

How to recycle right 2026 Pinellas County Recycle Guide

Text-only edition

**Pinellas County Solid Waste
Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education**

The items shown below are accepted across Pinellas County.

**Check your local recycling program for additional accepted items.
Please, no plastic bags or bagged recycling. All items should be clean and dry.**

- Empty glass bottles, jars (no lids)
- Empty plastic bottles, jugs (no caps)
- Empty metal cans (no lids)
- Flattened cardboard, paper, junk mail, newspaper, paperboard, cartons

Read me to learn about what can and cannot be recycled in Pinellas County, where your nearest recycling drop-off center is, where to take household hazardous waste and more!

Questions about your collection service?

Cities and towns manage trash and recycling collection, while County-licensed private haulers provide the service in unincorporated areas. Residents in those areas can sign up directly with a hauler.

City/Town

Belleair – (727) 588-3769 ext. 406 – townofbelleair.com
Belleair Beach – (727) 452-5278 – cityofbelleairbeach.com
Belleair Bluffs – (727) 572-8779 – belleairbluffs.org
Belleair Shore – (727) 593-9296 – belleairshore.com
Clearwater – (727) 562-4920 – myclearwater.com/recycling
Dunedin – (727) 298-3215 – dunedin.gov/home
Gulfport – (727) 893-1089 – mygulfport.us*
Indian Rocks Beach – (727) 595-6889 – indian-rocks-beach.com
Indian Shores – (727) 595-4020 – myindianshores.com
Kenneth City – (727) 498-8948 – kennethcityfl.org**
Largo – (727) 587-6760 – largorecycles.com
Madeira Beach – (727) 543-8154 – madeirabeachfl.gov
North Redington Beach – (727) 391-4848 – townofnrb.com**
Oldsmar – (813) 855-5257 – myoldsmar.com
Pinellas Park – (727) 369-0690 – pinellas-park.com
Redington Beach – (727) 391-3875 – townofredingtonbeach.com
Redington Shores – (727) 397-5538 – townofredingtonshores.com
Safety Harbor – (727) 724-1550 ext. 2002 – cityofsafetyharbor.com
Seminole – (727) 397-6383 ext. 3 – myseminole.com**
South Pasadena – (727) 384-0701 – mysouthpasadena.com
St. Petersburg – (727) 893-7398 – stpete.org/recycle
St. Pete Beach – (727) 572-6800 – stpetebeach.org
Tarpon Springs – (727) 943-4837 – ctsfl.us/200/solid-waste-recycling-yardwaste
Treasure Island – (727) 547-4575 ext. 250 – mytreasureisland.org

* Recyclables are collected in two separate bins. Glass is not accepted curbside.

** Call for information about recycling collection assistance.

Unincorporated (not in a city or town)

Contact these private haulers to inquire about trash and recycling collection service.

Coastal Waste and Recycling – (727) 561-0360 – coastalwasteinc.com

D and D Hauling-Sanitation – (727) 586-6416 – dndhauling.com

Solar Sanitation – (727) 535-0447 – solarsanitationinc.com

Stinky's Waste Management – (727) 423-5555 – stinkyswastemanagement.com

Tote Enterprises, Inc. – (727) 422-0736 – toteenterprises.com

Waste Connections – (727) 572-6800 – wasteconnections.com/pinellas

WM – (727) 572-8779 – wm.com

Waste Pro – (727) 452-5278 – wasteprousa.com/office/clearwater

Kid's activity: Natural resources

Recycling helps protect our planet's natural resources, such as air, water, land and energy, while reducing pollution that would be generated when raw materials are used to make a new product. Natural resources are useful materials we get from the Earth, like coal, oil, natural gas and trees.

There are two main types of natural resources: renewable resources, which can be replaced readily, and nonrenewable resources, which take millions of years to form and cannot be quickly replaced.

Research renewable and nonrenewable resources, then create an infographic that explains the difference between the two. Using the Tampa Bay Times as your primary source, find images, advertisements, photographs, cartoons or graphics to illustrate your infographic. Finally, share your infographic and explain what you learned with your class.

Florida Standards: SC.4.E.6.3; SC.412.N.1.1; SC.912.L.17.11; ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.3; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.V.1.1

Don't put these items in your recycling bin! Here's what do with them.

PLASTIC BAGS OR BAGGED RECYCLING

- Avoid use of plastic bags by swapping for reusable bags.
- Reuse plastic bags.
- Place recyclables loose in your bin.

CLOTHING

- Donate unwanted clothing.
- Turn old clothing into rags.

