



# How2Recycle®

## Guidelines for Use

*Abbreviated*



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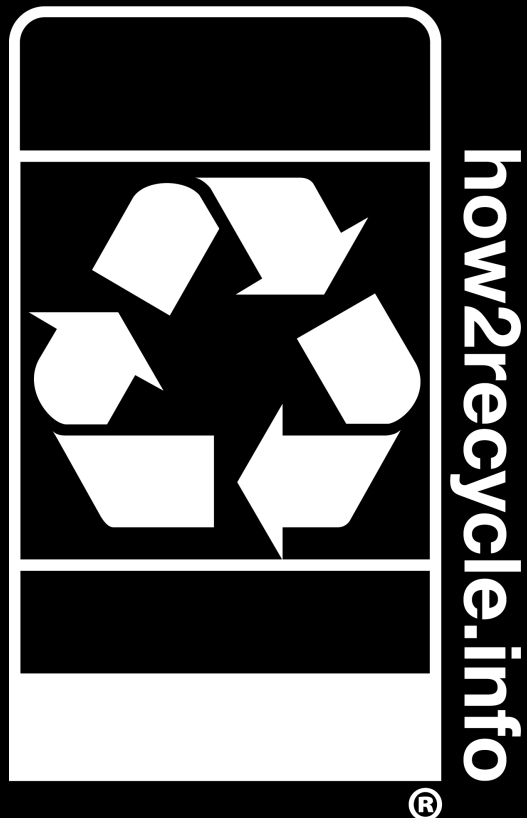
# Abbreviated Membership Guide & Rulebook

This is an abbreviated version of the official rulebook and guide for How2Recycle membership. It is not an exhaustive document and doesn't reflect every factor that How2Recycle may consider during recyclability assessments.

How2Recycle updates its Guidelines for Use twice a year. Members of How2Recycle are required to stay up to date with all program changes and follow the most recent version of the Guidelines for Use.

The How2Recycle labeling system is designed to comply with legislation and guidance in the United States and Canada, such as the US Federal Trade Commission's Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims. To avoid consumer deception and increase the transparency, reliability, and completeness of recyclability claims, all How2Recycle members must endeavor to be consistent with these laws in all marketing materials, including but not limited to website content and on package language.

How2Recycle is unable to provide advice for claims outside of How2Recycle labeling but works to provide members with timely updates when relevant legislation and guidance changes.



1

## New & Important Updates

---

2

## How2Recycle Program Foundations

---

3

## Requesting How2Recycle Labels

---

4

## Using Labels & Pre-qualification Letters

---



### Quick Links

Recyclability Changes

Packaging Under Review

New Labels

Pre-qualification

Artwork Rules



How2Recycle



Section



Quick Links

[Recyclability Changes](#)

[Packaging Under Review](#)

[New Labels](#)

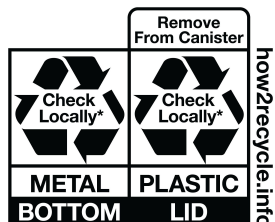
[Legislation](#)

# News & Important Updates



# Recyclability Changes

How2Recycle is announcing several changes in the general recyclability of several package formats. These changes are effective as of the release of these Guidelines for Use, January 31st, 2025.



\*Not recycled in all communities. Do not separate metal bottom from canister. Paper walls of canister will not get recycled.



\*Not recycled in all communities

## Composite canisters with steel bottoms upgraded to **Check Locally** (US only)

This format has already been eligible for Check Locally in Canada. We strongly encourage working with suppliers to seek pre-qualification for this package format. Only formats with specific dimensions, material composition, and product use are eligible for the new label designation.

## Aluminum & steel aerosol cans downgraded to **Check Locally** (US only)

This format remains Widely Recyclable in Canada. How2Recycle will be retroactively updating all previously assigned labels for aerosols sold in the US to Check Locally in the coming months.

While a label downgrade may feel like a step backward, it does not diminish the progress being made to recycle these formats at scale. Instead, it highlights areas for improvement, enabling targeted efforts to advance recycling technologies, boost community acceptance and communication, and support further research. These label changes reflect the reality of current data, ensure transparency, and set accurate consumer expectations.

*Continue reading to understand the data behind these changes.*



1

2

3

4



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# The Data Behind the Changes

How2Recycle's [multifaceted assessment](#) is built on credible data, with acceptance being one factor. As announced in 2024, we have gained more detailed and timely information on the acceptance of specific material formats for recycling in the United States through our partnership with **The Recycling Partnership** (TRP). While this is not the sole data source considered in our assessment, this key data from [TRP's National Recycling Database](#) allows How2Recycle to complete our review for several package formats. Please read more about this collaboration, our [shared methodology](#), and [view the published Community Recycling Program Acceptance Data](#).

**Composite canisters with metal bottoms**, specifically steel, are upgraded from Not Yet Recyclable to Check Locally in the US. This is due to acceptance, sortation, and end market data provided by our members and third parties. The acceptance data supporting this designation is derived from sources outside of TRP's National Recycling Database, and [this format will be reevaluated using TRP data as the primary source in 2026](#).

**Aluminum & steel aerosol cans** are downgraded from Widely Recyclable to Check Locally in the US due to new collection data which revealed that fewer communities explicitly accept aerosol containers for recycling and because of potential safety concerns. How2Recycle is considering only explicit acceptance for this format based on concerns regarding hazards that aerosols might pose within MRFs because of the risk that residual pressurized product may cause fires. For safety, all aerosol cans should truly be *empty before recycling*, as the label states, if accepted in your community recycling program and may be responsibly disposed of by other means, such as through hazardous waste collection sites.

## Review Complete

Since our Guidelines for Use release in July 2024, How2Recycle has determined that **HDPE & PP squeeze tubes, PP beverage cups & other formats in the US, and PET beverage cups in the US** are not eligible for a recyclability category upgrade in January 2025 based on current acceptance for recycling of these formats. We will reassess if acceptance rates improve in the future.

How2Recycle has also reviewed multiple data sources for the recyclability of **aseptic & gable top cartons** in the US and determined that this format remains eligible for Widely Recyclable. The acceptance data supporting this designation is derived from sources outside of TRP's National Recycling Database, and [this format will be reevaluated using TRP data as the primary source in 2026](#).



1

2

3

4

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# Packaging Under Review

We closely monitor changes in the recycling system and make every effort to let members know before any package recyclability category changes are likely to occur through our Guidelines for Use. The following formats are all currently under review for a potential downgrade.

## Formats Under Review

- **Certain flexible PE formats** may not be eligible for a Widely Recyclable label in Canada due to restricted acceptance for recycling based on package format and product application. The formats under review include stand-up pouches, metallized film, wrappers, and other food packaging while formats such as grocery store, bread, and newspaper bags remain widely collected. Further research is underway in 2025.
- **HDPE trays, thermoforms, and other formats** may be downgraded from Widely Recyclable to Check Locally in the United States due to acceptance data, which has shown that only HDPE bottles, jars, and tubs may be eligible for the Widely Recyclable label.
- **Bulky rigid plastics**, including 3- and 5- gallon HDPE and PP buckets, may be downgraded from Check Locally to Not Yet Recyclable in the US due to new acceptance data.
- **PP beverage pods** (as used for single-serve coffee, tea, and other beverages) may be downgraded from Check Locally to Not Yet Recyclable in the US due to its acceptance rate, despite significant efforts that have been made to strengthen the end market for all PP and provide technical recyclability data for this format. While the current data shows low explicit acceptance, TRP is conducting a data review to more thoroughly distinguish format acceptance nuances for this package category. During this process, How2Recycle will not be issuing any new Check Locally recyclable labels to pods in the US.



1

2

3

4

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# The Dynamic Data Driven Future of On- Pack Labeling

Learn More about  
How2Recycle Forward



## How2Recycle Pro

After years of the Legacy How2Recycle Label, in October 2024 we announced our refreshed How2Recycle Pro label. We've designed the How2Recycle Pro label to be more clear, actionable, and compliant to ensure accuracy no matter when- or where a label is issued. Pending legislation, the label will soon be available to How2Recycle members in the Member Platform.



Label  
Refresh



Data  
Ecosystem



Operational  
Optimization



Consumer  
Education

## How2Recycle Plus

We're also offering members the opportunity to request the dynamic QR code label, How2Recycle Plus featuring Recycle Check. This label utilizes data from [The Recycling Partnership's National Recycling Database](#) to provide consumers with localized disposal instructions.



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# Legislation News

Applicable law is one of the foundational aspects of the How2Recycle recyclability assessment. Our program will always adapt as needed to be in compliance with law in the United States and Canada at the federal, state, and province levels.

