



Plastic Film Recycling



Tips for Businesses and Retailers

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Plastic Film Recycling Tips for Businesses and Retailers

Thank you for considering how your business can promote plastic film recycling. In the following pages, you will find specific tips for recycling plastic film and wrap at retail locations and distribution centers, helpful reference materials and a contact list of experts, recyclers and buyers of plastic film in your area.

These tips from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and plasticfilmrecycling.org are useful for commercial and industrial sites. For more on consumer and citizen recycling, visit dnr.wi.gov/topic/Recycling/bags.

To learn about setting up a collection program and registering your site as a drop-off location, visit www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Identifying recyclable plastic film

Plastic film is thin polyethylene plastic used for wraps, packaging and commercial/retail use bags. It is sometimes called stretch film or shrink film. Most plastic film collected for recycling may carry either a #2 HDPE or #4 LDPE mark. Common commercial or industrial use examples include:

- **Case, shrink and pallet (stretch film) wraps**
- **Film and bags designed to protect or transport merchandise**
- **Furniture and electronics wraps**
- **Industrial use film and bags designed to protect or transport materials**
- **Bubble wrap and air packets (shipping)**
- **Grocery, retail and newspaper bags**
- **Dry cleaning bags**
- **Consumer product packaging (bathroom tissue, paper towels and bulk item case wrap)**
- **Zipper type food storage bags and bread bags**

Since every film buyer or recycler has their own market specifications, it is important to describe your material as accurately as possible.

Identifying NON-recyclable plastic film

Keeping film CLEAN, DRY and CONTAMINANT FREE is vital to recycling. Avoid the following in your recycling bins:

- **Multi-layered, laminated or heavily printed films (like pet food bags)**
- **Non-polyethylene plastic film (which can be stiff and/or crinkly)**
- **Bags used to contain frozen food or prewashed salad greens**
- **Bags used to contain softener salt**
- **Degradable bags and films**
- **Agricultural films (like horizontal silage bags, etc.)**
- **Plastic hangers**
- **Plastic bottles and jugs, tape, paper or other waste**
- **Styrofoam™ or “peanuts”**
- **Food waste**
- **Residues, paint and adhesives**

If you are not sure about a specific material, please check with your film buyer or recycler before including any material in your recycling stream.

Free Informational Posters Available on the Wisconsin DNR Website

Recycle *clean, dry* plastic bags and film packaging

Recycle if Clean & Dry

Store Drop-off

PLASTIC BAGS / FILM / WRAP

how2recycle.info

- ONLY frozen food bags with the above how2recycle label
- NO prewashed salad mix bags
- NO degradable bags

Recycled plastic bags and wraps can become new packaging or durable home building products.

plasticfilmrecycling.org

Recycling plastic bags and film

First REDUCE your use of plastic bags and film, then REUSE and then RECYCLE!

Most *clean and dry* plastic film and bags are 100% recyclable at participating Wisconsin store drop-off locations. Find a participating location in your area at plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Generally, these materials are *not* collected with your curbside recycling because they can get caught in the machines that sort your recyclable containers.

Keep more plastics out of landfills. Take clean, empty bags and film to a retailer that offers a plastic film and bag collection bin to customers.

Plastic film includes any thin plastic used in things like bags, shrink-wraps or paper towel and dry cleaning overwraps. Although you may not notice, most likely you come into contact with it every day. Most plastic film is recyclable and has great value to manufacturers as a raw material. Products made from bags and films include new bags, composite lumber and playground equipment.

Remember: plastic containers like water bottles and yogurt containers need to go in your recycling bin and should not be included with your plastic film and bags.

If in doubt, throw it out! Plastic film must be clean and dry and the right type in order for it to be recycled. Materials that can harm the recycling process include: tape, labels, paper receipts, food residue and crumbs, salt, and crinkly or rigid plastics (bottles and tubes). These contaminants can ruin the quality of the plastic and may result in it not being recycled.

Remember: Reduce, Reuse, then Recycle!

Why do plastic bags and film need to be clean and dry? Most plastic bags and film do not go through a wash process before turning into a new product and therefore must be received clean. Moisture can be a problem when bags are bunched up or balled tightly together. Mold can form, thus contaminating and ruining the batch.

Can I recycle plastic bags and film if they...

YES!

- ...are colored plastic? **YES**, the color does not affect the recycling process.
- ...stretch when I pull them apart with both hands? **YES**, this is the correct type of plastic to recycle. If you cannot stretch them apart with your hands, throw it in the garbage.
- ...have a paper label or tape stuck on? **YES** but labels, tape and adhesive strips **MUST** be removed prior to recycling.