YARD WASTE

- Take yard waste to a yard waste processing facility to be turned into mulch. See page 10 for more information.

FOAM PACKAGING PRODUCTS

- Bring your own to-go containers.
- Save and reuse for future packing needs.

WIRES, CORDS OR HOSES

- Donate usable wires, cords or hoses.
- Take metal items to a scrap metal recycler.

FOOD WASTE OR FOOD RESIDUE

- Compost food waste at home.
- Place food waste in your trash bin.

OTHER PLASTIC PRODUCTS

- Reduce use of plastic products by swapping for reusable items.
- Place other plastics in your trash bin.

BATTERIES

- Only batteries labeled "alkaline" can be thrown in the trash.
- Never place batteries in your recycling bin. Take nonalkaline batteries to a battery drop-off center. See pages 12 and 13 to find out why!

Visit [Pinellas.gov/where](https://pinellas.gov/where) to find out what to do with these and other items.

When in doubt, leave it out. But where does it go?

Not sure what to do with an unwanted item? The [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) helps you find local options to reuse, recycle or dispose of it.

Here's how to use the tool:

Step 1: Visit [Pinellas.gov/where](https://pinellas.gov/where).

Step 2: Select “Homes” or “Businesses.”

- **HOMES:** The item you're getting rid of was for personal use.
- **BUSINESSES:** The item you're getting rid of was used by or for a business, including hobbyists, side gigs and nonprofits.

Step 3: You can search for a specific item or select and browse one of the categories.

Step 4: Find the best option for your unwanted item!

Want to test your recycling knowledge and find out if you are a recycling superstar?

Take the recycling quiz at [Pinellas.gov/RecycleQuiz](https://pinellas.gov/RecycleQuiz)!

Recycling FAQ

Recycling is the process of taking something old and turning it into something new, helping conserve natural resources. Recycling is especially important for Pinellas County because it helps divert materials from our disposal complex and helps the County achieve its vision of zero waste to landfill by 2050. For more information on why recycling is important, visit [Pinellas.gov/why-recycle](https://pinellas.gov/why-recycle).

Q: How does recycling work in Pinellas County, and where does it go?

A: In Pinellas County, your recycling is collected by your city or town or, if you live in an unincorporated area, by a private hauler. From there, the recyclables are taken to a recycling sorting facility, also called a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). At the MRF, recyclables are sorted, bundled and sold to companies that turn them into new products, like cans, paper or even park benches!

Q: How can I find out what is accepted in my local recycling program?

A: You can check your city's/town's or hauler's website, or contact a representative about what can be placed in your recycling bin. You can also use the guidance provided in this Recycle Guide. No matter where you are in Pinellas County, if you recycle all things listed on the front cover of this guide, you are recycling correctly! For more information about trash and recycling collection, visit [Pinellas.gov/swcollection](https://pinellas.gov/swcollection).

Q: My plastic item has a number and a recycling symbol on it. Can it be recycled in my local program?

A: The number on the bottom of a plastic item is called a Resin Identification Code (RIC), which tells you what type of plastic it is, not whether it is recyclable. Items with these symbols may or may not be recyclable in your local program. Forget about the numbers! In Pinellas County, we recycle plastics based on their size and shape. If it has a neck or opening smaller than the base (like bottles or jugs), it's recyclable. If not, or if the container is smaller than your fist, leave it out of your recycling bin.

Q: What happens if I put the wrong item in my recycling bin?

A: This is called contamination. Contaminants, like plastic bags, food waste, foam or small plastic items can damage equipment, harm workers and ruin entire loads of recyclables. When in doubt, leave it out, and check out the [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) at [Pinellas.gov/where](https://pinellas.gov/where) to find the best reuse, recycling and disposal options.

Q: Why isn't everything recyclable in my local program?

A: While many materials can be recycled somewhere, local recycling programs are designed to handle only certain common household items. Two key factors make an item recyclable. First, it has to have the right physical properties, like shape and size, to be sorted by the machines at a MRF. Second, it needs to have a market value, meaning a MRF can sell it to a manufacturer to be made into new products. The items on the cover of this Recycle Guide can be sorted and are sold to be made into new things.

Kid's activity: Being a recycling advocate

The [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) is a searchable database that connects you to the right donation centers, recycling facilities, online takeback programs and safe disposal locations in Pinellas County. As a recycling advocate, it is your job to let other residents know about this tool. You can do this by designing an advertising campaign and press release explaining the tool and its importance to others.

