.

It's important to recycle, but it's just as important to recycle correctly. Putting the wrong recyclables into your bin or bag may cause the

CANS Empty and Rinse.	CARTONS Empty and Rinse. Replace Cap.	GLASS Empty and Rinse.
PAPER & BOXES Flatten Cardboard.	PLASTIC BOTTLES & JUGS Empty and Rinse. Replace Cap.	

entire load to be thrown out as trash. We want everyone to do their part to recycle right.

You can help be part of the solution by recycling right at home and at school! Check out our recycling FAQs or take a look at our tips to recycle right in Cuyahoga County at cuyahogarecycles.org.

Dogs Can't Flush

Remember to Pick Up Poop (PUP)!



Dogs can't scoop it, so you have to "doo" it! The PUP Program encourages dog owners to Pick Up Poop, or "PUP." PUP, which educates pet owners about the environmental hazards of abandoned poop, is a part of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District's commitment to a clean Lake Erie.

Dog poop is a contributor to many water quality problems, impacting not only your local water but also our beaches. When it rains, the water runoff picks up just about everything off the ground and carries it into our storm drains, rivers, and beaches. Lawn chemicals, litter, road salt and debris, cigarettes, and dog poop are just a few possible contaminants.

Doggie doo can contain lots of bacteria and parasites, such as E. coli, salmonella, and giardia, that can make you sick. With more than 90,000 dogs living in our county, cleaning up after your pet is an easy way to keep your neighborhood and water clean.

To avoid contaminants from your pup's poop in our water, don't drop your dog's poop into the storm drain or leave it on the lawn when letting your pet out or walking your dog. Most storm drains flow directly to your local stream and not to a wastewater treatment plant. Remember to take a bag with you (biodegradable preferred) on your walks and scoop that poop, then promptly dispose of the bag in the trash. By remembering PUP, you can help us to keep our county's water clean!

Learn more at dogscantflush.org.

BEGINNINGS & ENDINGS

Add a prefix and/or suffix to each word and then put the word into the correct sentence below. (Hint: Sometimes you need to drop the "e" when adding a suffix.)

—pose response— —correct

ease— —cycle—

disier

- Look for notebook paper with _____ content.
- We are all _____ for making our world a cleaner and healthier place to live!
- _____ of used paper towels in the trash, but recycle the tube when the roll is empty.
- Make it _____ for your family to recycle by putting a recycling bin right next to the trash can.
- Dominick kept finding recyclables in the _____ bin at his school, so he created a sign to show which items went into the recycling bin and which didn't.



How Green Is Green?

As you learn to shop and buy things, consider how what you shop for can be good, neutral, or bad for the earth. Your family may already buy goods that are environmentally-friendly, especially for personal care products like shampoo, soap, detergent, and sunscreen since they have contact with your skin.

We should all make our purchases count. The things we buy shouldn't harm the planet, wildlife, water resources, our health, or other people. The less you buy throughout your life, the more you can contribute to the health and safety of everything on our earth.

We know that sometimes not buying something isn't an option, so here are some questions you can ask to find the greenest products:



- Is this made using natural or non-toxic ingredients?
- Can the packaging and/or product be reused or recycled?
- Could I buy something used instead of something new?
- Is this item made from renewable resources like plants?
- Will this last a long time?
- Was this product made locally and transported only a short distance?
- Can it be easily repaired?
- Was it made by a company that tries to reduce waste and conserve water and energy?
- Will the company that made this item collect the package or product after you are through with it?



Worms Break It Down for You

Worms take your food scraps and break them down to make compost. We call this process "vermicomposting." You can set up a worm compost bin in your kitchen, basement, or classroom. While you eat, sleep, and study, the worms will be busy feasting on your food waste and turning it into valuable and nutrient-rich compost.

Worms do best at room temperature, so plan to keep them where the temperature is usually between 55 and 80 degrees. You'll need a bin, a couple handfuls of soil, water, and shredded newspaper or cardboard for bedding. Soaking your shredded newspaper or cardboard in water overnight and then squeezing out the extra water with your hands will provide enough moisture to get started.

A pound of red wiggler worms will eat about one-half pound of food scraps per day. These scraps may

include fruit and vegetable peels and scraps and bread. You can feed your worms every day or once or twice a week. To feed your worms, move the bedding aside and create a small hole for the food. Rotate where you bury the food. After burying the food, cover the feeding area with newspaper bedding.

The vermicompost is ready to harvest when the contents have turned dark brown. You'll probably be able to harvest compost about every six months. Vermicompost contains a lot of nutrients that your plants need, so add it to your garden soil or flower pots.

If you're interested in learning more about composting, ask a parent or teacher to visit cuyahogarecycles.org/schools_youth_programs to schedule a presentation to your classroom, afterschool program, camp, or scout group.