NO!

- ...are thicker plastic like a dog/cat food bag or a frozen vegetable bag? **NO**, this type of plastic will degrade the quality of the plastic film collected.
- ...were used for water softener salt? **NO**, this plastic bag will have traces of salt on it and should be thrown away. The salt will degrade the recycling process.
- ...make a loud crinkle sound (like a chip bag or candy wrappers) when I mash it in my hand? **NO**, this plastic film is not recyclable.

W.R.A.P.

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This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call (608) 262-2111 for more information.

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For a [free full-size PDF download](#) version of this poster, visit dnr.wi.gov and search “plastic bag and film recycling”

Guide to Plasticfilmrecycling.org's "Set Up a Collection Program" Website

The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org provides several resources to help retailers, distribution centers and other businesses set up a collection program. Visit the site and select the "Set Up a Collection Program" tab. On this page, you will find the following resources:

Tip sheets for specific site needs

Free downloadable signs/posters

Links to find recyclers and buyers

List a site in the drop-off directory

Links to more information

Calculate costs and benefits

The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with tabs for Home, Find a Drop Off Location, Set Up a Collection Program (highlighted), Facilitate Bag and Film Recycling, Add Your Location, Get Listed, and W.R.A.P. The main heading is "Set Up a Collection Program". Below this, there is an introductory paragraph and a search box for tip sheets. A "Waste Audit" download button is visible. The "Artwork Downloads" section features several posters and signs, including "Drop-Off Center Poster", "Mail Recycling Poster", "Retail Poster", and "Magnet". A grid of resource links is located at the bottom, with arrows pointing from the text on the left to specific links like "Learn What's Recyclable", "Find Recyclers", "List In Drop Off Directory", "WRAP / FRFG", "How2Recycle", "PlasticsMarkets.org", "Calculator", "Bins and Equipment", and "Bale Specifications".

This page was last updated in **April 2014. Be aware that the webpage layout is subject to change and, if it appears differently on your screen, be sure to keep looking for these resources.

Recycling in a Retail/Grocery Store

Conducting a Retail/Grocery Waste Audit

Conducting a plastic film waste audit is the first step to quality assurance in your plastic film recycling program. Retailers can conduct a waste audit in five simple steps:

- 1. Collect samples.** Look in trash bins, dumpsters and compactors for thin plastic film to evaluate what kinds of recyclable plastic films your facility generates.
- 2. Identify plastic film types.** Look for #2 HDPE and #4 LDPE identification marks on film and bags, or use the downloadable reference signs (see step three, below). Material that is unmarked or for which you have questions (even if it carries a #2 or #4 mark) should be evaluated by your film buyer or recycler to determine if it can be collected and recycled. *A good rule of thumb is if the plastic tears like paper, it is typically not polyethylene and should be kept out of your program.*
- 3. Post an educational sign near waste bins to show what plastic film items can and cannot be recycled.** This will help maintain quality. Use the plastic bag and film recycling signs provided for free at dnr.wi.gov (search for “plastic bag and film recycling”) and www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.
- 4. Train your personnel to recognize recyclable films and contaminants.** Contaminants include moisture, dirt and non-polyethylene films and plastics.
- 5. Conduct a periodic audit.** Your collection process, signage and training may change over time. Always refer to your film buyer or recycler with any questions about items for which you are unsure. QUALITY is the most important component to a successful program.

Simple Tips for Drop-Off Locations

Many retailers offer collection bins at their entrances or elsewhere in their stores to offer a place for consumers to return their film and bags. There are several things your business can do to make a customer drop-off program a success:

1. Place recycling bins next to all trash bins to make it as easy to recycle as it is to discard the material. Avoid placing bins in wet areas.
2. Be sure to include easy-to-understand labels on both film collection bins and trash bins. Recycling bins and waste containers should look different to avoid confusing your customers.
3. Display a [film plastic educational poster](#) (available for free by searching for “plastic bag and film recycling” at dnr.wi.gov) or [the free downloadable posters from www.plasticfilmrecycling.org](#) near or above film collection bins to deter customers from putting waste inside.
4. Display samples of plastic film/bags to illustrate acceptable types of film for recycling to employees/customers.
5. Combine training into regular staff meetings so that employees can answer customer questions about how and what to recycle.
6. Use clear bins and bags to help with quality control and limit contamination.
7. If you are working with a hauler or recycler who is picking up other recyclables such as cardboard, work with them to find how best to prepare the film plastic for pick up.
8. If you have space for storage and you're generating more than a ton per month, consider baling your film.

