

RECYCLING: THE BASICS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Recycling is good for South Carolina's environment and economy, but how does it all work? Here are the basics.



1 HOW DOES IT WORK?

Recycling – with the exception of a few items such as appliances, electronics, and lead-acid batteries – is not mandatory in South Carolina. Recycling is voluntary.

Local governments design and offer programs for their residents that need your participation to succeed. **Recycling will not work without you.**



2 WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?

Programs differ from community to community. Items commonly accepted include aluminum cans, plastic bottles, steel cans (e.g., fruit, vegetable, soup), cardboard, and newspaper. One of the most important actions that you can take is to find out what is specifically accepted in your area and how to recycle these items correctly.



3 WHAT'S NOT ACCEPTED?

Recycling starts when you place the correct items in your recycling container – that is material that is accepted in your community's program.

Placing the wrong items – material that is not accepted – increases costs for local governments and businesses.

To learn more, visit recyclerightsc.org.



4 RECYCLE IT ALL?

No. Markets often determine whether an item is recyclable in your community. If there isn't enough of a given material or the material is too far away from an available market, then it's less likely to be accepted for recycling. In addition, some material (e.g., Styrofoam™) has little value in the marketplace and may not be cost-effective to collect.



5 WHERE TO RECYCLE?

You can recycle at home, school, work, and on-the-go – just about anywhere. South Carolina has more than 60 curbside programs and nearly 550 recycling drop-off centers statewide. Recycling also is available at South Carolina's State Parks and four largest airports. Many national retail outlets offer recycling for specific material.

6 ARE THERE ITEMS THAT MUST BE RECYCLED IN SOUTH CAROLINA?

Yes. By law, several items must be recycled in South Carolina. If you have questions on any of them, contact your county recycling coordinator. A list of recycling programs in your county, what each program accepts, where recyclables are accepted and program contact information is available at scdhec.gov/recycleheresc.

- **Large appliances** (e.g., refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers) – If you buy a new appliance, ask the retailer to take back your old one. Each of the state's 46 counties also accept large appliances, so check with your county recycling coordinator.
- **Electronics** – All counties provide programs and/or single-day events to recycle electronics. Many retailers (e.g., Best Buy®, Target™) also offer collection programs. Finally, consider donating your working electronics to non-profits and other organizations.
- **Tires** – Each county has a collection program that accepts a maximum number of tires at recycling drop-off centers or landfills. When you buy a new tire, retailers charge a \$2 fee on each new tire. The fee provides grant funding to local governments to manage waste tires.



- **Lead-acid batteries** – Check with your county recycling coordinator to know if your county offers a lead-acid battery recycling option. You also can recycle your old lead-acid battery at the retail location where you bought your new one. There is a \$7 advance recycling fee on each new battery purchased. If you return your old battery when buying a new battery, you will receive a \$5 credit and be charged only \$2.
- **Used motor oil** – There are more than 900 collection sites across the state for do-it-yourself oil changers. The network includes local government collection sites and participating retailers (e.g., AutoZone®, Advance Auto Parts®, O'Reilly Auto Parts®, Jiffy Lube™). Not all retailers participate, so make sure to call ahead. Visit scdhec.gov/used-motor-oil-recycling for more about oil recycling.



To learn more about recycling and doing it right, call 1-800-768-7348 or visit scdhec.gov/recycle and recyclerightsc.org.

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