Using the advertisements in the Tampa Bay Times as models, create an attention-getting ad for this tool. For the press release, write your release around the essential questions covered in a typical newspaper article: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Share your advertisement and press release with your class. **Submit both the advertisement and press release to recycle@pinellas.gov for a chance to win a prize!**

Florida Standards: ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.3.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.C.5.1; ELA.412.R.2.1; ELA.412.R.2.2

Recycling Drop-Off Centers

CLEARWATER

- Clearwater Solid Waste Facility • 1701 N. Hercules Ave.
- Sand Key Park • 1060 Gulf Blvd.*
- Walmart • 23106 U.S. 19 N., southeast corner of parking lot*

DUNEDIN

- Highlander Park Recycling Site • 1941 Ed Eckert Drive, across from Highlander Pool
- Lake Haven Recycling Center • 810 Lake Haven Road

GULFPORT

- 49th Street Neighborhood Center • 1617 49th St. S.

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

- Brown Park • Bay Boulevard and Second Street
- Indian Rocks Beach Nature Preserve • 903 Gulf Blvd.
- Indian Rocks Historical Museum • 203 Fourth Ave.
- Kolb Park • 1507 Bay Palm Blvd.

INDIAN SHORES

- Indian Shores Town Hall • 19305 Gulf Blvd.

LARGO

- Hamlin Boulevard 4-H • 14644 113th Ave. N.*
- Pinellas County Extension • 12520 Ulmerton Road, north of Ulmerton Road, entrance on 125th St. N. Frontage Road*
- Starkey Road Recycling Center – 1551 Starkey Road, north of Ulmerton Road, south of East Bay Drive
- Tri-City Plaza • U.S. 19 N. and East Bay Drive, behind Ross store

PALM HARBOR

- Curlew Retention Pond • 1740 Curlew Road, between Belcher Road and CR 1*
- John Chesnut Sr. Park • 2200 East Lake Road*
- William E. Dunn Water Reclamation Facility • 4111 Dunn Drive, off Alt U.S. 19 N.*

REDINGTON SHORES

- Redington Shores Town Hall • 17425 Gulf Blvd.

SEMINOLE

- Lake Seminole Park • 10015 Park Blvd., east of Seminole Boulevard*

ST. PETERSBURG

City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Sites:

- 1000 62nd Ave. NE
- 7750 26th Ave. N.
- 2453 20th Ave. N.
- 2500 26th Ave. S.
- 4015 Dr. MLK Jr. St. S.
- Crescent Lake Park • 1320 Fifth St. N.
- Pinellas County Solid Waste • 2855 109th Ave. N.*
- St. Petersburg Municipal Marina • 300 Second Ave. SE

TARPON SPRINGS

- A.L. Anderson Park • 39699 U.S. 19 N., between Klosterman Road and Tarpon Avenue*
- Brooker Creek Education Center • 3940 Keystone Road*
- Tarpon Springs Fire Rescue Station 70 • 1023 Gulf Road
- Tarpon Springs Yard Waste Facility • 898 S Levis Ave.

TIERRA VERDE

- Fort De Soto Park - 3600 Pinellas Bayway S.*

*County-managed drop-off centers

Kid's activity: Recycling viewpoints

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, recycling is a series of activities that includes:

- The collection of used, reused or unused items that would otherwise be considered waste.
- Sorting and processing the recyclable products into raw materials.
- Remanufacturing the recycled raw materials into new products.

People help close the recycling loop by purchasing products made from recycled content. Recycling can also include composting food scraps, yard trimmings and other organic materials. For recycling to be effective, people of all ages must participate in the process.

Interview a friend and a family member about recycling practices and their views on recycling. Using the articles in the Tampa Bay Times as models, write a short article on your family member's and friend's current views about recycling. Share and discuss what you have learned with your class.

Florida Standards: ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.3.3; ELA.412.V.1.1

Pages 8-9

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection

The HHW program diverts household hazardous waste from the trash for proper recycling and disposal.

The County offers two convenient ways to drop off household chemicals and rechargeable batteries.

HHW CENTER

2855 109th Ave. N., St. Petersburg
Open select days from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

HHW NORTH

29582 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater
Open select Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

HHW CALENDAR

Visit [Pinellas.gov/hhwcalendar](https://pinellas.gov/hhwcalendar) to view hours, days and locations.

The free Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program is for Pinellas County households only. Government-issued ID is required and scanned for proof of residency. If the chemicals you're getting rid of were used by or for a business, visit [Pinellas.gov/bizwaste](https://pinellas.gov/bizwaste). Questions? Visit [Pinellas.gov/hhw](https://pinellas.gov/hhw) or call (727) 464-7500.