## Impact to the How2Recycle Label

The How2Recycle label is changing in 2025 to increase consumer clarity and preparedness for upcoming legislation. California's SB 343 remains the bill at the forefront of recyclability labeling in the United States, with implementation likely to occur in the second half of 2026. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC)'s evaluation of the Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims ("Green Guides") is also still underway.

In Canada, How2Recycle is continuing to watch for a finalized draft of the Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) regulatory framework regarding recycled content and labelling rules for plastics.

## Additional News

As these Guidelines for Use are only issued twice per year, updates on individual pieces of legislation will no longer be provided here, unless directly impacting How2Recycle members. For current legislation news, we recommend reading the Sustainable Packaging Coalition's (SPC) [monthly policy round-ups](#), which are free to access, and for companies who are SPC members to join the [SPC Packaging EPR Collaborative](#).



# PE Film Recyclability

How2Recycle continues to support the PE film recycling stream and is engaged in several ongoing projects related to the recyclability of this material type.

## Access to Recycling

Additional work is needed and underway to gather new data for the collection of PE film in both the US and Canada. The SPC, in collaboration with Resource Recycling Systems (RRS), is studying film collection through store drop-off programs in the US. Initially expected to be complete by the end of 2024, the necessary data was not available for an update in this Guidelines for Use but is anticipated in 2025.

## Store Drop-off

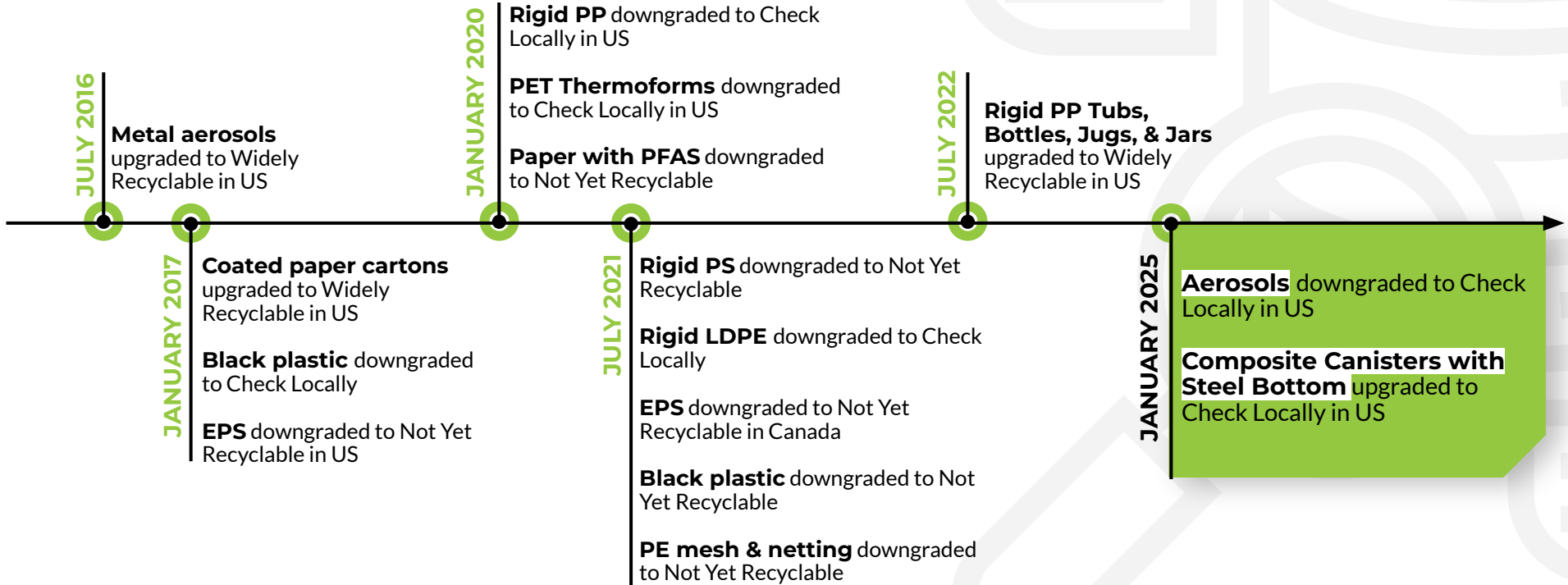
How2Recycle will make updates to Store Drop-off labels as deemed necessary by the outcome of the access study or other factors, including legislation. How2Recycle and GreenBlue are committed to supporting the Store Drop-off recycling stream as a method to facilitate PE film recycling in the US. We encourage retailers to share information about their collection operations and engage with the SPC team.

Recent news is the launch of a new directory by the FFRA (Flexible Film Recycling Alliance). Please visit [plasticfilmrecycling.org](https://plasticfilmrecycling.org) to find a store drop-off location today.

How2Recycle continues to work with the APR's Clean & Dry Working Group to develop a quantitative test to understand the limitations of product residue on film for Store Drop-off recycling and understand better which residue types are acceptable in the PE flexible film recycling stream.



# Recyclability History



1

2

3

4







Section



Quick Links

[Definition of Recyclability](#)

[Recyclability Categories](#)

[Optimal Design](#)

[Package Testing](#)

[Proving Recyclability](#)

# How2Recycle Program Foundations

# Definition of Recyclability

For each package, you will receive a How2Recycle label and a **custom recyclability assessment**. Each assessment considers:

Applicable Law

Collection

Sortation

Reprocessing

End Markets

## Consistency, Common Sense, Consumer Experience, Material Health

How2Recycle aligns with the Federal Trade Commission and Competition Bureau Canada guidance, and remains committed to complying with emerging state and national regulations.

We measure the percent of the population within communities that accept a package for recycling, using data from partners such as The Recycling Partnership.

We consider how successfully materials sort in a Material Recovery Facility based on size, shape, and other physical attributes to ensure they are properly captured.

We consider how successfully materials are reprocessed by entities. We consult experts and reference well-established industry guidance and testing protocols.

We assess demand, scale, and value over time to determine the strength of end markets and whether a material will be responsibly made into new products.

For a deeper understanding of our definition of recyclability and assessment criteria, read the How2Recycle [Guide to Recyclability](#).



1

2

3





4



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# US General Recyclability Categories

These are the general overall recyclability designations of various material formats and the percent of the population that has access to recycling these formats in the **United States**. This list does not consider attachments, labels, size, additives, interaction between components, consumer preparation, testing, and many other attributes that are assessed during How2Recycle's process.

|                      |                       |   | Plastic   | Paper   | Metal  | Glass              | PE Film Only   |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|--|--------------------|--|
| 60% - 100%<br>Access | Widely<br>Recyclable  |  how2recycle.info  | clear PET bottles & jars;<br>HDPE rigids*; PP tubs,<br>bottles, jugs, & jars  | uncoated & clay coated<br>wood fiber; aseptic &<br>gable top cartons;<br>molded wood fiber;<br><u>tested coated paper</u>   | aluminum & steel<br>beverage & food cans                               | soda-lime glass    | <b>Store Drop-off</b><br>flexible PE film bags,<br>wraps, & pouches  how2recycle.info |
| 20% - 60%<br>Access  | Check<br>Locally      |  how2recycle.info<br><small>*Not recycled in<br/>all communities</small> | clear, colored, & opaque<br>PET thermoforms; LDPE<br>rigids; PP drink cups &<br>other rigids                              | 1-side poly coated rigid<br>paper; 1-side heat seal<br>coated rigid paper;<br>composite can with metal<br>bottom            | aluminum & steel<br>aerosols; aluminum<br>foil; aluminum food<br>trays |                    |  |
| 0% - 20%<br>Access   | Not Yet<br>Recyclable |  how2recycle.info  | multi-layer films & rigids;<br>PVC; PS; other plastics;<br>black plastic rigids;<br>squeeze tubes; foam;<br>PP & PET film | 2-side poly coated rigid<br>paper; 1-side poly coated<br>flexible paper; innovative<br>coatings on fiber;<br>non-wood fiber | stainless steel  | borosilicate glass |  |

\*This package format is currently under review and its general recyclability category may change in the future.



