General Information on Plastic Recycling

Manufactured as ➔

Number 1 Plastics
PET or PETE (polyethylene terephthalate)

Recycled into ➔

Polar fleece, fiber, tote bags, furniture, carpet, paneling, straps, (occasionally) new containers

PET plastic is the most common for single-use bottled beverages, because it is inexpensive, lightweight and easy to recycle. It poses low risk of leaching break-down products. Recycling rates remain relatively low (around 20%), though the material is in high demand by remanufacturers.

Found in: Soft drink, water and beer bottles; mouthwash bottles; peanut butter containers; salad dressing and vegetable oil containers; ovenable food trays.

Local Recycling — # 1 bottles, tubs, and "clamshell" containers are recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites with the exception of micro-wave food trays.

Manufactured as ➔

Number 2 Plastics
HDPE (high density polyethylene)

Recycled into ➔

Laundry detergent bottles, oil bottles, pens, recycling containers, floor tile, drain-age pipe, lumber, benches, doghouses, picnic tables, fencing

HDPE is a versatile plastic with many uses, especially for packaging. It carries low risk of leaching and is readily recyclable into many goods.

Found in: Milk jugs, juice bottles; bleach, detergent and household cleaner bottles; shampoo bottles; some trash and shopping bags; motor oil bottles; butter and yogurt tubs; cereal box liners

Local Recycling — # 2 bottles and tubs are recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites, with the exception of bottles that contained motor oil, antifreeze, or hazardous materials. Plastic shopping bags can be returned to all grocery stores in Fort Collins for recycling.

Manufactured as ➔

Number 3 Plastics
V (Vinyl) or PVC

Recycled into ➔

Decks, paneling, mudflaps, roadway gut-ters, flooring, cables, speed bumps, mats

PVC is tough and weathers well, so it is commonly used for piping, siding and similar applications. PVC contains chlorine, so its manufacture can release highly dangerous dioxins. If you must cook with PVC, don't let the plastic touch food. Also never burn PVC, because it releases toxins.

Found in: Window cleaner and detergent bottles, shampoo bottles, cooking oil bottles, clear food pack-aging, wire jacketing, medical equipment, siding, win-dows, piping

Local Recycling — # 3 bottles are recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites. Take plastic-coated wires to scrap metal dealers for recycling.

Manufactured as ➔

Number 4 Plastics
LDPE (low density polyethylene)

Recycled into ➔

Trash can liners and cans, compost bins, shipping envelopes, paneling, lumber, landscaping ties, floor tile

LDPE is a flexible plastic with many applications. His-torically it has not been accepted through most Ameri-can curbside recycling programs, but more and more communities are starting to accept it.

Found in: Squeezable bottles; bags (bread, frozen food, dry cleaning and shopping bags); tote bags; cloth-ing; furniture; carpet

Local Recycling — # 4 bottles are recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites. Plastic shopping bags can be returned to all grocery stores in Fort Collins for recycling. Used clothing can be taken to local thrift stores or Rivendell drop-off site.

Manufactured as ➔

Number 5 Plastics
PP (polypropylene)

Recycled into ➔

Signal lights, battery cables, brooms, brushes, auto battery cases, ice scrapers, landscape borders, bicycle racks, rakes, bins, pallets, trays

Polypropylene has a high melting point, and so is often chosen for containers that must accept hot liquid. It is gradually becoming more accepted by recyclers.

Found in: Some yogurt containers, syrup bottles, ketchup bottles, caps, straws, medicine bottles

Local Recycling — # 5 bottles and tubs can be recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites.

Manufactured as ➔

Number 6 Plastics
PS (polystyrene)

Recycled into ➔

Insulation, light switch plates, egg cartons, vents, rulers, foam packing, carry-out containers

Polystyrene can be made into rigid or foam products -- in the latter case it is popularly known as the trademark **Styrofoam.** Evidence suggests polystyrene can leach potential toxins into foods. The material was long on environmentalists' hit lists for dispersing widely across the landscape, and for being notoriously difficult to recycle. Most places still don't accept it, though it is gradually gaining traction.

Found in: Disposable plates and cups, meat trays, egg cartons, carry-out containers, aspirin bottles, compact disc cases

Local Recycling — # 6 clear plastic "clamshell" to-go containers can be recycled in Fort Collins' curbside and drop-off sites. Foam to-go containers, meat trays, and chunk Styrofoam cannot be recycled in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites. (You can recycle Styrofoam peanuts by donating them to a pack and ship business.)

Manufactured as ➔

Number 7 Plastics
Miscellaneous

Recycled into ➔

Plastic lumber, custom-made products

A wide variety of other plastic resins that don't fit into the previous categories are lumped into number 7. A few are even made from plants (polyactide) and are compostable. Polycarbonate is number 7, and is the hard plastic that has parents worried these days, after studies have shown it can leach potential hormone disruptors.

Found in: Three- and five-gallon water bottles, sun-glasses, DVDs, iPod and computer cases, signs and displays, certain food containers, nylon

Local Recycling — # 7 bottles and tubs less than 2-1/2 gallons in size are accepted in Fort Collins' curbside recycling program and drop-off sites. Compostable plastics (often labeled #7 PLA) and all non-bottle or not-tub shaped plastics are not locally recyclable.

Adapted from: A consumer's guide to green from GoodHousekeeping.com - thedailygreen.com/green-homes/latest/recycling-symbols-plastics-460321
For more recycling information : fcgov.com/recycling/centers.php