



# Frequently Asked Questions: Recycling

Florida Tech Facilities Operations



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# General Recycling

## Florida Tech Bin Color Codes:

BLACK, BROWN, GREY: Landfill bound waste and trash

BLUE: Plastic or Aluminum Bottles & Cans

GREEN, YELLOW: Paper Only

RED: Hazardous Waste

*Remember, this is a working document and is subject to changes and revision.*

## **Who handles Florida Tech's recycling?**

Florida Tech's recycling program is coordinated through the Facilities Operations Director of Operations in addition to our custodial services provider, National Management Resources. National performs the physical collection of the items and places them into Waste Management dumpsters and receptacles.

## **How is recycling beneficial to our campus?**

Recycling is a sustainable way to continue the lifespan of a product, cutting down on the overall ecological footprint of the University by giving waste a new life. It also diverts expensive waste streams into a more economically sustainable process.

## **Why can I still recycle everything at my house (or apartment), but not on campus?**

Waste Management has a different set of rules for residential collection and commercial collection of recyclables.

## **How can we teach people what is recyclable or not?**

Use this FAQ to educate yourself, then educate your roommates, friends, teammates, professors, coaches, and anyone else who calls Florida Tech home. Remember, it only takes one or two people to contaminate an entire recycling bin, forcing those items to instead get sent to landfill. If anyone is unsure about anything not mentioned in this document, reach out to campus recycling resources.

## **Where do you put various items (cans, paper, plastic, etc.)?**

Campus-wide recycling is achieved through our multiple types of recycling bins including exterior cans/bottles bins, interior single-stream bins, and Hex-bins; there is a green bin for paper and a blue bin for cans and plastic bottles. See [this flyer](#), which was created to make it as simple as possible to recycle correctly on campus. **For cardboard boxes, please flatten them and place them in the cardboard dumpsters.**

## **Plastics**

### **What numbered plastics are recyclable?**

Waste Management does not strictly follow the number system. For campus recycling of plastics, remember that bottles (with lids on tight) belong in the BLUE bins.

### **Are plastic straws recyclable?**

No. While some people may think that since they are plastic they can be recycled, this is not the case. You can read more [here](#).

### **Are plastic containers, forks, spoons, or knives recyclable?**

No. Single-use plastics for food use like these are made of very low quality material that do not make recycling them profitable. Reduce your impact by [avoiding single-use plastics!](#)

### **Are plastic shopping bags recyclable?**

To recycle your plastic shopping bags on campus, please take them to the recycling station on the first floor of Evans Library at the base of the stairs. To find other local drop off stations like Publix, look [here](#).

### **Are disposable drink cups recyclable (i.e. Solo®, Starbucks®, Dunkin®)?**

Nope. To help keep these bad boys out of our oceans and landfills bring your own reusable cup/bottle - you'll be able to easily identify your drink, carry more volume, and get a [discount](#) when buying your drink. A win-win-win!

### **Are plastic lids recyclable (i.e. coffee cup lids, fast food drink lids)?**

No. Single-use plastics like these are made of very low quality material that do not make recycling them profitable. Reduce your impact by [avoiding single-use plastics!](#)

### **Are plastic bottle caps recyclable?**

Yes, but please *be sure the lid is tightly fastened* on the bottle. Loose caps tend to jam the sorting machines at the recycling center!

### **Can the plastic bags inside of cereals be recycled?**

Yes! You can recycle these alongside your plastic shopping bags. To recycle your plastic shopping bags on campus, please take them to the recycling station on the first floor of Evans Library at the base of the stairs. To find other local drop off stations, look [here](#).

### **Is bubble wrap/air pillows or plastic cling wrap recyclable?**

Bubble wrap and air pillows are recyclable alongside your plastic shopping bags (take to library), *as long as you've completely deflated it first*. Cling wrap is *not* recyclable. To learn more about recycling plastic films, look [here](#).

### **Do my bottles need to be rinsed? How clean do they need to be?**

Bottles should be *completely empty* and ideally rinsed, especially if coming from dorms. If you're walking across campus and need to drop your drink bottle in the BLUE bins for recycling, make sure it's *completely empty* and the lid is on tight!