1

2




3

4


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# Canada General Recyclability Categories

These are the general overall recyclability designations of various material formats and the percent of the population that has access to recycling these formats in **Canada**. This list does not consider closures, attachments, labels, size, additives, interaction between components, consumer preparation, and many other attributes that are assessed during How2Recycle's process.

|                      |                       |   | Plastic  | Paper   | Metal   | Glass              |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---|--|---|---|--------------------|
| 50% - 100%<br>Access | Widely<br>Recyclable  |  | clear PET bottles, jars, & thermoforms; HDPE rigids; PP containers; flexible PE film bags, wraps, & pouches*               | uncoated & clay coated wood fiber; aseptic & gable top cartons; molded wood fiber; <u>tested coated paper</u>   | aluminum & steel beverage & food cans; aluminum & steel aerosols; aluminum food trays | soda-lime glass    |
| 20% - 50%<br>Access  | Check<br>Locally      |  | colored, & opaque PET thermoforms; LDPE rigids   | 1-side poly coated rigid paper; 1-side heat seal coated rigid paper; composite can with metal bottom            | aluminum foil   |                    |
| 0% - 20%<br>Access   | Not Yet<br>Recyclable |  | Multi-layer films & rigids; PVC; PS rigids & EPS; black plastic rigids; squeeze tubes; foam; PP & PET film; other plastics | 2-side poly coated rigid paper; 1-side poly coated flexible paper; innovative coatings on fiber; non-wood fiber | stainless steel   | borosilicate glass |

\*This package format is currently under review and its general recyclability category may change in the future.



1

2

3

4


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# Compostable Packages

For packages that become saturated with food or other organic matter and are not eligible for a favorable recyclability category, compostable packaging may be a suitable option.

Learn more about [when compostable packaging may make sense](#) for your packaging sustainability goals.



[How2Compost](#) labeling is designed to communicate comprehensive recovery instructions to consumers on pack alongside How2Recycle labels.

To use the How2Compost label, you must be a US based How2Recycle member and receive **BPI certification** for the component. You may also acquire a sublicense from BPI if your supplier holds the compostable certification. There are certification costs, but How2Compost membership is free for eligible How2Recycle members.

Email [how2compost@greenblue.org](mailto:how2compost@greenblue.org) for additional information and next steps.



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# Overall Recyclability

We identify ways members can improve their package design by assigning one of three overall recyclability categories for each complete package we assess on the How2Recycle Member Platform.

How2Recycle encourages members to apply all recommendations given to every Recyclable but Needs Improvement and Partially Recyclable or Not Yet Recyclable label request to strive for Optimal Recyclability.

## Optimally Recyclable

The entire package meets all the criteria for the best design practices in their material category. No recommendations to improve the package design are needed.

## Recyclable but Needs Improvement

The majority of the package or the whole package is recyclable, but it falls short of being Optimally Recyclable due to suboptimal features.

## Partially Recyclable or Not Yet Recyclable

The package includes one or more components that feature the Check Locally or the Not Yet Recyclable label, or has design features that inhibit recyclability.



# Optimal Plastic Package Design

When assessing the technical recyclability of plastic packages and making recommendations for optimal design, there are key alignments between How2Recycle and the **Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR) Design® Guide**, **APR Design® Recognition Program\***, and **testing protocols**. This partnership allows us to leverage APR's technical expertise as needed. Both organizations are excited to continue working together to promote better plastic packaging design.

To be categorized as Optimally Recyclable by How2Recycle, all features of a plastic package, including labels, closures, and additives, must be categorized as Preferred by APR. How2Recycle encourages companies to pursue APR Design® for Recyclability Recognition\* for all eligible packages.

Using a package or components with APR Recognition does not always guarantee a specific label will be assigned, but it helps simplify the label request process by providing data on the structure's technical recyclability. APR Recognition can also reduce the amount of information and testing How2Recycle requires on a label request.

**As How2Recycle and APR work towards greater alignment, testing requirements and recyclability assessment criteria may change.** Any updates resulting in label assignment changes will be proactively communicated to members.

\*Please note: no claim of APR approval or recognition may be made without undergoing the complete APR Design® for Recyclability Recognition process, which includes submitting information to APR and technical panel review.

## Detrimental Features

APR recommends prioritizing the removal of the following detrimental features that significantly reduce the quality and yield of recycled plastics.

- From **all plastics**, remove paper labels and metal attachments.
- From **PET packages**, remove pressure sensitive and shrink sleeve labels that have not received APR Recognition.
- From **HDPE packages**, remove or limit all PP content from closures, labels, and attachments to no more than 10 wt % of the package.



1

2

3

4



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# Design for Optimal Recyclability

## Plastic Bottle



This **transparent** PET bottle uses pressure sensitive **labels** specifically designed for recycling that have received APR Design® Recognition and a **closure** that is Preferred by APR.

There are no additives or features that are detrimental to recycling and the consumer does not need to separate any components before disposal.

## Optimally Recyclable

If your package is not Optimally Recyclable, we will provide recommendation(s) on how to improve the design. Consider these Optimally Recyclable package examples.

## Paper Box



This **wood fiber** shipping box is constructed of rigid corrugated paperboard and has **no poly layers, laminations, or other innovative coatings**.

The **only attachments** on this box are tape used to seal the package and a shipping label, which do not impede technical recyclability.



# Recyclability Assessment Criteria

As How2Recycle evolves with the recycling industry, the information we request from our members and our assessment criteria changes. Members may notice continuous improvements within the Member Platform and will receive notice of major changes impacting labels. Members must stay up to date with the Guidelines for Use to be informed of changes and be prepared to fill out label requests with all necessary information.

These are improvements, *first included in our August 2024 Guidelines for Use release*, to our assessment which stem from our alignment work with APR.

## Rigid Plastic Packages

- Test requirements and recommendations for EVOH used in rigid HDPE and PP plastic containers are updated to better align with what is preferred by APR.
- Sortation testing is required based on the label coverage and container volume, per the APR Design® Guide. Members must provide the container volume in addition to the label coverage when a label is being used on a rigid plastic container.
- Metal sortation testing is required for containers employing metal decoration in accordance with the APR Metal Decoration Resource. The type of decoration and coverage area are needed in requests when metal decoration is used on a rigid plastic package.

## PE Film Packages

- Compatibilizers for barrier layers (e.g. EVOH) must be used at the loading that received APR Design® for Recyclability Recognition or passed technical recyclability testing. Please work with your supplier to check the appropriate usage.
- Combinations of APR Preferred elements and APR Recognized innovations may require additional testing, especially when the amount of PE in the structure is <90% by weight.
- AlOx and SiOx barrier coatings do not require testing when used in accordance with what is preferred in the APR Design® Guide.



1

2

3

4

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# Package Testing

We are here to help! If you are unsure if your package requires testing or how best to conduct required testing, you can reach out to How2Recycle.

There are tests your company may be required to complete for a package to demonstrate technical recyclability and be eligible for a more favorable label. The test protocols How2Recycle relies on to support sortation and reprocessing are developed by trusted third-party organizations and widely accepted within the industry in the US and Canada.

The following pages detail commonly required testing. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and your package may require additional testing not listed here.

## Quick Links

[Fiber Packaging](#)[PE Film](#)[Rigid Plastics](#)[Sortation Potential](#)[More About Package Testing](#)

# Testing for Fiber Packaging

Some rigid and flexible fiber based packaging may require technical recyclability testing to be eligible for a more favorable How2Recycle label. We may decline to label flexible paper innovations until testing is completed.

Examples of attributes that may require testing:

- Plastic laminates & coatings
- Foil & metallization
- Repulpable, sealable & other coatings
- Bagasse, bamboo, & other non-wood alternative fibers

Based on our [Material Health](#) rule, some fiber packages require testing for **per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)** by testing the total organic fluorine concentration.

Both Repulpability (Part 1) and Recyclability (Part 2) must be completed at a partner lab for any fiber package requiring testing. Packaging must be tested **as it would enter the recycling stream**, including all print and decoration, against an appropriate control sample. The control should be an uncoated wood fiber substrate that is similar to the test subject without any innovative features.

The **OCC-E Protocol** should be followed for unbleached fiber packaging and the **SBS-E Protocol** should be followed for bleached fiber packaging. Currently these are the only two protocols accepted when a fiber package requires technical recyclability testing.

The How2Recycle team is aware of ongoing work in the paper industry to develop new test methods and will inform members if any new protocols will be accepted in our assessment. The SPC [Paper Packaging Recyclability Collaborative](#) is available for SPC members who are interested in fiber testing.

## Partner Labs

- **OCC-E paper testing:** University of Wisconsin Stevens-Point, Innofibre (Quebec), Western Michigan University
- **SBS-E paper testing:** Western Michigan University



1

2

3

4

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# Testing for PE Film

How2Recycle requires the transparent, data-driven test protocol: **APR's Critical Guidance Protocol for Polyethylene Films** when testing is required to demonstrate technical compatibility with the PE recycling stream.

PE films may require APR's **Polyolefin Packaging Articles Sink or Float Evaluation** when Critical Guidance testing is not required, but the film's density is a concern.

Eligible PE films will receive a Store Drop-off How2Recycle label in the US and a Widely Recyclable label in Canada.

