

# FREE YOUR RECYCLABLES.



## It's Simple - No Plastic Bags!

Waste Management wants to help your business reduce recycling contamination. As a first step, we are providing a straightforward solution to eliminate the biggest contaminants - plastic bags and bagged recyclables in your collection system.

**Recycling your clean and dry bottles, cans, paper and cardboard is simple. No plastic bags, no bagged recyclables. If you're doing it right, there's no need for a plastic bag.**

### Why Are Plastic Bags So Problematic?

When recyclables arrive at our plant, they go through an automated sorting process. Recyclables must be loose (not in a bag) in order to make their way through the sorting equipment. Plastic bags wreak havoc at the plant; they become wrapped around sorting equipment. When this happens, all equipment must be shut down so that workers can climb into the machinery and cut plastic bags out of gears and screens. This poses a serious safety risk for workers and makes recycling inefficient and costly. Often good recyclables never make their way out of the plastic bag and end up going to a landfill. We need your help to ensure recyclable materials make it through the entire system to their next best use.

To see the impact of contamination (including plastic bags) at a Waste Management recycling plant, check out this video:

**Contamination.**

### Are There Other Options for Recycling Plastic Bags?

Clean and dry plastic bags can be recycled at many local retailers. The bags that are collected in these programs are processed separately so they stay clean and dry. Visit [www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org) to find a take back location near you.

### How Do I Manage My Recyclables Without Using Plastic Bags?

Don't worry, we have a solution for you. Remember, plastic bags were only invented in the 1960s. We managed before, and we can manage again. If your recyclables are clean and dry, there's no need for a plastic bag liner anyway.

#### PRO TIP!

Share our Business Recycling 101 video with co-workers and janitorial team – it explains why it's important to recycle right and how you can set your workplace up for success:

**Recycling 101.**

### Going Bag-Free Just Makes Sense!

- ✓ It's the right thing for the environment.
- ✓ If you are recycling right and your recyclables are clean and dry, there's no need to use a plastic bag as a liner.
- ✓ It reduces your costs – no more money spent on plastic bags or liners.
- ✓ It's faster and more efficient for your janitorial team – no more time spent replacing bags or liners each day.
- ✓ It will help your business reduce recycling contamination.

# OK, I'M READY TO STOP USING PLASTIC BAGS TO HOLD MY RECYCLABLES, WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

*Eliminating plastic bags at your workplace is simple. Follow these steps:*

- Start by talking to your janitorial team to determine how to work together to eliminate plastic bags or liners. Remember, recyclables should be clean and dry so, unlike trash, plastic bags or liners aren't needed to keep your recycling bins clean.
- Secondly, talk to all fellow employees. Essentially, everyone who uses the recycling and waste containers needs to know why you're eliminating plastic bags and liners and this is the perfect time to remind them loose plastic bags don't belong in the recycling either.
- Make sure all containers – both inside and out- are properly labeled. You can download bin decals from [recycleoftenrecycleright.com/resources/for-business/](https://recycleoftenrecycleright.com/resources/for-business/)
- Place posters in prominent areas, like by copiers, break room or front of the house to remind people that acceptable recyclables should be clean and dry, and to never place plastic bags in the recycling container.
- Train janitorial staff to empty loose collected recyclables from indoor containers directly into outdoor recycling bins. If plastic bags must be used in the indoor process, be sure to cut open those bags and empty recyclables loose into outdoor bins.
- Take your commitment to recycling right with no plastic bags to the next level. Include language prohibiting plastic bags during the collection process in contracts with janitorial staff, and include contamination statistics as metrics in their performance review.



## RECYCLING PROCESS WITHOUT PLASTIC BAGS

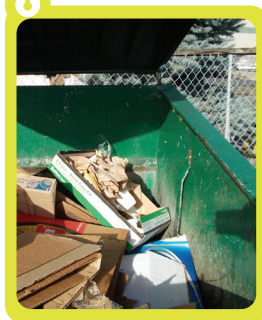
Place clean, dry materials in recycling container.



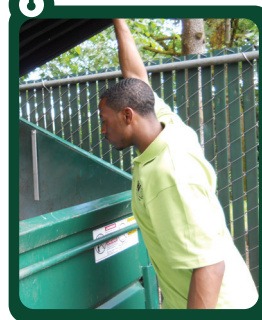
Consolidate smaller recycling containers into a larger, liner-free container.



Dump recyclables loose into your outdoor collection bin.



Double check recycling bin to make sure it's free from contaminants; no plastic bags or liners and all recyclables are loose in the bin.



For more tools and resources to help you recycle right, visit [RecycleOftenRecycleRight.com](https://RecycleOftenRecycleRight.com)