What to Bring

Limits to quantities are per vehicle per day.

AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

- Oil and antifreeze (Limit: 5 gallons)
- Gasoline and diesel

(Limit: 2 five-gallon DOT containers. No tanks.)

BATTERIES

- Rechargeable batteries including: lithium-ion, nickel cadmium, nickel-metal hydride, small sealed lead acid and lithium polymer
- Vape devices (Limit: 12)
- Non-rechargeable, single-use batteries including: lithium, zinc-air, zinc-chloride, mercury, lithium manganese and silver oxide
- Items containing the above batteries that cannot be removed

HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS

- Adhesives/epoxies
- Aerosols
- Cleaners

LAWN & GARDEN CHEMICALS

- Pesticides/herbicides
- Fertilizers
- Sprayers

MERCURY-CONTAINING DEVICES

- Thermometers
- Thermostats
- Fluorescent bulbs (Limit: 12)

PAINT PRODUCTS

- Paints/stains and solvents

(Limit: 20 one-gallon and 5 five-gallon total)

POOL & SPA PRODUCTS

- Chlorine
- Muriatic acid
- Cleaners/clarifiers

SIGNAL FLARES

- Marine
- Road
- Guns and cases not accepted (flares only)

HOW TO PACKAGE CHEMICALS

Keep yourself and our staff safe and minimize spills. When you are getting ready to drop off your household chemicals, please package them as follows:

DO:

- Place containers in a box or tray and use crumpled newspaper as packing material to prevent breakage.
- Place leaking containers in a clear, sealed bag; then in a box or tray.
- Place chemicals in trunk or truck bed, away from passengers.

DO NOT:

- Mix chemicals together.
- Put containers in a bag, unless leaking.

Kid's activity: Household Hazardous Waste

Pinellas County Solid Waste's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program keeps household hazardous waste out of our trash so it can be properly recycled or disposed of. If this waste isn't disposed of properly, it could harm the environment, people and animals. Go to Pinellas.gov/hhw to learn more about the HHW program.

Work on writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper urging Pinellas County residents to dispose of their HHW properly. It is a way for individuals to share their opinions on current events and issues.

Using the letters to the editor in the Tampa Bay Times or tampabay.com/viewpoints/letters as models, write a letter to the editor urging Pinellas County residents to dispose of their HHW properly. Your letter should include: an introductory statement; one or two facts or examples from this publication or from Pinellas.gov/hhw to support that point; and a concluding call to action.

Florida Standards: ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.3.3; ELA.412.V.1.1; SC.912.L.17.14; SC.912.L.17.16

‘MULCH’ BETTER THAN THROWING IT AWAY

Pinellas County grinds yard waste and turns it into mulch for reuse by county residents.

The County offers free mulch at convenient locations all around Pinellas County. Bring a shovel and transport container(s) and take as much as you need. Your garden will thank you!

For more information, visit Pinellas.gov/mulch.

ARTIFICIAL REEFS

Pinellas County reuses environmentally safe items, such as concrete, pipes and steel beams, to build artificial reefs.

Artificial reefs provide valuable habitat for marine life and create exciting attractions for scuba divers to explore.

You can find the reef locations on our online map by visiting Pinellas.gov/reef.

Kid’s activity: Artificial reefs

Coral reefs are underwater ecosystems made up of several types of corals that continue to grow, often on top of one another. Reefs often also have sponges and algae growing on them, which provide a complex habitat for many types of marine animals. Coral reefs provide marine life with more shelter, food and resources than surrounding open ocean areas. Because of this, they have an abundance of marine life and are very important to protect.

Watch the two-minute video, “Artificial Reef Dive Update,” at youtu.be/tmwZiILFChU to learn about how artificial reefs can provide unique homes to a variety of ocean organisms. Artificial reefs provide valuable underwater habitats for marine life using environmentally safe building and demolition debris. Items such as concrete pipes, steel beams, or entire ships are carefully placed on the Gulf or bay bottom. Learn more about Pinellas County’s artificial reef program by visiting Pinellas.gov/reef.

Using the cartoons in the Tampa Bay Times as models, create a cartoon depicting the artificial reef process. Share your cartoon and what you have learned with your class.

Source: Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Radical Reefs activity

Florida Standards: SC.412.N.1.1; ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.3.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.C.5.1; ELA.412.F.1.3; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.2.3; ELA.412.R.2.4; VA.4121.C.1.1; VA.412.C.2.3

Discover why there is no such place as away!

