

Materials Lesson

Here you will learn about different materials & how to get rid of them in the right way.

There are many ways to get rid of stuff we don't need or use anymore. Some materials can be put in a cart or dumpster where we live. Others need to be taken to drop-off locations.

Iowa City curbside recycling collects these materials:

- paper & cardboard
- metal cans & foil
- plastic bottles
- cartons

Don't live in Iowa City? Most places in Johnson County offer a curbside pickup, but materials collected may be different.

Metal cans & aluminum foil can be recycled, & made into new cans. Make sure to rinse them first of any food before tossing in the recycle bin!

Paper, such as newspaper, cereal boxes, juice & milk cartons, school paper, & magazines, can be recycled. Recycled paper can be used to make new paper or boxes.

Plastic, such as water bottles & laundry detergent bottles, can be recycled & made into new things, such as bottles, carpet, or clothing. Make sure to rinse them first before tossing in the recycle bin!

Cardboard is not allowed in the trash in Johnson County, & must be recycled. Old cardboard boxes can be recycled into new paper or cardboard boxes.

Single stream recycling is when all recycling materials, such as paper, cardboard, metal cans, & plastic, can go in one bin mixed together. Iowa City curbside collection offers single stream recycling.

After your recycling is picked up from where you live, it is taken to a sorting facility to separate the materials into groups: metal, plastic, paper, & so on. Once these materials are sorted, they are sent to recycling companies to make them into new stuff.

There are a lot of other materials that can be recycled, but not in curbside recycling, such as electronics, tires, light bulbs, oil, & batteries. We have drop-off recycling programs for all these materials in Johnson County!

Drop-off locations include:

- East Side Recycling Center
- South Riverside Recycling Center
- Iowa City Landfill
- Coralville Recycling Center

Each location has different programs.

Glass bottles & jars can be recycled & have the materials used again. Glass can be recycled into new glass containers or home insulation. Some materials, like plastic, can only be recycled a few times. Glass can be recycled again & again forever.

Plastic bags cannot be recycled at the curb. When the mix of recycling materials end up at a sorting facility, plastic bags get caught in equipment & cause problems. Take these to local stores that have plastic bag recycling.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like masks, gloves, & wipes cannot be recycled. These should go in the trash when you are done using them.

Styrofoam cannot be recycled, & must go in the trash. To reduce waste, use options that can be reused or recycled instead.

Some light bulbs contain hazardous materials. CFL bulbs contain mercury, & LED bulbs contain lead. Recycle bulbs at the East Side Recycling Center, Iowa City Landfill, or community partners. When recycled, the hazardous materials are safely handled, & other parts of the bulb are recycled.

Electronics, like TVs, computers, & cell phones can be recycled. Each electronic is taken apart, & the materials are separated so that they can be recycled into new stuff. These can be recycled at the East Side Recycling Center or Iowa City Landfill.

Recycling appliances, such as refrigerators & ovens, is important because there are chemicals in them that are bad for the environment, & they are made of things that can be used again when recycled. Recycle at the Iowa City Landfill.

Most batteries should not be thrown in the trash because they can start fires at our landfill. Batteries can be recycled at the Hazardous Material Collection Facility at the Iowa City Landfill.

Tires are not allowed in the trash, & must be recycled. Recycled tire rubber can be used to build new roads. Recycle tires at the Iowa City Landfill.

Want to learn more?

Recycling: www.icgov.org/recycle

Hazardous Material & Batteries: www.icgov.org/hhm

Electronics: www.icgov.org/ewaste