Setting Up a Collection Program

The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org provides resources for [setting up a local collection program](#) and for [registering locations as community drop-off centers](#).

If your location already accepts bags and film from customers, please add your information to the Drop-Off Directory at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Recycling in a Distribution Center

Tips for the Distribution Center

- 1. Conduct a Waste Audit.** Look in trash bins, dumpsters and compactors for thin plastic film to evaluate what kinds of recyclable plastic films your facility generates.
- 2. Contact a film buyer or recycler to develop your program.** A film buyer or recycler may provide resources such as balers, bins or technical assistance. The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org maintains a [searchable directory of buyers and haulers](#) that work with plastic film and wrap recycling, though you should check with your buyer or recycler even if they are not yet on this list.
- 3. Consider collection methods.** Designating a clean and dry storage location will help protect the quality of the material. Many distribution centers generate enough film (more than 1 ton per month) that a baler becomes useful for consolidating material. Your film buyer or recycler can help determine which type of baler best meets your needs. Balers can be bought, leased or, in some cases, provided in exchange for material. To increase your volume collected and potentially your revenue, consider backhauling from your customers.
- 4. Train employees.** Use information from your sample audits and signage on bins that clearly displays what materials can be recycled.
- 5. Place collection bins in convenient locations.** This will help increase employee participation, help decrease contamination and enhance the value of your material. Recyclers state that it is important to use collection bags made of a resin that can be recycled along with the film you're collecting—HDPE or LDPE.
- 6. Designate an employee(s) to handle film collection throughout the warehouse.** He or she will be in charge of collecting bags from collection bins, doing spot checks for contamination and will be in charge of consolidating and storing the material.
- 7. Maintain communication with your recycler/buyer to enhance the value.** It is essential that your material continually meet the buyer/recycler's quality requirements. Make sure your recycler or buyer knows how to contact you.
- 8. Update employees on how the recycling program is going to keep them motivated to succeed!**

Consider Backhauling from Your Customers

If your wholesale customers generate plastic film within their operations, consider backhauling collected films to your warehouse. The benefits of backhauling are two-fold: your company can consolidate greater volumes of film for market while providing an additional service to your customers by allowing them to reduce their own disposal costs. Make a plan for how to collect and store the backhaul material. Follow the suggestions below to reduce contamination from your backhaul customers and to maintain the quality of material.

- Use clear collection bags to deter contamination.
- Provide signs and info about what can and can't be recycled. Be specific and stress quality.
- Keep track of which bags arrive from where so that you can identify sources if problems arise.
- Do periodic quality checks at pick up and/or in the warehouse.
- Communicate with your customers to address any issues.

Setting Up a Collection Program

The website www.plasticfilmrecycling.org provides resources for [setting up a local collection program](#) and for [registering locations as community drop-off centers](#).

If your location already accepts bags and film from customers, please add your information to the Drop-Off Directory at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Recyclers, Haulers and Buyers of Wisconsin Plastic Film and Wrap from the plasticfilmrecycling.org Recycler Directory (last update March 2014)

To check for latest information and updates, select the “Find Recyclers” button under the “Set Up a Collection Program” tab at www.plasticfilmrecycling.org.

Many of the buyers listed here only come to Wisconsin for large loads and several only buy clear commercial LDPE film. Contact buyers directly to learn about their services and requirements.

****Inclusion in this directory does not imply DNR endorsement****

[Access Management Information](#)

2538 Danels St
Madison, WI 53718
Dick Deschane 608-221-3212
richard.dechane@accessmanagement.com
Neither listed as buyer nor as drop-off

[Action Recycling](#)

2969 S Chase
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Nick Schultz 414-671-5777
nick.schultz@actionrecyclers.com
Buyer and drop-off

[AERT, Inc](#)

914 North Jefferson
Springdale, AR 72765
Stormy Luttrell 479-756-7406
stormyluttrell@aert.cc
Buyer

[Alan Josephsen Co., Inc.](#)

101 East Maple St
Mundelein, IL 60060
Peter Josephsen 847-949-0700
peter@ajcoinc.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Aronson Recycling Company](#)

513 Fond du Lac St
Waupun, WI 53963
Steve Aronson 920-324-2209
saronson@aronsonrecycling.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Avangard Innovative, LP](#)

11906 Brittmoore Park Dr
Houston, TX 77041
Marcus L. San Juan 281-582-0700
msanjuan@avaicg.com
Buyer

[Central Paper Stock](#)