Join us on a tour of the Solid Waste Disposal Complex to learn what happens to your trash after you throw it away!

Approximately 90 minutes long. Available to everyone ages 8 and older.

For children ages 8 and under, check out our kindergarten through grade 2 educational resources at [Pinellas.gov/swresources-k-12](https://pinellas.gov/swresources-k-12).

Teachers: The activities are aligned with Florida Standards and can be used in the classroom.

For more information and to sign up for a tour:

- Call (727) 464-7500
- Email recycle@pinellas.gov
- Visit Pinellas.gov/SWeducation

Can't visit us in person? Take our virtual tour at Pinellascountyswdc.vrticalmedia.digital/!

The Skeptical Receptacles Talk: Batteries

Did you know that some batteries can spark and cause fires when they get crushed in trash and recycling trucks?

These fires put workers in danger, destroy expensive equipment and ruin perfectly good recyclables. That's why it is so important to know which batteries need to be brought to a drop-off center.

- If your battery is labeled "alkaline," it is okay to throw it in the trash!
- No battery should ever be placed in your mixed recycling bin.

Batteries hide in many commonly used household items, like electric toothbrushes, laptops, portable fans, toys, power tools, handheld and robot vacuum cleaners, watches and more. If it charges or runs without a cord, chances are it has one of the batteries listed on page 12. Use our [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) to find the drop-off center closest to you!

ALWAYS BRING THESE BATTERIES TO A DROP-OFF

Rechargeable Batteries

- Nickel Cadmium (Ni-CD) (e.g., cordless phones)
- Nickel-Metal Hydride (NiMH) (e.g., toothbrushes, razors, cameras, cellphones)
- Small Sealed Lead Acid (e.g., UPS back-up batteries)
- Lithium-Ion (e.g., cellphones, laptops, tablets, power tools, toys, vape devices)
- Lithium Polymer (LiPO) (e.g., remote control vehicles)

Non-Rechargeable Batteries

- Silver Oxide (SR) Button Batteries (e.g., remote controls, digital thermometers, watches)
- Zinc-Air (e.g., hearing aids)
- Lithium (e.g., smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors)
- Zinc-Chloride (e.g., remote controls, calculators, small gadgets)
- Lithium Manganese (LR) Button Batteries (e.g., key fobs, electric scales)
- Mercury (e.g., watches, hearing aids)

Kids activity: ‘Battery Detective’

Lithium-ion batteries power many of the devices we use every day, but they also pose serious fire risks when they are incorrectly disposed of. When compressed, such as in trash or recycling trucks, the batteries can spark and cause fires that burn hotter and faster than normal fires. A 2021 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report found 245 fires at waste facilities between 2013 and 2020 caused by lithium batteries.

Your mission as a “Battery Detective” is to investigate how these batteries work, why they can be dangerous, and how to handle them safely. Start by reading the article “What are lithium-ion batteries, and how do they catch fire? Here’s what to know” in the July 24, 2023, Tampa Bay Times e-Newspaper or online at tampabay.com/news/2023/07/21/tampa-bay-lithium-ion-battery-leak-fire-explosion-risk. Collect the clues: How can you determine if your battery is rechargeable? How do you safely dispose of a rechargeable battery when you no longer need it?

Once you’ve gathered the evidence, design a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign explaining the importance of properly disposing of rechargeable batteries. PSAs are advertisements that try to “sell” a behavior or idea instead of selling a specific product. The most effective PSAs have a powerful message that sticks with the viewer, sometimes becoming part of society’s collective psyche. PSAs come in all shapes and sizes, and your campaign should include at least three different types of ads, such as a print ad, a short video or audio recording, a social media post or an outdoor ad, like a poster or billboard. For inspiration, check out examples from the Ad Council at adCouncil.org and browse the ads in the Tampa Bay Times.

Florida Standards: ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.3.3; ELA.412.V.1.1

ASK AN EXPERT: Recycling Services of Florida

Brian Stoner, General Manager and Tyler Ward, Managing Director

Recycling Services of Florida (RSF) is a recycling processor located in Pinellas County. They are responsible for processing collected recyclable material from many areas of the county and selling it to manufacturers to be turned into something new!

Q: What is one thing you'd like everyone to remember when putting items in the recycling bin?

A: "When in doubt, leave it out." What your local or regional recycling sorting facility can process varies. If you don't know what's accepted, check with your city/town or hauler. Often, residents feel guilty about throwing something they want to be recyclable in the trash, but it's usually better to leave it out of your recycling bin.

