

City hopes to clear up confusion involving two common recycling mistakes

(Penticton, BC – Sept. 26, 2024) – The City of Penticton is issuing a reminder to residents about two common recycling mistakes that continue to pop up throughout the community.

Recent audits by RecycleBC reveal that people are continuing to place items within plastic bags in their residential recycling carts. To be clear, no plastic bags of any kind – blue, black or clear – are permitted in curbside recycling. Flexible plastics can get tangled in the machinery, causing operational shutdowns.

“The recycling receiving facility frequently receives materials that have been sorted and tied into plastic bags. This may seem like it is helpful, but it results in the bags and contents within them needing to be thrown away,” says Sustainability Coordinator Madison Poultney. “The bags cannot be opened because there have been numerous instances where a staff member has been injured by something inside.”

Secondly, audits show that residents are mistakenly stacking or nesting their recyclables together. For example, metal and plastic containers are being found stacked together, which makes it difficult to separate during the sorting process. Nesting also includes papers stashed inside of a cereal box, and shoving any type of materials into a large plastic container.

Materials like these that arrive at the receiving facility are deemed “unsortable materials,” cannot be recycled and are sent to the landfill. This adds to the City’s overall contamination rate, which can result in fines from RecycleBC that will ultimately be passed down to taxpayers.

The only material that can be recycled in the blue cart that must be contained in a paper bag or small cardboard box is shredded paper.

“Instead of tying recycling in a plastic bag or mixing stacks of containers, please throw all materials in your cart or bin loosely to ensure that they will be properly recycled,” adds Poultney.

How to recycle flexible plastics

The best way to recycle flexible plastics is to take them to the flexible plastics bin at the depot, where they are recycled separately. After flexible plastics are taken to the depot, they are produced into a recycled plastic pellet and turned into a usable feedstock for new product manufacturing.

Flexible Plastics can be taken at the J&C Bottle Depot (200 Rosetown Avenue) or the recycling depot at Campbell Mountain Landfill (1765 Reservoir Road).

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