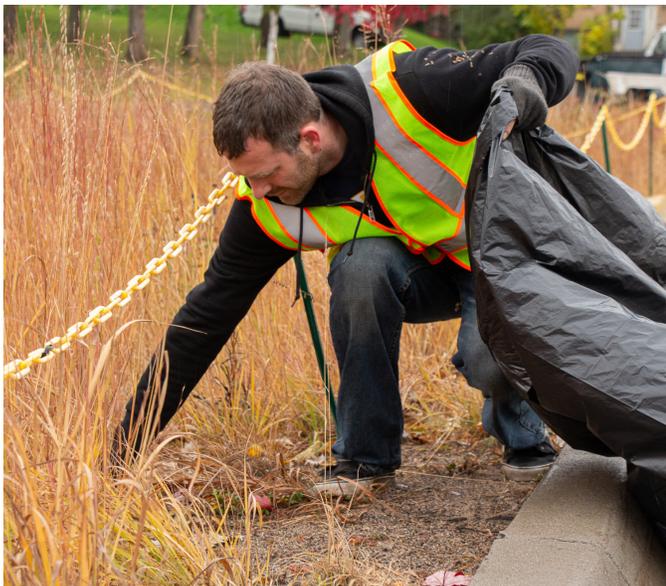


Waste sort guide for litter cleanups



Litter cleanups are a popular way to curb the plastic and other waste ending up directly in our water and soils. Well-intentioned volunteers may want to sort what they find into trash and recyclables, but to be the best recyclers, we should make sure we're not wish-cycling or including materials that will cause problems for sorting facilities.

This is a guide for what to do with common materials that are picked up during litter cleanups. Refer to hennepin.us/recycling for regular curbside recycling information.



Most litter must be put in the trash

Many of the most common items found during pickups need to go into the trash for disposal.



Trash

- food wrappers
- gum wrappers
- candy wrappers
- loose plastic bottle caps and other plastic lids
- straws and stirrers
- cigarette butts
- plastic utensils
- pieces of broken glass
- Styrofoam cups and containers
- clothing or other fabrics
- paper takeout food containers

Be careful about what you recycle

Some items you would normally recycle should go in the trash if they are muddy, flattened, broken or unrecognizable. Recycling facilities sort recyclables by their weight, shape, and visual appearance. Items that are no longer recognizable are likely to be sorted incorrectly or result in lower-quality end products. Remember to only put loose recycling into your recycling cart as bagged recycling could be mistaken for trash.



Recycling

hennepin.us/recycling

Plastic cups (#1 or #5), plastic bottles, and plastic takeout or deli containers (#1, #2, or #5)

- Must be empty, fairly clean and dry to include in recycling. Bottles should have caps on (no loose caps). Plastic items must all be larger than the size of a fist.

Glass bottles

- Must be empty. Put broken pieces in the trash.

Aluminum cans

- Must be empty. Crushed cans must be larger than the size of a fist. Fully flattened cans may fall through equipment at the sorting facility and not get recycled, so it is better to collect them separately and take them to a drop-off facility or metal recycler.

Cardboard/paper/magazines

- Must be clean and dry. If cardboard or paper products are wet or covered in dirt, they should be put in the trash.

What items can be composted?

Organic items should be collected separately in a paper bag or certified compostable plastic bag.



Organics

hennepin.us/organics

- Food scraps
- BPI-certified compostable plastic or paper cups
- paper towels
- napkins
- soiled paper bags

What to bring to a drop-off facility

Hazardous materials should be taken to a Hennepin County drop-off facility for safe disposal.

You can consult the Green Disposal Guide (hennepin.us/green-disposal-guide) for information on items you are unsure about.



Drop-off facility

hennepin.us/dropoffs

Hazardous materials

- Household cleaners, motor oil containers, or batteries

Large items

- Vehicle tires, electronics

Plastic bags

- Grocery bags, newspaper bags, bread bags, or other plastic film
- Must be empty, clean and dry. If a bag is dirty, wet, or contains other items, throw it in the trash.