Technical recyclability testing may be required for PE film with the following attributes:

- Metallized layers & metallic ink
- Unfilterable barrier layers (i.e., PP, nylon, & EVOH)
- Barrier & innovative coatings (i.e. PVOH)<sup>†</sup>
- Combination of multiple functional layers, barriers, or coatings
- Cold seal adhesive
- Non-PE attachments (i.e., zippers & labels)
- Fillers and PE attachments or labels causing density to exceed 0.996 g/cm<sup>3</sup>

Some structures may not require testing if they have received APR Recognition or have been pre-qualified with How2Recycle. We may require testing for other attributes not listed or new combinations of previously tested structures and APR preferred elements when the total amount of PE in the structure falls below 90%.

<sup>†</sup>AIOx and SiOx coatings no longer require testing if applied per the APR Design® Guide.

## Partner Labs

APR Critical Guidance testing must be complete at an APR Recommended Testing Facility. Sink or Float Evaluations may be completed by members in-house or at an external lab.



1

2

3

4


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# Testing for Rigid Plastics

How2Recycle relies on the industry-developed **APR protocols** when requiring technical recyclability testing for rigid plastic packages.

Examples of attributes that may require testing:

- Scavengers & oxygen ingress barriers
- Barriers (i.e., EVOH, nylon, AlOx, & SiOx)
- Fillers & integrated desiccants
- Functional additives, layers, & coatings

Structures with the above attributes may not require testing if they have APR Recognition or been pre-qualified by How2Recycle. We may require testing for other attributes not listed here.

## Required APR Test Protocols

- **HDPE or PP containers** with fillers or additives that increases the resin density to 0.97 - 1.0 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, Polyolefin Packaging Articles Sink or Float Evaluation may be completed in-house.
- **HDPE containers**, Critical Guidance Protocol for HDPE Rigid Containers.
- **PP containers**, Critical Guidance Protocol for PP Rigid Containers.
- **PET containers**, Critical Guidance Protocol for Clear PET Resin and Molded Articles. If an innovation exhibits time dependent behavior (e.g., oxygen scavengers), the Preparation of PET Articles with Potential Time Dependent Behavior should be followed before testing.

The above protocols refer to reprocessing testing. Additional attributes, such as color and labels, on rigid plastic packages require sortation testing.

## Partner Labs

All APR Critical Guidance testing must be complete at an APR Recommended Testing Facility. If you are unsure if a certain lab is appropriate for testing, please reach out to APR or the How2Recycle team.



1

2

3

4

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# Testing for Sortation Potential

APR has published several sortation potential protocols to help the industry better determine what packaging may be difficult to sort at MRFs based on its design attributes. All sortation potential protocol tests should be preceded by APR's **compression protocol**.

Specific sortation tests can determine packaging's sortation potential based on:

- Size of small packages
- Dimensionality of flat plastic packages (2D/3D sortation test)
- Color and label coverage of plastic packages (NIR identification)
- Metal & Metallic Components used on plastic packages

## Testing Requirements

The listed tests may be required by the How2Recycle team to demonstrate your package's sortability. A conservative Not Yet Recyclable label may be assigned until the required testing is completed. Failure to sort properly or with a preferable result will also result in a Not Yet Recyclable label.

In some cases, positive sortation test results may make a package eligible for a more favorable recyclability label. Certain **mono-material blister packs**, typically Not Yet Recyclable due to dimensionality, may be eligible for a Check Locally recyclable label based on positive 2D/3D sortation results.

Dark colored plastic packages and plastic packages with high label coverage amounts require positive **Near Infrared (NIR) sortation test results** to be eligible for a Check Locally or Widely Recyclable label.

## Partner Labs

All APR sortation potential testing must be completed at an APR Recommended Testing Facility. If you are unsure if a certain lab is appropriate for testing, please reach out to APR or the How2Recycle team.



1

2

3

4

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# More About Package Testing

## Test Requirements

The How2Recycle team proactively communicates which test(s) are required to support a more favorable recyclability category. Without testing, your package may receive a conservative label or we may decline to provide a label. Testing should be completed at a third-party facility to ensure objectivity and credibility. In-house test results are only appropriate for specific, limited situations when specified by How2Recycle.

## Test Articles

In all recyclability testing scenarios, test articles should be representative of the package as it would enter the recycling stream, including all print, decoration, and attachments present after consumer use. Attributes under evaluation should be tested at the highest level or worst-case scenario, such as the maximum coverage and darkest color ink if the exact print is unknown or varies.

## Data Ownership

The member who conducts the test owns the results, and that data will only apply to that member's requests. Data or test results are not shared between requests from different members, even if multiple members have the same packaging format. How2Recycle will only share data between members with explicit written permission from the data owner.

## Utilizing Other Tests

Testing can help fill gaps when the data required to determine a package's recyclability are missing. If no industry standards fit your situation, alternative routes to gathering data may exist.

The How2Recycle team can help review your test plans. A **MRF flow test** may be appropriate to study the sorting potential of an innovative or unusual package.

As the industry evolves and new protocols arise, How2Recycle may expand or change which protocols are required. We are developing a **standard for accepting protocols** which will be shared publicly once available. Members are encouraged to present new, scientifically backed protocols for consideration.



1

2

3

4



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# Proving Recyclability

Changes in legislation, access to recycling, and innovations in technology contribute to a dynamic recyclability landscape. In response, we provide guidance for members, partners, and industry groups to propose updates to a package format's recyclability category and label eligibility.

## Recommended Resources on Recyclability

How2Recycle's [Guide to Future Recyclability](#) offers a roadmap to understanding emerging and innovative packaging format recyclability. It provides insight into our assessment criteria, recommendations for strategizing future recyclability, and examples of current recyclability-challenged packages.

Our Overall Recyclability Assessment, available to members in the Member Platform, is a comprehensive guide to the evaluation criteria How2Recycle considers in making a recyclability assessment.

## Presenting Your Case to How2Recycle

If you believe a particular package format should be eligible for a different recyclability category and placed [under review by How2Recycle](#), we ask you to submit scientifically credible data from third parties to support the claim.

We understand that building a case for recyclability of a package format takes significant time and resources. Our team is equally committed to thoroughly reviewing all submitted information. Before enacting a recyclability category change, we must verify that the claim is not misleading to consumers and there is sufficient data to support the recyclability claim. This careful approach safeguards our members from the potential negative attention of using misleading claims. How2Recycle will only issue recyclability labels that we believe comply with applicable laws and are supported by strong, credible scientific evidence.