6665 Jonas Pl
St.Louis, MO 63134
Stan Cope 314-521-8686 ext.106
stan@paperrecycler.com
Buyer

[DJM Global Company](#)

31 West Downer Pl suite 201
Aurora, IL 60506
Lametrick 6308010220
djmglobal360@gmail.com
Buyer

[East-Terra Supply LLC](#)

60 E Long Ridge Road
Terre Haute, IN 47802
Jay Chu 812-645-4816
info@east-terra.com
Buyer

[Faherty Incorporated](#)

1120 Broadway
Platteville, WI 53818
Ed Faherty 608-348-9586
ed@farerty.com
Buyer

[Greenpath Recovery, Inc.](#)
330 W Citrus Ave
Colton, CA 92324
Joe Castro 909-954-0686
rsomerville@greenpathrecovery.com
Buyer

[Hilltopper Recycling](#)
W6833 Industrial Blvd
Onalaska, WI 54650
Penny Pierce 608-406-2542
penny.pierce@hilltopperrefuse.com
Buyer

[Javelina Trade Co](#)
11844 Bandera Rd #491
San Antonio, TX 78023
Valorie De la Torre 210-725-0339
javelinatradeco@yahoo.com
Buyer

[Kard Recycling Service Inc](#)
4702 Helgesen Dr
Madison, WI 53718
Tom Kern 800-786-8585
sales@kardrecycling.com
Drop-off

[KARD Recycling Service Inc](#)
3000 S 163rd
New Berlin, WI 53151
Tom Kern 800-786-8585
sales@kardrecycling.com
Drop-off

[Landfill Reduction & Recycling](#)
3001 E Glendale Ave
Appleton, WI 54911
Jason Salisbury 920-319-8118
jason.salisbury@landfillreduction.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Louis Monteleone Fibers](#)
1170 Longwood Ave
Bronx, NY 10474
Mandy Weinstock 516-637-0728
toreli@verizon.net
Buyer

[McDunnough, Inc](#)
10732 Plaza Dr
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189
William Seling 734-449-4008
william@mcDunnough.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Milwaukee Working](#)
2233 N 30th
Milwaukee, WI 53208
Bob Wulf 414-702-7752
bob.wulf@milwaukeeworking.org
Drop-off

[Mondo Polymer Technologies](#)
27620 State Route 7 PO Box 250
Reno, OH 45773
Ron Wesel 740-376-9396
ron@mondopolymer.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Nexcycle Plastics Inc](#)
235 Wilkinson Road
Brampton, ON L6T4M2
Joe Lapierre 905-454-2666
jlapierre@npiplastic.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Pioneer-Milwaukee](#)
4875 N 32nd
Milwaukee, WI 53209
Jim Birmingham 414-255-2146
jbirmingham@pioneerintl.com
Buyer and drop-off

[POLY-V, INC.](#)
604 East Butler St
Manchester, IA 52057
Donald Syren 563-823-8646
donald@poly-vinc.com
Buyer

[R&J RECYCLING](#)
6550 S Oak Park
Chicago, IL 60638
Laureano Robles
fabany1@sbcglobal.net
Buyer

[Ram Recycling Inc](#)

W188S8393 Mercury Dr
Muskego, WI 53150
Tony Duckert 262-679-8864
info@ramrecycling.net
Buyer

[Schulzs Recycling](#)

W6059 Heldt St
Merrill, WI 54452
Jolene 715-536-7141
schulzsrecyl@msn.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Snow Tree](#)

25 Nautilus Ave
Plainview, NY 11803
Mandy 5166370728
toreli@verizon.net
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[Trex Company, Inc.](#)

160 Exeter Dr
Winchester, VA 22603
Dave Heglas 540-542-6327
dheglas@trex.com
Buyer

[U.S Pulp & Paper](#)

1892 Greentree Rd Suite 2
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
David Cohen 856-489-3500
uspulp@gmail.com
Buyer

[U.S.Polymers, Inc.](#)

100 Cummings Center Suite 326-
G
Beverly, MA 01960
Randy Haight 978-921-8000
randy@uspolymer.net
Buyer

[Universal Commodity Services, Inc](#)

10612D Providence Rd #750
Charlotte, NC 28277
Igor Beylin 704-690-9668
ibeylin@ucsincny.com
Buyer

[West Allis Salvage](#)

1909 S 80th St
West Allis, WI 53219
Nelson Dos Reis 414-321-4134
nelsond@westallissalvage.com
Buyer and drop-off

[Wisconsin Film & Bag](#)

3100 E. Richmond St
Shawano, WI 54166
Dan Blake 715-524-8036
danblake@wifb.com
Buyer