



# Purchasing Pup e-News

## On the road to recycling

The life-cycle for products we buy includes extraction of materials, processing, manufacturing, distribution, consumption and end-of-life. When it comes to the end-of-life for a product, if it can be reused or recycled, there are great opportunities for savings. All the expenses, energy, and pollution associated with extracting the material are saved by using recycled material instead of "virgin" material.



**RECYCLABLE** products are items that can be recycled. They don't necessarily contain any recycled material but have the most benefit after use if they are recycled.

**RECYCLED** products are made from discarded material from the manufacturer during production or from consumers.

### POST CONSUMER RECYCLED CONTENT

products contain materials recycled by consumers. Labels usually indicate the percentage of post-consumer recycled content in a product. They may be completely or partially made from post-consumer materials. Aluminum cans and newspapers are recycled products which usually contain high quantities of post-consumer materials.

## Plastic by the numbers

**1** Most disposable soda bottle and water bottles are made of #1 plastic. (polyethylene terephthalate, also known as **PETE or PET**) Generally considered safe but does have porous surface which could allow bacteria to accumulate, so don't reuse these bottles for food.

**2** Most milk jugs, detergent bottles, and juice bottles are made up of #2 plastic. (high density polyethylene or **HDPE**)

Considered safe with low risk of leaching.  
**3** This is a tough plastic, used to make food wrap, cooking oil bottles, and plumbing pipes. (Polyvinyl chloride, **PVC, V**). Contains phthalates which interfere with hormonal development and is not considered safe for food cooking.

**4** Most grocery bags, squeezable bottles, and bread bags are made of #4 plastics. (low density polyethylene, **LDPE**) Considered safe for food storage.

**5** Most yogurt cups, medicine bottles, ketchup, and syrup bottles are made of #5 plastic; these are considered safe. (polypropylene, **PP**)

**6** This is Styrofoam, many containers, disposable cups and plates, and disposable coolers are made up of #6 plastics. (polystyrene, **PS**) Evidence suggests PS leaches potentially toxic chemicals, especially when heated.

**7** This category covers "everything else." iPods and computer cases, along with some food containers and baby bottles include #7 plastics (**PC**). It can include bisphenol-A (BPA), banned in many states due to health risks.

### EASY TO RECYCLE

Plastics #1, 2, 4, and 5 are widely accepted plastics in recycling programs.

### DIFFICULT TO RECYCLE

Avoid plastics #3, 6, and 7 if possible. They are not widely accepted in recycling programs. Check with your local recycling program to see what they accept.

[Click here for more on plastics.](#)

When you purchase plastics, look for these logos:



## Recycled toner cartridges

These are a good example of the savings from recycling. Toner cartridges are returned to a manufacturer, checked to assure they meet physical specifications, re-filled with ink, and tested for quality. This cuts out major expenses of creating and manufacturing plastic into a specific shape, providing monetary and environmental savings.



**WHAT  
WHERE  
HOW  
TO  
RECYCLE IN  
OMAHA**