Section

3

Quick Links

Package Components

Pre-qualification

Information Needed

Product Application Limits

# Requesting How2Recycle Labels



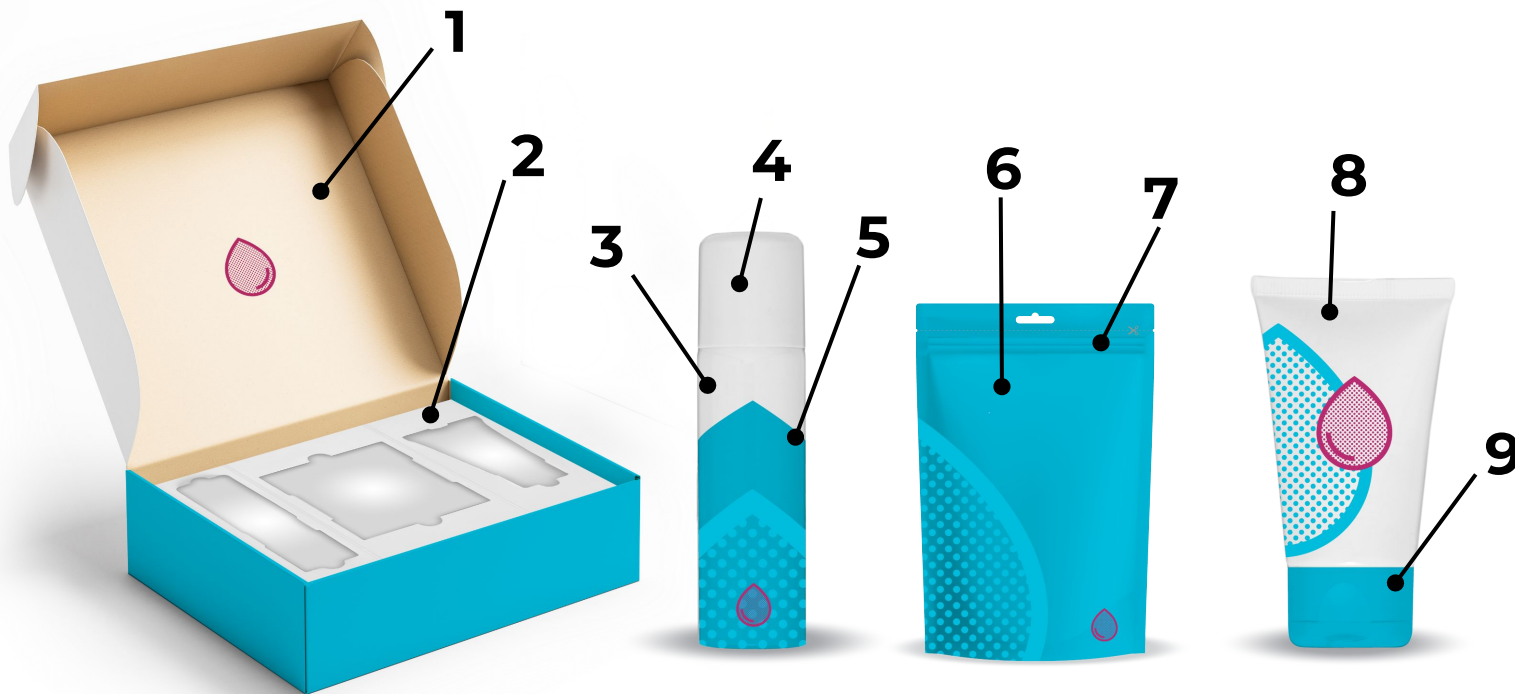
How2Recycle

# Package Components

If this was your package, these are the components you need to enter on your request. See the assigned label this package would feature on pack.

## Components

1. Paper **Box**
2. Paper **Tray**
3. Metal **Can**
4. PP **Cap**
5. PET **Label**
6. PE **Pouch**
7. PE **Zipper**
8. HDPE **Tube**
9. PP **Cap**



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2

3

4



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# Similar But Different Packages

Packaging that are similar but differ by materials, closure types, coatings, additives, or other factors may require separate requests.

## Separate Requests



These are **NOT the same package format** because the bottles have different closures.



These are **NOT the same package format** because one box has a window.

## One Request



These are the **same package format** even though the products are different varieties and the packages have different artwork.



These are the **same package format** even though they are different shapes and sizes. They have the same materials, coatings, and function.



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# Similar But Different Materials

If you're a material manufacturer or covert member seeking pre-qualification for a base material or substrate, follow these additional tips.

## Submit One Request When . . .



- A package has same material type (e.g. resin) and composition, but the amount of recycled content varies.
- The material is a film or fiber substrate where the composition and ratio of base material to additives and coatings remains the same, but the thickness is variable.
- You submit a family of films where only the amounts and types of PE vary.
- You offer white and clear versions of the same plastic component, where you can provide the density for both.

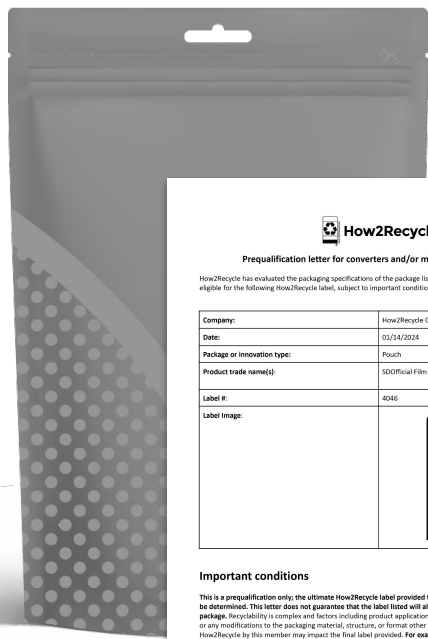
## Submit Separate Requests When . . .




- You want to understand how a highly specific product application, such as one that may leave residue, influences the recyclability.
- A base material, such as paperboard, is converted into different formats (e.g. cups, trays, and boxes).
- Films have identical base resins and overall structure, but use different barrier materials (i.e. EVOH versus nylon).
- A film is offered in metallized and non-metallized versions.
- A plastic component is offered in a clear or natural color and a black or dark color.




# Pre-qualification Letters



 **How2Recycle**

**Prequalification letter for converters and/or material manufacturers**

How2Recycle has evaluated the packaging specifications of the package listed below, and determined that it is eligible for the following How2Recycle label, subject to important conditions below.

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Company:                    | How2Recycle Converter   |
| Date:                       | 01/14/2024  |
| Package or innovation type: | Pouch   |
| Product trade name(s):      | SD Official Film  |
| Label #:                    | 4046  |
| Label image:                |  |

**Important conditions**

This is a prequalification only; the ultimate How2Recycle label provided for consumer-facing on-pack use is still to be determined. This letter does not guarantee that the label listed will always be provided for every use of this package. Recyclability is complex and factors including product application, the addition of attachments, elements, or any modifications to the packaging material, structure, or format other than what was originally submitted to How2Recycle by the member may impact the final label provided. For example, liquids or greasy and sticky products are not eligible to receive the Store Drop-Off label; see the How2Recycle Guidelines for Use for more detail. All relevant packaging and product considerations at play in each specific instance will dictate the label provided to brands and retailers, and the label is subject to change at any time.

Note that this letter is not a "certificate." The How2Recycle program is not a certification program, and this label is to be used for marketing purposes only.

Material manufacturers and converters receive a **pre-qualification letter** for eligible packages by submitting a label request.

Benefits of the pre-qualification process for material manufacturers and converters include:

- Clearly communicating the recyclability of your package using a comprehensive definition of recyclability
- Confidentially sharing material specifications and test reports with How2Recycle, instead of with brands and retailers

Pre-qualification does not guarantee a specific How2Recycle label will be assigned. Factors including attachments and product applications may impact the package's ability to be recovered and affect the label assigned to brands and retailers. Brands and retailers must submit a label request for the final package application to feature the label on pack.

These letters are not certificates. The How2Recycle program is not a certification program and this letter and label are for **marketing purposes only**. Familiarize yourself with the [acceptable uses of pre-qualification letters and labels](#).



1

2

3

4


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# Pre-qualification Eligibility



How2Recycle provides pre-qualification letters to package structures of any material type, but not all package formats. Not all components are eligible for their own recyclability label as the recyclability of minor components is largely dependent on the package it is a part of or attached to.

## **Request pre-qualification letters for these structures:**

- Base materials (films, paper substrates)
- Complete, unbranded packages

How2Recycle may review but not assign a pre-qualification letter or label to minor package components, including:

- Additives & barrier coatings
- Attachments (i.e., closures, labels, zippers, & lidding films)
- Inks, decorations, & adhesives



1

2

3

4

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# Information Needed on Every Request

Certain packaging formats and attributes require more details to complete a label request. Read the following pages for what information is needed and why.

## All Package Types

- [Material Health](#)
- [Package Size](#)
- Labels on [Plastic Packages](#) & [Other Packages](#)
- [Product Application Limits](#)
- [Consumer Preparation](#)

## Plastic Packages

- Product Application Limits for [PE film](#)
- [Black Plastic & Colored PET](#)
- [Closures & Seals on Plastic Packages](#)
- [All Plastic Packages](#)

## Fiber Packages

- [Coatings & Additives on Fiber Packages](#)
- [Attachments on Paper Packages](#)



# Material Health Rule

How2Recycle encourages finding safer alternatives to substances that are hazardous to the environment and human health. We may render a package **Not Yet Recyclable** if it contains intentionally added substances that are harmful or potentially harmful to the environment and/or organisms. Read more about this rule [here](#).

In partnership with ChemFORWARD, the SPC launched [CleanPackage](#), a database of verified safer alternative materials that can connect companies with suppliers based on leadership in human and environmental safety and interest in increasing consumer trust.



**Fiber packages** containing intentionally added per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are assigned a Not Yet Recyclable label. How2Recycle may require lab testing to verify claims on formats where PFAS use is known to be used. If the total fluorine concentration exceeds **100 ppm**, the package will receive a Not Yet Recyclable label.

The following package formats historically have contained PFAS:

- Take-out containers
- Fiber foodservice packaging
- Molded fiber plates, bowls, & trays
- Bakery & deli paper wraps
- Microwaveable popcorn bags
- Grease-resistant paper bags



# Package Size



Dimensions play an important role in recyclability and label assignments. Include the height, length, and width or diameter and height for all packages.

**Small packages** that are less than 2 in (5 cm) in any dimension and **flat or shallow plastics**, such as shallow trays, are at risk for not sorting properly at MRFs. We may require testing for these packages and assign a conservative label until testing is complete.

**Large, bulky containers**, especially those larger than 2 gallons (7.5 liters), are also at risk for not sorting properly. The brimful volume is a required field for all plastic container requests.