Q: What are people doing right?

A: Putting items in containers loosely and unbagged. When a worker sees a plastic bag on the line, they do not open it; instead, they immediately pull it off and put it in the trash.

Q: What are the items you wish people recycled more of?

A: Plastic bottles, tin and aluminum cans. Most households and businesses don't recycle them enough.

Q: What's your favorite part of your job?

A: No two days are the same.

Q: Are my items really getting recycled/does recycling really work?

A: Yes, absolutely, they are getting recycled. That's my job!

Q: What happens to my recycling after the truck picks it up?

A: The truck gets weighed, then dumps its load on the tip floor. After that, the material runs on a series of conveyors through machines, like optical sorters and magnets, that sort items based on physical properties. The materials are separated into different bunkers. Then, they are each baled, packed into a truck that weighs upwards of 80,000 pounds and sold to mills to be made into new products. More than 95% of these mills are located in the United States, where materials are pulped, smelted or shredded.

YOU CAN REDUCE WASTE AT YOUR NEXT EVENT!

WHAT IS A LOW-WASTE EVENT?

A low-waste event reduces environmental impact by minimizing landfill waste through sustainable materials, diversion methods and outreach. Unlike zero waste — which sends no trash to a landfill — low waste focuses on reducing waste as much as possible, which all event organizers can strive for.

It's important to create less waste to protect the places we live, work and play in the Tampa Bay area for future generations. The Tampa Bay Area Low-Waste Event Guide can help!

The guide provides a planning checklist, tips for specific aspects of the event, guidance on tracking progress and additional resources. Find the guide at [Pinellas.gov/lweg](https://pinellas.gov/lweg).

Go low waste and win!

At the next event you host, take a photo of the low-waste tip you implemented and email it to recycle@pinellas.gov for a chance to be featured on social media, highlighting your low-waste tips, efforts and results!

Kid's activity: Make your next event low waste

The Low-Waste Event Guide is aimed at organizers of large events, such as festivals, but many of its tips can be used for small events, such as parties, too! Look through the following sections of the guide under "Tips": "For Waste Stations," "To Reduce," "To Reuse" and "To Recycle." Make a list of tips that could be applied to small events, such as birthday parties, backyard barbeques or holiday celebrations.

Using the articles in the Tampa Bay Times as models, write a newspaper article that explains why holding low-waste events is important, and how Pinellas County residents can do so. Be sure to include the 5 Ws and H – the who, what, when, where, why and how.

Florida Standards: ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1; ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1; ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.3.3; ELA.412.V.1.1

RECYCLE ONLY

- Paper and cardboard
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastic bottles and jugs
- Metal food and beverage cans
- Cartons

MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit Pinellas.gov/recycle
- Call 727-464-7500
- Email recycle@pinellas.gov

About Newspaper in Education

The Pulitzer Prize-winning Tampa Bay Times is the largest daily newspaper in Florida. Locally owned and independent, the Times has long been celebrated for its outstanding and credible journalism, practiced with integrity in the public interest. The Times has been part of the Tampa Bay community for more than 140 years.

The Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program (NIE) is a cooperative effort between schools and the Times to encourage the use of newspapers in print and electronic form as educational resources – a “living textbook.”

Since the 1970s, NIE has served educators, students and families in the Tampa Bay area by providing classroom access to the Times plus award-winning original educational publications, teacher guides, lesson plans, educator professional development resources and much more – all at no cost to schools, teachers or families.

Our educational resources fall into the category of informational text, a type of nonfiction text. The primary purpose of informational text is to convey information about the natural or social world.

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A text-only version of this guide can be found at Pinellas.gov/recycle.

Florida Standards

This publication and its activities incorporate the following Florida Standards:

ELA.412.EE.1.1; ELA.412.EE.2.1; ELA.412.EE.4.1; ELA.412.EE.5.1; ELA.412.EE.6.1;
ELA.412.C.1.2; ELA.412.C.1.3; ELA.412.C.1.4; ELA.412.C.1.5; ELA.412.C.2.1;
ELA.412.C.3.1; ELA.412.C.4.1; ELA.412.F.1.4; ELA.412.R.2.2; ELA.412.R.3.3;
ELA.412.V.1.1; SC.412.N.1.1; SC.4.E.6.3; SC.912.L.17.11; SC.912.L.17.14; SC.912.L.17.16;
VA.4121.C.1.1; VA.412.C.2.3