

FALL 2016

Saint Louis
COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH
REDUCE • REUSE • RECYCLE
GO GREEN!



HOW WE ROLL!

REDUCE • REUSE • RECYCLE

MASTERING METALS

Metals have transformed civilization since ancient people first realized the dark-silvery rocks poking out of the earth could be worked into tools and weapons, sometime around 1500 B.C.E. The first metal recycling in this country occurred in 1776 when New York City patriots melted down a statue of King George to make over 42,000 bullets. Today's scrap and junk yards have roots coming from early peddler carts used in the 1840s to collect salvaged tin, copper, and brass.

The inherent value of anything metal has led to some confusion about getting metals to the proper recycling destination. Because metals can be a valuable resource, let's start with the different kinds of metals out there and how they can be recycled.



**FERROUS METALS
CONTAIN SOME TYPE
OF IRON. IF A MAGNET
STICKS TO THE OBJECT,
IT IS A FERROUS METAL
LIKE STEEL OR IRON**



Both types of metal are extracted as an ore, refined, and fabricated into products – an energy intensive process. Using recycled metal greatly decreases the resources needed for consumer goods. Fortunately, there are abundant recycling opportunities for metal. The first question:

Which metals can be recycled curbside?

DID YOU KNOW?

- An aluminum can is recycled and back on store shelves within 60 days
- Using ferrous scrap metal vs. virgin materials in iron/steel production reduces CO₂ emissions by 58 percent

Source: Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. 2016

“METALING” AROUND CURBSIDE RECYCLING

When it comes to metals in mixed recycling programs, such as curbside collection, think packaging! The facilities that sort recycling are designed to handle packaging. For metals this means cans, bottles, aluminum food trays, and foil. Even though other items made from metal may be recyclable (such as gutters, pipes, pots, and pans), these items **must not** go in a curbside bin! These items cause serious damage to the sorting equipment and may pose danger for people who work in the recycling facility.

Acceptable metal items in your curbside bin include:

- Empty Aluminum Cans and Bottles
- Clean Aluminum Foil, Pans, and Trays
- Metal and Bi-Metal cans (tin)
- Empty Aerosol Cans



THE SCOOP ON SCRAP

Just because an item can't be recycled curbside doesn't mean it's not worthy of recycling at a drop-off location. Diverting recyclable metal from landfills reduces the need to mine and refine metal ore for use in new products. Take your unwanted metal to a scrap yard. Depending on current market prices, you may even get some money back!

For licensed locations in St. Louis County, visit: www.stlouisco.com/HealthandWellness/RecyclingandWasteManagement/RecyclingInformation/PlacestoRecycle#Drop-off

Here are some examples of scrap metal you may have lying around the house that you can take to a scrap yard:

- Aluminum Gutters
- Copper Pipes/Wire
- Iron and Steel Chairs
- Stainless Steel Fixtures
- Brass Plumbing/ Fixtures
- Window Frames
- Pots and Pans
- Cabinets
- Siding
- Window Blinds



FOR BBQ, WE GIVE THANKS... NOW WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THE TANKS?

Propane tanks contain valuable metals – steel and copper – in the valve. However, unless every drop of gas is expelled, these tanks can cause serious injury or even death to both landfill and recycling personnel. Manufacturers encourage customers to recycle larger tanks (used for grills and outdoor fireplaces) by returning them to a retail outlet to be exchanged for a new tank at a reduced cost. Small camp stove tanks often have instructions on how to empty the tank completely for recycling at a scrap metal dealer.

If you are unsure if a propane tank is empty, make an appointment at the regional Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program to drop the tank(s) off for proper disposal.

FOIL FACT

Aluminum foil can be a tricky beast. Aluminum foil is definitely recyclable in your curbside bin, but it needs to be clean. If it has heavy food residue, it is best to throw it in the trash. Have you ever thought about reusing your foil? Aluminum foil is dishwasher safe and can be put on the top rack. When the steam rushes out from opening your dishwasher door, you will have clean, reusable foil sheets. Try it and see how this reuse tip saves you money, in addition to being earth friendly!

CHARGE IT! THE BEST BATTERY SOLUTION

Batteries are made of metal and they **can** be recycled. For alkaline or single-use batteries, the process to recover the metals exceeds their market value. For that reason, there is a charge for most single-use battery recycling options.

The best option, when trying to keep batteries out of landfills, is to choose rechargeable batteries. Depending on the frequency of use, proper handling and charging, the average AA rechargeable battery can be recharged up to 1,000 times! These batteries can contain toxic chemicals and are best kept out of the landfill. Cell phones or rechargeable batteries weighing less than 11 lbs/5kg each can be recycled through the **Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporations Call2Recycle** program. Visit Call2Recycle.org to find a drop-off location near you, or visit the regional Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facilities that also accept batteries.

UP IN THE AIR ABOUT AEROSOL CANS?

Aerosol cans can be recycled in your curbside bin as long as the can is empty (nothing can spray out anymore). If the can contains a product that is hazardous, follow the directions on the label for disposal. If the label indicates that you should contact a local waste authority, you can recycle the can through the regional Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program.



Make an appointment to drop off items mentioned above by visiting www.HHWSTL.com

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016 WASTE DIVERSION GRANT RECIPIENTS!

Brentwood Middle School will start a composting program to reduce waste sent to the landfill by 20%.

The City of Florissant will implement an outreach campaign to improve residential recycling.

The Green Business Challenge will use grant funding to cover certification fees for St. Louis County businesses who participate in the challenge.

Operation Food Search will purchase tablets for food pantries to streamline and replace paper receipt and reporting processes for food donations.

St. Louis Recycling and Waste will purchase recycling carts to increase multi-family and commercial recycling in the Fenton area.

St. Louis HELP will purchase advertising for their annual events that collect used home medical equipment such as wheel chairs, walkers and crutches. This equipment is distributed at no cost to the uninsured and underinsured.

The St. Louis Teacher Recycling Center will open a new "POD" in University City and hold teacher workshops. A POD is a location where teachers can pick up industrial scrap materials that would have been landfilled but are repurposed for use in art, math, and play.

Total Organics will do promote the composting of food waste and sponsor a community food waste collection service at the Ferguson Farmer's Market.

W.W. Keysor Elementary School in Kirkwood will expand their school composting program.

The Waste Diversion Grant program and this newsletter are funded by voter-approved St. Louis County Landfill surcharge fees. For more information on our programs, visit www.recyclesaintlouis.com or call (314) 615-8958. This newsletter is printed on recycled content paper.