Additionally, the **package size can influence the consumer facing language** in your assigned label. For example, a similar shape container may receive a label calling it a cup when it holds a single serving, but a tub when it holds multiple servings.



1

2

3

4



# Labels on Plastic Packages

To optimize plastic recyclability, HowRecycle recommends using labels that have received [APR Recognition](#). When using a recognized label, you must include the producer and specific product name as it was recognized in your label request. We recommend also attaching the documentation from APR.

Full body shrink sleeves on plastic containers that have not received APR Recognition must have a full length perforation to be eligible for a two tile label [instructing the consumer](#) to remove the label.

## Labels Requiring Additional Testing

How2Recycle requires [NIR sortation potential](#) testing for pressure sensitive, spot glued, and in-mold labels that exceed coverage amounts [preferred by APR](#). Members must provide the **label coverage** and **brimful volume** of the container in their requests. The coverage is defined as the label surface area divided by the area of the side wall and shoulder of the container. The area for bottles does not include the container neck, threaded finish, and base.

Testing may be required for metallized labels and labels with metallic decoration or ink due to reprocessing and sortation challenges. Refer to the [APR's Metal Decoration Resource](#) to understand when sortation testing may be required.



## RFID Tags

Labels with integrated RFID tags are detrimental to plastic recycling because of the potential for contamination from the plastics, adhesives, and metals used in the RFID tag. **Plastic packages with RFID tags will be designated Not Yet Recyclable**, even when retailers require their use, unless the package has passed all necessary testing.

**Eliminate the use of RFID tags when possible.**



1

2

3

4

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# Labels on Other Packages

Always be mindful of **label materials**. Using a label material that is dissimilar to the package body can be detrimental to recycling.

## Paper Packages

It is best practice to direct print on paper packages. **Pressure sensitive labels** on rigid paper packaging should be made of paper substrate.

## Metal Packages

It is best practice to direct print on aluminum and steel packages when possible. Paper or plastic **pressure sensitive and wraparound labels** don't negatively impact the recyclability of aluminum and steel cans and aerosols, but will not be recycled themselves. **Shrink sleeves** on aluminum cans and aerosols can be detrimental to MRF equipment.

## Glass Packages

Glass recycling is generally forgiving to labels, including pressure sensitive labels and shrink sleeves, but may reduce overall yields. During the recycling process, glass is crushed and most labels can be easily separated or will burn off during glass making.

## RFID Tags

While more forgiving than when on plastic packages, RFID tags on paper, glass, and metal packages may still be problematic and reduce recycling yields. Technical recyclability testing may be required for certain fiber package formats with RFID tags applied. Glass packaging with attached RFID tags may receive a Not Yet Recyclable label.

**Eliminate the use of RFID tags when possible.**



1

2

3

4



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# Product Application Limits for PE Film

Little Seeds. BIG FLAVOR.

Cracker Mix  
BLACK PEPPER

Scan Now to Watch the How-To Video!

**INGREDIENTS:**  
Makes 60-70 2 1/2" x 2" Crackers  
4 Cup Olive Oil  
1 Cup Boiling Water, HOT!  
1/2 tsp Sea Salt (Optional)

**INSTRUCTIONS:**  
Preheat oven to 325°F (163°C)  
Mix seed mix and oil in bowl  
Add boiling HOT water to mixture  
Stir, then rest for 5 minutes

**HOW TO MAKE:**  
Place 1/2 of mixture on sheet of parchment paper (you don't need baking sheet yet)  
Cover with another sheet of parchment paper  
Drag rolling pin across paper to spread dough to edges  
Mixture should be as thin as the seeds will allow  
Slide dough and paper onto baking sheet and carefully peel off top sheet  
Score into desired cracker sizes  
Repeat

**BAKE:**  
Bake at 325°F for 30-40 minutes until pumpkin seeds are golden brown. (Cooking times may vary)  
Cool and crack along scored lines  
Sprinkle with sea salt if desired

CONTAINS: Sesame  
MADE IN A NUT-FREE FACILITY

Visit Us: [www.TopSeedsz.com](http://www.TopSeedsz.com)  
Follow Us: @TopSeedszSnacks

Top Seedsz LLC  
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Clarence Center, NY, 14032

Certified Organic By:  
Natural Food Certifiers

Recycle It  
Clean & Dry

How2Recycle  
PLASTIC  
POUCH

USDA  
ORGANIC

50046 66329 1

## Nutrition Facts

About 18 servings per container  
Serving size 2 tbsp dry mix (21g)

| Calories           | As packaged |     | As prepared |       |
|--------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-------|
|                    | 120         | 150 | % DV*       | % DV* |
| Total Fat          | 9g          | 11g | 12g         | 18%   |
| Saturated Fat      | 1g          | 0%  | 1.5g        | 8%    |
| Trans Fat          | 0g          |     | 0g          |       |
| Cholesterol        | 0mg         | 0%  | 0mg         | 0%    |
| Sodium             | 42mg        | 2%  | 40mg        | 2%    |
| Total Carbohydrate | 5g          | 3%  | 5g          | 3%    |
| Dietary Fiber      | 3g          | 9%  | 3g          | 9%    |
| Total Sugars       | 0g          |     | 0g          |       |
| Incl. Added Sugars | 0g          | 0%  | 0g          | 0%    |
| Protein            | 3g          |     | 4g          |       |
| Vitamin D          | 0mcg        | 0%  | 0mcg        | 0%    |
| Calcium            | 70mg        | 6%  | 70mg        | 6%    |
| Iron               | 1.7mg       | 10% | 1.7mg       | 10%   |
| Potassium          | 110mg       | 2%  | 110mg       | 2%    |

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

INGREDIENTS: Top Seedsz Mix (Sesame Seeds\*, Sunflower Seeds\*, Pumpkin Seeds\*, Flax Seeds\*), Arrowroot\*, Black Pepper\*, Sea Salt\*  
\*Organic

The product application can cause a technically recyclable PE film package to receive a Not Yet Recyclable label due to contamination concerns for the Store Drop-off recycling stream. These limits also apply to PE films collected in Canada through curbside and drop-off collection programs.

The following product applications make a package ineligible for a Store Drop-off How2Recycle label.

- **Wet, moist, sticky, gooey, or oily**, including:
  - Condiments & dressings
  - Wet baby food & wet pet food
  - Dairy products
  - Refrigerated meats
  - Drinks containing sugar
  - Liquid soaps, detergents, & personal care products
- **Hazardous or potentially hazardous**, including medical waste, pesticides, & herbicides
- **Dirt or dirt-like**, including growing media & sand
- **Lacking strong end markets**, including salty snacks & chocolate products
- **Difficult or unreasonable for the consumer to prepare** as 'Clean & Dry' to be recycled via Store Drop-off.



1

2

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4



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# Product Application Limits

**A product can limit a package's recyclability and may render a package Not Yet Recyclable**, even when the package material is technically recyclable. Certain product applications impact reprocessing because of residue or present health and safety concerns. Similar packages may receive different How2Recycle labels depending on the degree and type of residue specific to the product application, just as similar products may receive different labels depending on their package's format and material. For example, a dairy product in a paper tub will be designated Not Yet Recyclable while a dairy product in a PP tub may be eligible for Widely Recyclable.

**The How2Recycle team may ask for photos of the package contents and/or product samples to evaluate residue left behind in a package.** Please keep in mind that this can impact label request turnaround time. When samples are requested we ask that you send the worst-case sample, the product that leaves behind the most residue. The sample should be sent in the final package or as close to final as possible. Always send physical documentation including the request number with the sample and send us the tracking number upon shipment.

Provide additional details when your package has direct contact with a product that:

- Leaves a **thick, sticky, or oily residue**
- Classifies as **flammable, corrosive, or highly reactive**
- Has **hazard warnings** about environmental or human exposure
- Is **cooked** (as in through a microwave or oven) in the package

1

2

3

4





# Consumer Prep Rule



How2Recycle takes a balanced and common sense approach to determining whether a special instruction is appropriate to prepare a package properly for recycling. We seek to support packaging innovation and the recycling system with our instruction tab, while recognizing the importance of convenience and ease for consumers to recycle properly. We may request videos, photos, or physical samples to assess how a consumer may prepare the package for recycling.

If consumers have to take an unreasonable action, such as using tools and excessive force, to recycle a package properly, we will not provide additional instructions. Read the full description of the consumer prep rule.

Package formats **designated Not Yet Recyclable under the consumer preparation rule** include:

- Full body shrink sleeves on plastic containers that prohibit recycling and do not have a full length perforation
- High coverage paper labels on plastic containers that must be forcefully scraped or peeled off by consumers
- Pressure sensitive labels on PE film that are contaminants to the PE recycling stream and are not removable
- Packages that must be cut to be emptied, when that package format needs to be clean for recycling

Special actions that are clear, reasonable, and well-known and accepted by the general public to prepare the item for recycling, such as flattening corrugated boxes and removing lidding film, will be provided by How2Recycle.



