

# ASK THE GANG!



**Q: I know that recycling conserves natural resources but what does it do for jobs?**

**A:** Recycling not only helps us realize the greatest value of our natural resources but it also maximizes human resources too. On average, recycling creates four jobs for every one job in the waste disposal industry. Overall, recycling creates 1.1 million U.S. jobs, \$236 billion in gross annual sales, and \$37 billion in annual payrolls, according to the National Recycling Coalition. The benefits of recycling also can be seen throughout the entire process. For every job collecting recyclables, there are 26 jobs in processing the materials and manufacturing them into new products. Locally, there are workers in many aspects of recycling, including collection (curbside carts, recycling dumpsters, and roll-off containers), processing (fibers, containers, metals, electronics, organics, construction and demolition waste), and manufacturing (paper, organics, construction and demolition waste), as well as non-profit positions and recycling coordinators. See page 5 (and the contact list below) for local organizations that employ people in the recycling field.

**Q: What do you mean by “check for the neck” when talking about what plastics are recyclable?**

**A:** There are two things that you need to look for when determining which plastics are recyclable in Anchorage – 1) the type of plastic and 2) the shape of the container. First, you will need to look for the (SP) code, usually on the bottom of the container. See page 4 for an explanation of the SPI code. Then you'll need to “check for the neck” to determine that the plastic container is a bottle or a jug. Usually it's a container that primarily holds liquids. It has to have a neck with a screw top to be recyclable in Anchorage. For example, a soda bottle has a skinny neck compared to its body and it has a screw top type closure. A yogurt tub does not have a neck and it has no screw top - its lid snaps on. Sometimes the neck is less defined but the screw top

should be the decider. For example, a peanut butter jar can be recycled since it has a screw top even though its neck is not really well defined. The majority of #1 PET recyclable bottles are water and soda bottles and the majority of #2 HDPE recyclable jugs are milk, juice and detergent jugs. There are a few other containers that fit the requirements, such as some shampoo bottles, cooking oil bottles and jugs, peanut butter jars (they do have a screw top!) and parmesan cheese plastic shaker containers.

**Other important plastics recycling rules:**

- Be sure to rinse all containers. Peanut butter jars can be tricky. Fill them with water, let them sit for several hours, pour out half the water, put the lid back on tightly and shake vigorously. When you pour out the water, the container should be clean enough to put in the recycling bin.
- Don't put any plastic bottles or jugs in your recycling cart that held motor oil or harsh chemicals such as lawn pesticides. Containers that held general household cleaners are acceptable as long as they are rinsed.

**Q: Can caps be recycled on my plastic bottles?**

**A:** Up until recently, caps needed to be removed and discarded. However, you may now leave caps on your plastic bottles when you recycle them. But be sure to empty the bottles before recycling.

**Q: Can I recycle used fryer grease?**

**A:** Yes, Alaska Green Waste Solutions is now accepting CLEAN cooking oil and grease in CLEAN containers. This means no sink trap grease, only grease from fryers. The grease can be dropped off at Alaska Waste at 6301 Rosewood, Monday through Friday, 8am to 4:30pm. Call 563-3717 for more details. The fee is \$1/gallon to drop off grease.

## A QUICK LOOK: Waste & Recycling Resources

Alaska Waste.....	<a href="http://www.alaskawaste.com">www.alaskawaste.com</a> .....	563-3717
ALPAR.....	<a href="http://www.alparalaska.com">www.alparalaska.com</a> .....	274-3266
Anchorage Recycling Center (RockTenn Recycling – formerly Smurfit-Stone) .....		562-2267
Anchorage School District Recycling.....	<a href="http://www.asdk12.org/depts/recycling">www.asdk12.org/depts/recycling</a> .....	348-5151
Central Recycling Services.....	<a href="http://www.centralrecyclingservices.com">www.centralrecyclingservices.com</a> .....	748-7400
EverGreen Nursery..	<a href="http://www.alaskaevergreen.com">www.alaskaevergreen.com</a> .....	344-2588
Girdwood Recycling.....	<a href="mailto:girdwoodrecycling2010@gmail.com">girdwoodrecycling2010@gmail.com</a> ...	242-5520

Girmscheid Enterprises .....	<a href="mailto:prodigalson@gci.net">prodigalson@gci.net</a> .....	770-1720
Green Earth Landworks.....	<a href="http://www.greeneearthalaska.com">www.greeneearthalaska.com</a> .....	243-7892
Hilltop Recycling.....	<a href="http://www.hilltoprecycling.com">www.hilltoprecycling.com</a> .....	696-2246
MOA Solid Waste Services.....	<a href="http://www.muni.org/sws">www.muni.org/sws</a> .....	343-6262
Mobile Metals .....		277-7777
Schnitzer Steel - Anchorage (Alaska Metal Recycling) .....	<a href="http://www.alaskametalrecycling.com">www.alaskametalrecycling.com</a> .....	349-4833
Southside Recycling.....	<a href="mailto:pnuts33@hotmail.com">pnuts33@hotmail.com</a> .....	242-9587
Valley Community for Recycling Solutions (VCRS).....	<a href="http://www.valleyrecycling.org">www.valleyrecycling.org</a> .....	907-745-5544
Total Reclaim .....	<a href="http://www.totalreclaim.com/Alaska.html">www.totalreclaim.com/Alaska.html</a> ....	561-0544