

Let's Erase the Waste, Colorado!

Colorado ranks high as a desirable place to live — beautiful mountains, limitless opportunities for recreation and play, and a vibrant economy. Since Colorado excels in so many ways, it's surprising for many to discover that Colorado's recycling rate lags far behind other states — at 15.9% compared to the national average of 32%. **Other states' recycling rates are double or triple that of Colorado.** Minnesota, which is comparable in population, had a 33.9% recycling rate in 2018.



Here are three easy ways to get started on the road to recycling:



Keep glass out of landfills. Glass food and drink containers are 100% recyclable, meaning they can be recycled over and over indefinitely with little loss of material. Your used glass can live on for many years in many useful ways, so rinse and empty it and put it in the recycling bin every time.



Capture your cardboard. It's one of the easiest materials to recycle and is widely accepted at recycling centers across the state. And it doesn't require any special effort from you to recycle. Just flatten the boxes before putting them in the bin or taking them to a local recycling center.



Aluminum can be recycled over and over. Aluminum foil is just as recyclable as aluminum cans as long as it's clean and is bigger than the palm of your hand. Be sure to rinse your cans first and check with your local recycling center for any special requirements.

A little recycling effort can go a long way. By doing so, not only can we boost our state's recycling rate, but we can help our environment and create jobs for Coloradans.



Recycled Glass Stays in Colorado

It works like this:

- Step 1** You recycle your glass bottles and jars in your curbside recycling bin or at a drop-off center.
- Step 2** Your recycling is picked up and sorted.
- Step 3** The recycler cleans the glass and sorts it further.
- Step 4** The cleaned and sorted glass is sold to local bottling companies, in Wheat Ridge and Windsor, where it is remanufactured into new beer bottles, ready to repeat the cycle.

These systems only work when people participate in the process. More recycling companies have opened their doors in Colorado, bringing with them advanced cleaning and sorting technology, and more glass is being recycled. Even with that increase, Colorado recyclers have capacity to recycle more glass. If Coloradans recycle more of their glass, recyclers hire more workers and create materials for bottle manufacturing, fiberglass insulation, sandblasting, asphalt engineering and other glass-related products.

Know what glass is recyclable in your curbside bin. Soda, beer, wine, and other drink bottles; pickle, jelly, sauce, or baby food jars; clear, blue, green, and brown bottles are all recyclable. Windows, ovenware, lightbulbs, Pyrex, and crystal are only recyclable through special programs. Not sure? Grab your phone, go online and check. A great place to start is cdphe.colorado.gov/recycling, or check the government website for your city or county.

Take the pledge – no glass in the trash – at
ErasetheWasteCO.org