

# Be Bright, Recycle Right!

## WHAT NOT TO RECYCLE CONTAMINATION 101

### TOP 10 CONTAMINANTS

1. Plastic Bags
2. Needles/Biohazardous Waste
3. Wire, hose, cords, rope & chains
4. Propane Tanks
5. Yard Waste/Wood
6. Motor Oil Containers
7. Electronics
8. Food Waste
9. Clothing/Shoes
10. Mercury Containing Objects



Rejected loads from recycling facility  
Photo by Jason Turville – Trans-Jordan

### RECYCLING CONTAMINATION

Curbside recycling benefits most residents in Salt Lake County. It feels good to keep perfectly usable stuff out of landfills and to give our recyclable paper, cardboard, and containers a chance to be made into new products. Yet even well intended recyclers have contributed to recycling contamination due to misunderstanding, inaccurate information, or what those in the industry refer to as “wish-cycling” by placing an item in the bin and hoping it will get sent to the proper place.

In Salt Lake County last year, about 19% of recycling was rejected and landfilled due to contamination. So what is contamination and why is it messing up our recycling? Anything that ends up in a recycling bin that does not belong is known as a contaminant. In a perfect situation, a contaminant can be removed in the sorting process, but more often than not the contamination spreads to surrounding material, sometimes even ruining the entire load.

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Every month, you will learn about a contaminant, find out why it is harmful, and what you can do to be part of the solution.

Your questions, comments, and ideas are always welcome! Please contact [education@transjordan.org](mailto:education@transjordan.org) and they may be mentioned in our article or FAQ page. [Visit transjordan.org/recycle](http://transjordan.org/recycle) for more recycling information.

**Q:** I always carry garbage out to the trash can in garbage bags, is it OK to bag recycling?

**A: NO.** Please do not bag your recycling. Plastic bags of any kind do not belong in curbside recycling bins. If you must line your indoor recycling, empty the recycling into the curbside recycling bin without the liner. Some grocery store recycle plastic bags. For drop off locations please visit [www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](http://www.plasticfilmrecycling.org).



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