1

2

3

4


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# Colored Plastic Packages



Disclose if any plastic components in your package are **black or dark colors** and submit a separate request for product variations that use a dark or black container. This does not apply when only the closure is black or darkly colored.

Dark colors can prevent a plastic package, including HDPE, PP, and PET from sorting properly in a MRF. **NIR testing is required for all rigid black plastic packages and may be required for additional dark colors.**

Rigid black and dark colored plastic packages that are not tested or do not pass testing as Preferred will receive a Not Yet Recyclable label. Dark color packages that pass testing are eligible for a more favorable recyclability category.

## PET Packages

Always include the color of your PET packaging and if it is transparent or opaque. Clear material has the highest value as a recycled stream since it has the widest variety of end-use applications. Clear, transparent light blue (as pictured to the left), and transparent light green PET bottles are eligible for Widely Recyclable.

To learn more about how colors in plastic packages affect recyclability and what colors are preferred, check out the Color sections in the [APR Design® Guide](#) for each plastic type.



1

2

3

4

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# Closures & Seals

Closures and seals can impact the recyclability of your package and influence the consumer preparation instructions on your assigned label. Provide complete details about each type of closure and **list all closures and seals as separate package components**. Adhesive strips and glue do not need to be listed as separate components, but should be listed within the component it's adhered to.

If the closure contains **any PVC, metal, silicone, or other materials**, clarify how the consumer uses it and if you can separate it from the rest of the package.



Indicate **whether the consumer removes the closure during regular use** (i.e., twist-off cap or snap-on lid) **or** if it remains on the package during the use of the product (i.e., flip-top or disc caps).



If your package has a **tamper-evident seal**, provide the material composition and a brief description of its location (i.e., induction seals and neck bands).



If present, don't forget to include the **lidding film** in your label request. Depending on the end use, composition, and the container the lidding film is attached to, your assigned label may instruct consumers to "discard seal" in the label's instruction tab.



1

2

3

4



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# Plastic Packages

How2Recycle recommends following the [APR Design® Guide for Plastics Recyclability](#) and ensuring all additives, barriers, and coatings are Preferred by APR. As described in the guide, some common plastic additives are considered **workhorse additives** and are not known to impact plastic recycling and do not require technical recyclability testing.



How2Recycle may request reprocessing and sortation testing for the following attributes and without testing, your package may receive a conservative label. Provide details about all additives, barriers, and coatings present.

- Active packaging (e.g. desiccants)
- Adhesives
- Barrier & tie layers (e.g. EVOH, PA)
- Coatings
- Degradability additives
- Fillers (e.g. CaCO<sub>3</sub>)
- Foils & metallized layers
- Metallic inks & decorations

## Flexible PE Films

When submitting a request for a package with a PE film component, don't forget to also include these details:

- Resin types (i.e., LDPE, HDPE, LLDPE, MDPE)
- Fillers and the film density when fillers are present
- Compatibilizers and their loading
- Overall density of the structure when PE attachments (i.e., labels) are present



1

2

3

4



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# Paper Coatings & Additives



Paper coatings and additives that perform different functions, such as adding barrier properties, sealability, and scuff resistance, may cause reprocessing issues and reduce overall yields.

Include detailed information about all present:

- Additives (i.e. wet strength and grease-resistance additives)
- Coatings (i.e., clay, UV, heat seal, & cold seal adhesive)
- Other alternative & repulpable coatings
- Laminates, extrusions, & poly coatings
- Metallic layers & decorations
- Liners
- Fluorinated or polyfluoroalkyl substances, chemicals, coatings, & additives (PFAS)

Also include in your request if a coating is on **one or both sides** of the paper component and if it is **flood coated or pattern applied** as these factors influence the recyclability assessment.

See the page on [Fiber Testing](#) for more information regarding the testing required for paper packaging with specialty coatings.



1

2

3

4



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# Attachments on Paper Packages



Attachments on paper packaging can reduce overall recycled material yields and create wear on MRF and recycler equipment. While some attachments are tolerated, others need to be removed before recycling. This will affect the package's overall recyclability and may influence the consumer preparation instructions on your assigned label.

Provide detailed information about all components present, including:

- Blister trays
- Fasteners & other plastic attachments
- Hangers & handles
- Metal cutters, spouts, & other attachments
- Plastic, glassine paper, or other material windows
- Seals & stickers

To design a paper package for Optimal Recyclability, How2Recycle recommends removing non-paper attachments or moving to all paper attachments.



1

2

3

4



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Section



Quick Links

[Artwork Checklist](#)

[Minimum Size](#)

[Messaging](#)

[Pre-qualification Uses](#)

# Using Labels & Pre-qualification Letters



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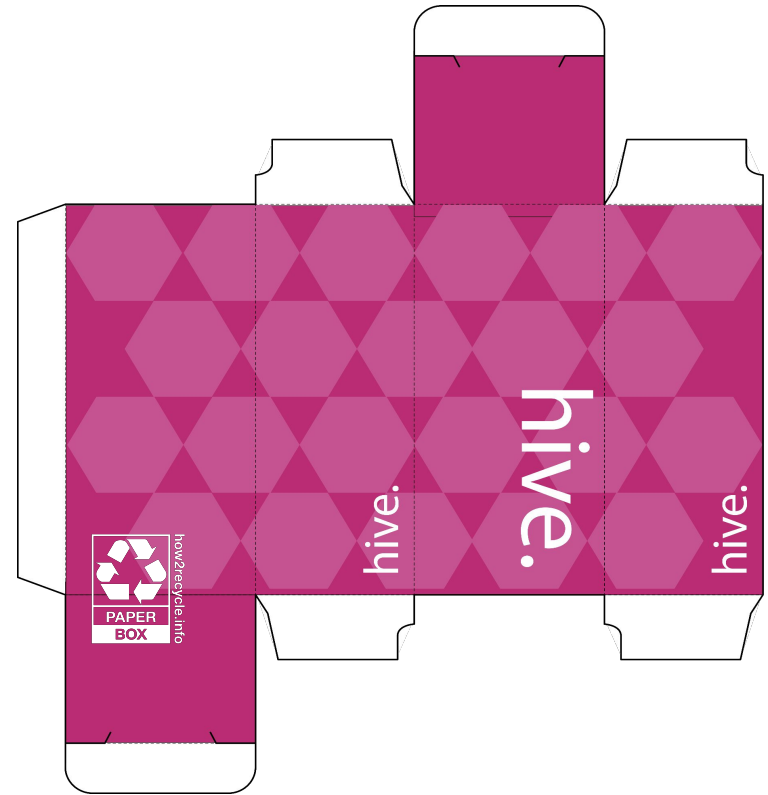
# Artwork Checklist

## Label Checks

- The label assigned in the request is the same label on the proof.
- The outermost printed component is shown in the proof.
- The label follows rules on sizing and color.
- The fonts in the label have not been changed.
- All parts of the label are present and legible, including the instruction tab, URL, and geographic qualifiers, if used.
- When selling in multiple countries, geographic qualifiers have been used and placed correctly.

## Package Checks

- Label(s) are placed on the correct component(s).
- The How2Recycle label is easy to find and read.
- Only permitted sustainability messaging & the label are used.
- All on-pack claims are specific and clear.
- Qualifying statements regarding recyclability have been used if a Store Drop-off, Check Locally, or Not Yet Recyclable label was assigned.
- Duplicative chasing arrows and disposal instructions are not used.



1

2

3

4



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# Minimum Label Size Required

Always start with a larger label and scale down as needed without going below these minimums so all label elements are legible. Difficult-to-read and small labels can cause consumer confusion and frustration.

Including label dimensions with your proof submission can help speed up the review process and is recommended.

## United States

Absolute smallest size:  
0.475 in



## Canada & Dual US/Canada

Absolute smallest size:  
15 mm



**Instruction tabs are not included in the minimum size requirement** because tab sizes vary. Use only the **main label body** to measure.



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# Acceptable Color Formatting

## Classic

Traditional black and white.  
Most common



## Inverted

White, or a single light color.  
For darker packages



## One Color

Single, solid dark color.  
For lighter packages



## Classic on Dark

Traditional black and white.  
For darker packages



## Faded Classic

Traditional black with a lightened shade of the package's color.



The How2Recycle label colors should not be altered in any way other than the acceptable formats outlined here. The color format selected must produce **legible contrast** of all parts of the label on your artwork. The URL and geographic qualifiers may need to be inverted to white.