GOOD WORK

Instructions: Unscramble the mixed-up words that are underlined to learn more about jobs that help improve our environment. We've done the first one for you. (Hint: Each scrambled word begins with the correct first letter.)

1. A ntiurlasat helps students learn what resources are, how we use them now, and how we could improve our efforts.

naturalist

2. A slido watse eignene designs systems for reducing, reusing, recycling, and properly disposing of trash.

3. A fotsrere takes care of trees in forests.

4. A sarlo catnrorcot installs sun-based electricity systems on houses.

5. A jnoirlutas writes articles to explain the relationship between science and the environment, describe how to reduce, reuse, and recycle, and much more.

6. A regenclyc tchecnanii sorts recyclables and sends them to factories for reuse.

7. A lfinaldl oeprtora buries trash and covers it with soil.

8. A ctoeptoms takes organic waste, such as grass and leaves, and turns it into nutrient-rich compost.

9. A rhecsare secsititn works in a lab and in the field to explore how chemicals, processes, and people impact our environment.

10. A decirort oversees government or non-profit programs, such as recycling centers, conservation efforts, government offices, or education centers.

COUNTING the VOTES

Instructions: At Oak Elementary School, 30 students serve on the student council. They have taken several votes and need your help tallying the results. For a resolution to pass, it must receive more than 50% of the votes. Round the percentages to the nearest whole number. We've done the first one for you.

Resolution	Yes Votes	Percentage	Did it pass?
1. Hold a waste-free lunch challenge every Friday.	19	63%	Yes
2. Declare "Trash Tuesdays" where students throw away as much as possible.	2		
3. Host an Earth Day family fair.	28		
4. Start a green team to monitor recycling bins.	25		
5. Require naps on Wednesday afternoons.	1		
6. Buy worm composting bins for the first grade classrooms and ask students to collect and compost lunch scraps.	16		



Time for a Waste-Free Lunch



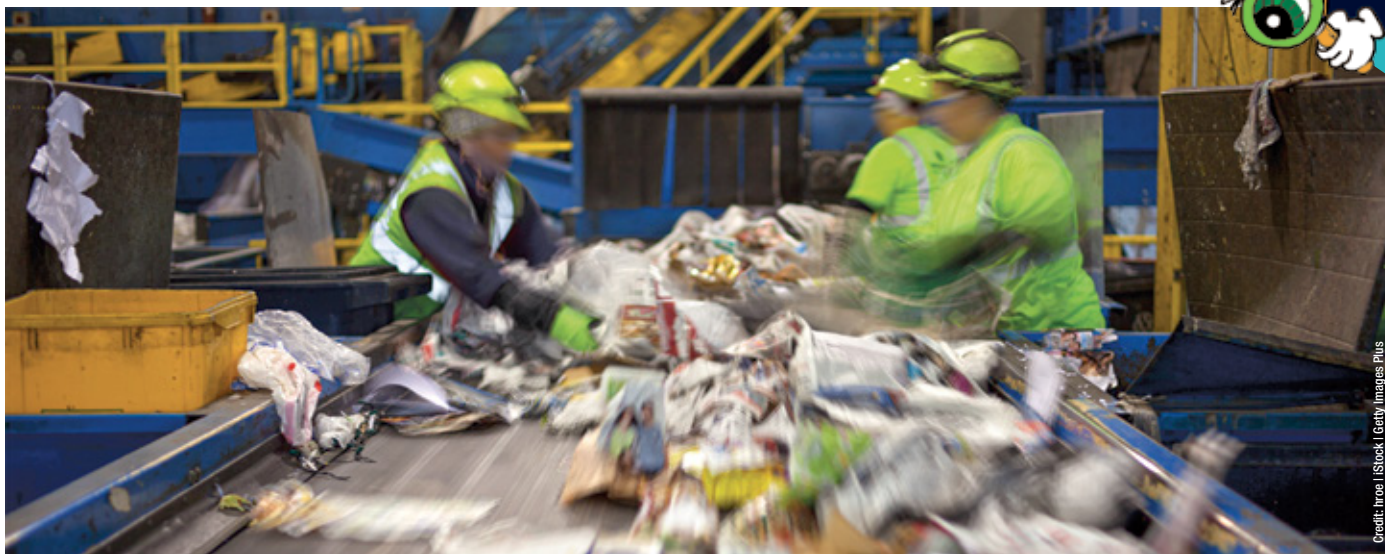
Credit: cagkanasyin / iStock / Getty Images Plus

Lunch is a fun break in the day when we can talk with friends, recharge our brains, and relax before heading back to class. Unfortunately, it is also a time of the school day when a huge amount of trash is created.