### **Do the labels on my bottles need to be removed?**

Taking labels off is great, but not fully necessary.

### **Are the to-go containers at the university dining facilities recyclable?**

Dining services' to-go "clamshells" should not be put in the recycling receptacles.

## **Metals**

### **Do my aluminum cans need to be rinsed?**

Cans should be *completely empty* and ideally rinsed, especially if coming from dorms as those often have the most food waste. Drop your cans in the BLUE bins.

# Paper/Cardboard

## **Where can I recycle cardboard boxes?**

Cardboard boxes can be taken to the cardboard recycling dumpsters found near residence halls.

## **Are pizza boxes recyclable?**

Unfortunately, pizza boxes cannot be put in the cardboard recycling dumpsters due to soiling from cheese, grease, and crumbs. This contamination interferes with the pulping process during paper/cardboard recycling.

## **Are paper cups/plates recyclable?**

No. Despite being called “paper”, these items are almost always coated with some sort of plastic or wax which interferes with the pulping process during paper recycling. Food and drink residue can also cause problems. To avoid adding these items to the landfill, opt for traditional cups and dining-ware that you can use over and over again.

## **Are used napkins/paper towels recyclable?**

No. These items are soiled after use and cannot be processed for recycling.

## **Are glossy coated magazines recyclable?**

Yes! Toss these in with the rest of your paper in the GREEN bins, other single stream cans, or the yellow paper sleds (OEC).

## **Are sticky-notes recyclable?**

Avoid putting sticky notes in the recycling. The adhesive that makes them stick can interfere with the pulping process during paper recycling at the plant.

# Glass

## **Where can I recycle glass?**

Unfortunately Waste Management, the company responsible for handling Florida Tech’s recycling, is not recycling glass commercially. Instead of throwing your glass away, re-use it with some of these [ideas](#).

# Electronics

## What should I do with old batteries, phones and electronics?

Evans Library has e-waste bins set up on the first floor by the stairs. There are also e-waste bins on the east side of Building 538 (machine shop) and in Shipping and Receiving. For off-campus electronics recycling, look [here](#).

# Miscellaneous

## Is Styrofoam recyclable?

Nope. Learn more about it's impacts [here](#).

## Does the university or community garden compost?

The community garden does compost! Panther Dining Hall sends a portion of its pre-consumer food scraps to the garden and Grounds contributes some landscape clippings to the piles of “black-gold”

## When is there going to be recycling available at the Olin Sports Complex (softball/baseball/soccer/turf fields)?

Our athletic community can expect recycling to reach the F.W. Olin Sports Complex as soon as this year! This area is difficult to set up due to the frequency and capacity of use for some of the areas.

# Residence Halls

## Where can I take my recyclables if I live on campus?

Currently the Harris Village C Hex-bin and cardboard dumpsters are the only available means for recycling in residence halls due to contamination issues.

## Are dryer sheets recyclable?

No. Most dryer sheets are made of thin pieces of polyester which have been matted together and coated in chemicals and fragrances, all factors which inhibit the typical recycling process.

# Offices

## **Where can I take my recyclables if I work on campus?**

Employees on campus can find bins in their main hallways, lobbies, or departmental offices/copy rooms. Otherwise they may follow the guidelines for other areas of campus.

# Steps You Can Take

## **How can I reduce my own waste?**

You can reduce the waste you produce by purchasing responsible, mainly less or green. Try to re-use items instead of buying a replacement, purchase items using biodegradable packaging, or purchasing things using re-usable bags. It is important to identify all the streams of waste you personally create before cutting things out indiscriminately.

## **Will I get a discount if I bring my own coffee cup or container to a campus dining location?**

Dining Services is evaluating what incentives it can provide to encourage users to be more sustainable in our campus facilities.

**Have more questions that aren't listed here? Send them to Facilities Operations! Contact Quinn Duffy at [qduffy@fit.edu](mailto:qduffy@fit.edu) or extension 7247**