# Unacceptable Color Formatting

Do not **frame the label**.

A border needed for printing is permissible.



Do not use **more than two colors**.



The **background color** should only be transparent, white, or a lightened shade of the package.



Do not use colors that produce an **illegible color contrast**.



Do not **invert isolated parts of the label**, such as only the instruction tab.



All of the above labels are examples of **unacceptable** color formatting and should not be used in your artwork.



# Limits on Label Format

The How2Recycle label and iconography are registered trademarks. Modifying the label design, format, and language is strictly prohibited.



Do not remove, shuffle, or de-emphasize any part of the label.

Do not change words, fonts, or symbols inside the label.

Do not separate tiles or split the label.

Do not use the outdated horizontal label.

Do not remove label elements including the URL, qualifiers, or instruction tab.

Do not stretch or compress the label or label text.









# International Labeling

Geographic qualifiers must be legible on your package and centered above the label tile. The qualifier text cannot be smaller than the smallest text in the How2Recycle label.

## How2Recycle is for use in the United States and Canada.

The table below outlines label options based on where you sell your product.

| Sold in US Only   | Sold primarily in US, but also sold elsewhere                                       | Sold in US, Canada & elsewhere<br>(Recyclability of the package is the same in US & Canada) | Sold in US, Canada & elsewhere<br>(Recyclability of the package differs in US & Canada) | Sold in Canada Only   | Sold primarily in Canada, but also sold elsewhere                                   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |          |      |  |  |
| Geographic qualifier not required   | US ONLY geographic qualifier required   | USA & CAN geographic qualifier required   | USA & CAN geographic qualifiers required  | Geographic qualifier not required   | CAN ONLY geographic qualifier required  |

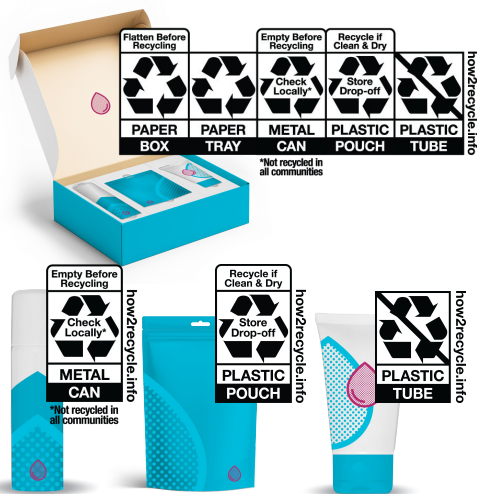


# Label Placement

Every component referenced in the assigned How2Recycle label must be featured on pack. Unprinted components should be referenced on the printed component it is contained within or attached to.

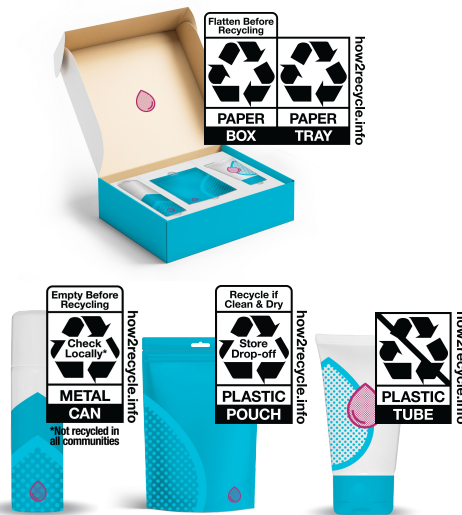
## Best format

Label all components on the outermost component & all printed components individually



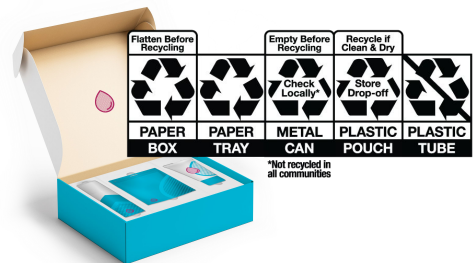
## Good format

Label all printed components individually



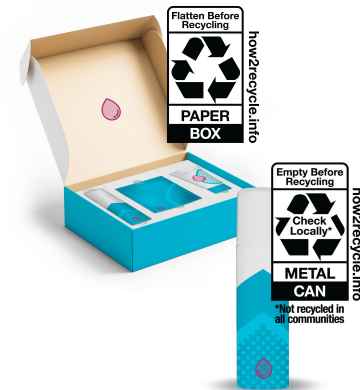
## Discouraged but allowed format

Label all components on the outermost component



## Not permitted format

Not labeling all components



1

2

3

4



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# Label Location

The **label must be featured where the consumer will encounter it** during product use or be able to locate it quickly at the time of disposal.

While not encouraged, it is permissible for the product to cover the label as long as it becomes fully visible and is not distorted once the package is open. Ensuring that the consumer spots the label naturally while experiencing the package should be prioritized when determining label placement.



# Permitted Sustainability Messaging

The How2Recycle label should be the only package recyclability messaging, unless additional claims are required by law or have been approved by How2Recycle.

Sustainability messaging about the product is permitted and should be clearly distinguished from messaging about the packaging.



## Additional Disposal Instructions

When a package is determined to be Not Yet Recycle by How2Recycle, it is permissible to include information about alternate methods of disposal, such as specialty or subscription recycling programs.

## Material Content Claims

How2Recycle encourages the use of recycled content and [source certifications](#) to guarantee and communicate responsible sourcing measures. Recycled content messages should be clear, specific, and cannot use chasing arrows that may be confusing or in conflict with disposal instructions.

## Digital Labeling

With approval, members can include their How2Recycle label within a digital code or online after featuring it on-pack. Only featuring the label in a digital format is prohibited. To feature How2Recycle on a website, it must be reviewed by the How2Recycle team and the webpage must follow all label format and claim rules outlined in this document. Members are responsible for updating digital labels if the assigned How2Recycle label changes.

## International Labeling

How2Recycle recognizes that other countries may require specific claims, information, or other labeling and does not interfere with including these on-pack. Appropriate country qualifiers should be used.





# Prohibited Sustainability Messaging

Using prohibited sustainability messaging will cause your artwork proof to be rejected. These are some examples that should not be printed on pack.



## Generic & Misleading Claims

Using “100% recyclable”, “fully recyclable”, “completely recyclable”, or “infinitely recyclable” claims can be deceptive to consumers and is prohibited. Even Widely Recyclable packages have elements (i.e. inks, adhesives, incidental attachments) that are not recycled and experience yield loss during the recycling process. Generic and misleading graphics are also prohibited.

## Unqualified Claims

Do not use generic “recyclable” claims or symbology for packages with Store Drop-off, Check Locally, or Not Yet Recyclable labels. Store Drop-off and Check Locally labels are qualified recyclability claims and omitting the qualifier is prohibited.

## Duplicative Statements

Do not include duplicative recycling instructions, claims, or images, including chasing arrows, in addition to the How2Recycle label. It is permissible to include information about product disposal when the product is not already referenced in the How2Recycle label or for speciality collection programs for Not Yet Recyclable packages.

Resin identification codes (RICs) on plastics, if used, should only appear in an equilateral triangle and not the chasing arrows symbol.



# Permitted Pre-qualification Uses

Material Manufacturer & Converter members of How2Recycle are eligible to receive pre-qualification letters and to use the How2Recycle label for marketing purposes. All communication materials created by members must follow the artwork rules in the Guidelines for Use and be reviewed and approved by How2Recycle prior to publication.



## Share your pre-qualification letters with your customers

Pre-qualification letters facilitate the transfer of information from your customers to How2Recycle. Your customers should attach pre-qualification letters directly to the label requests for their final packages on the Member Platform.



## Pre-qualify innovative packaging

Innovative packages often require testing to be eligible for a favorable recyclability category. In most cases, as determined by How2Recycle, if your package undergoes testing for pre-qualification, that testing applies to your customer's package.



## Qualify that the How2Recycle recyclability assessment may change

Include qualifiers on marketing materials and tell your customers that not all package uses will receive the same recyclability assessment. Additional components, product applications, or other attributes may change their package's recyclability.



## Market your pre-qualified package in the US & Canada

How2Recycle is for use in the United States and Canada. Request a dual US and Canada label to feature on your marketing materials and use geographic qualifiers if your package is sold in additional countries.



## Collaborate with other How2Recycle members

Work with partners and your customers to pre-qualify complete packages when your component is not eligible for its own pre-qualification letter and label.



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**How2Recycle**

# Stay In Touch

Send us an email, check out our websites, and follow us on social media!



How2Recycle is a project of GreenBlue, a 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit based in Charlottesville, Virginia, United States.



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