In Cuyahoga County, each of us creates about five to seven pounds of trash a day. Much of what goes into the trash could be composted or recycled. In fact, of all the garbage in the school lunchroom, about 12% could be recycled, while 57% could be composted.

Here are some tips to reduce waste in your lunchroom:

- Bring lunches from home in a reusable bag or lunch box, preferably one with compartments or washable containers. You can even reuse tubs from dips, spreads, or deli foods to store food.
- Store your drink in a reusable bottle from home or a recyclable bottle. Don't forget to recycle the empty bottle at school or at home.
- Pack naturally-wrapped snacks like apples, hardboiled eggs, and bananas that have peels and shells you can compost. If your school doesn't have a compost program, use an empty container to bring your peels home for backyard composting.
- Use washable silverware from home, a reusable straw, and a cloth napkin.
- Avoid zippered plastic snack bags, wraps, or packets and single-use condiment packets. Use condiments from bulk dispensers or reusable containers instead.
- If you buy school lunch and are allowed to choose your foods, only take what you will eat, and eat what you have taken.



Credit: iStock / Getty Images Plus

What Happens After I Recycle?

Do you ever wonder what happens to your recycling after you place it in your bin? Here in Cuyahoga County, our recycling takes a little trip before being sorted, separated, baled, and ultimately sold for a new use.

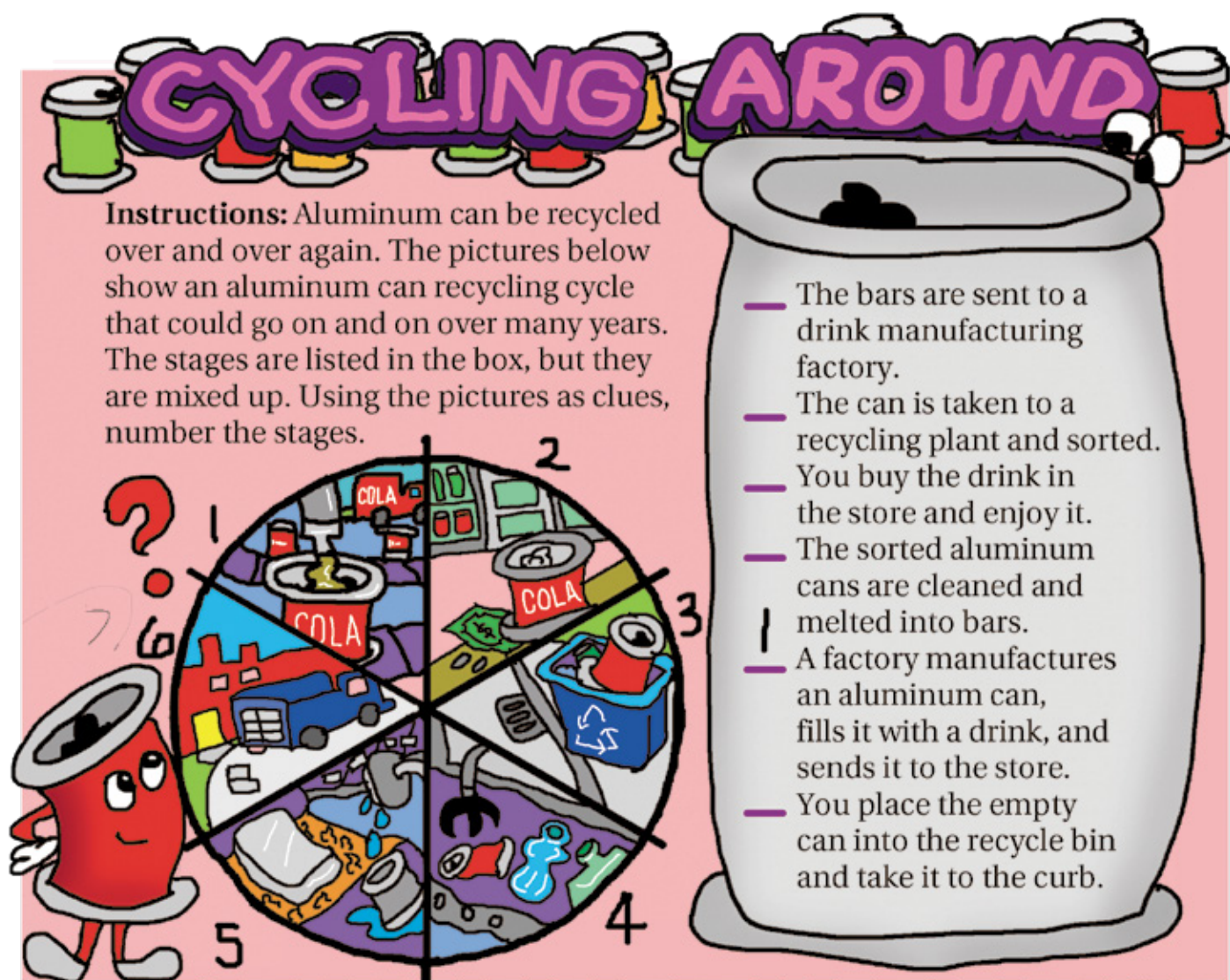
Our curbside recycling is mixed together loose in a recycling bin or cart. On your designated collection day, an automated truck picks up the bin or cart and empties it into a large vehicle which makes stops at many houses along the way. When the collection truck is full, it delivers the recycling to a transfer station where the materials are transferred to a larger vehicle for hauling to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).

The MRF is a large facility with many conveyors, belts, and machines. Whether your recycling is picked up by your city or a private company, recyclables from Cuyahoga County go to one of three MRFs in the area. Each MRF accepts, sorts, and processes tons of recyclables every day.

The vehicle delivering your recyclables is weighed as it enters and exits the MRF. The recycling is tipped on the building floor, then scooped up by a heavy-equipment machine called a front-end loader and placed on the sorting line. Large objects and contamination are removed first. The recyclables then travel through an automated sorting system which uses a disk screen, magnets, cameras, lasers, and workers on the line to separate the materials.

Once all the recycling is separated into categories, the sorted materials are grouped together and tied up into bales, and then sold to other companies and manufacturers that will turn the recyclables into something new.

The next time you're at the store, look for items that are made from recyclable materials like notebooks, shampoo bottles, and food containers — they're possible because people like you recycled!





Credit: SerrNovik | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Host a Low-Waste Party!

Whether it's your birthday, the holidays, or just a free weekend, think green when hosting a party! Celebrations can leave behind a lot of trash — from Thanksgiving dinner's leftovers to gift wrap and boxes from a birthday party. We can take better care of our earth during our events while still having a great time at any party or event!

Before the party, send out invitations through email or social media. Lots of online services let you send creative invitations for free while tracking responses and sending reminders. Then help your family to gather punch bowls, pitchers, plates, cups, napkins, tablecloths, and utensils that can all be washed and reused. Ask friends if they have any decorations you can borrow and reuse at your party, or consider using decorations that can be given away as party favors. Avoid using straws, plastic toys, candy wrapped in plastic, balloons, and any other decorations that can only be used once.

Once the party starts, enjoy having experiences with your friends! Play yard games, watch a movie, go on a nature scavenger hunt, or have a dance-off! Encourage people to use recycling and compost bins and only set out small amounts of food at a time, refilling as needed. Any leftovers can be sent home with guests in reusable containers.

At the end of the party, you'll have made new memories with your friends and family and have little to no waste to dispose of — meaning fun for you and for our earth! To learn more about giving and receiving low-waste gifts both at your party or a friend's event, check out the ideas above right.

Giving and Receiving Without Wasting

- When thinking about giving and asking for gifts, think about things that don't require wrapping, like classes and experiences. How about a dance class or music lessons? Movie or sporting event tickets, museum memberships, or a donation to your favorite charity also make great, no-waste gifts. You can also look for gifts that are fair-trade or locally-made.
- When shopping online, check out Amazon.com's "frustration-free" packaging. Items will arrive with no wires, ties, or hard-to-remove plastic, which means less trash. Also try to order items that ship from nearby cities to reduce pollution and costs from fuel and travel.
- Consider having a "no-wrap" party, where all the guests bring their gifts unwrapped. Bookmarks can be used in place of cards to identify the gift, or bring cards made from recyclable material.
- If you choose to wrap gifts, consider fun, reusable materials instead of wrapping paper. For example, you might use a reusable gift bag or decorated paper shopping bag, Sunday Comics pages, coloring book pages, stenciled brown paper and twine, or cloth napkins and scarves.
- When you do receive new items, always donate the old ones you are replacing instead of throwing them in the trash.



Credit: Monalika | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Fraktion Action

Sofia and her friends decided to donate some of their old shirts to charity instead of throwing them away.

Facts:

- 1. Sofia gave away 6 shirts.
- 2. Ava gave away $\frac{1}{3}$ as many as Sofia.
- 3. Abigail gave away 2 times as many shirts as Ava.
- 4. Trinity gave away $\frac{1}{2}$ as many as Sofia.

How many shirts did Ava give away? _____

How many did Abigail give away? _____

How many did Trinity give away? _____

Cuyahoga County
SOLID WASTE DISTRICT
CuyahogaRecycles.org

Visit CuyahogaRecycles.org to learn more about reducing, reusing, and recycling at home, at school, and in the community.

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