



# The Story of Today's Recyclables

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## **QUESTION: Where does Casella ship plastics today? What do they become?**

**ANSWER:** All of the residential plastics we pick up goes to North American buyers. For example:

- Water and soda bottles (PET) go to American and Canadian buyers who process it into things like rugs, fleece, t-shirts, and insulation for jackets and sleeping bags. We are working with another buyer in PA who will be making recycled PET back into new bottles.
- Milk jugs and detergent bottles (HDPE) go to the southeastern and midwestern US as well as Canada to be made into new containers, plastic lumber, playground equipment, fleece products, and recycling bins.
- Yogurt cups and other “tubs and lids” (PP) go to the same mills as HDPE, and very often are processed into paint buckets.

## **QUESTION: Where does Casella ship cardboard and paper today? What do they become?**

**ANSWER:** Cardboard goes to mostly North American markets to be made into new liner board and then into new boxes. Paper we process mostly into a “mixed paper” grade, which is going to increasingly domestic markets to be used as a percentage blend in new boxes as well as into brown paper towels. Several of our MRFs have been recently retrofitted to produce a “residential newspaper” grade that mills can use for making new newspapers and linerboard for boxes.

## **QUESTION: Where does Casella ship metal today? What do they become?**

**ANSWER:** Aluminum we send to a primary smelter in Kentucky to be made into new aluminum cans. Tin gets made into things like new cans, auto parts, bike parts, appliances, and rebar.

## **QUESTION: Where does Casella ship glass today? What do they become?**

**ANSWER:** Glass is highly recyclable, and we can clean it up to meet many different market specifications, but it's heavy, which means that you need your buyers to be within a small radius because shipping costs add up so fast. We previously sent most of our glass to MA to be made into new bottles, but that plant shut down. The next best option is to use recycled glass as a replacement for sand or gravel in construction projects. By using recycled glass in construction, you're reducing the need for sand mining. In our Rutland market we are able to ship our glass by rail to a bottle-to-bottle facility. In other markets, we're sending our clean glass to construction applications.

## **QUESTION: Shouldn't we go back to dual-stream recycling? Aren't the materials coming out of those MRFs cleaner and more marketable?**

**ANSWER:** We have operated both single stream and dual-stream MRFs, and we know that both systems are equally capable of producing quality outbound product. At the end of the day, these are manufacturing facilities, and they require expertise to design and operate. We have that expertise and we know how to produce a quality product. In fact, we have the same mills buying cardboard from both our single-stream and dual-stream MRFs. Same for mixed paper, same for plastics, same for glass, etc. There's no sense throwing out the convenience and efficiencies of single stream, because the idea that dual-stream MRFs will yield a higher quality product is a myth.

## **QUESTION: So why is my neighbor telling me that he saw on Facebook that only a fraction of the recycling stream actually gets recycled?**

**ANSWER:** Bottom line, fake news. If an item is listed on our posters as acceptable, it's because we have a good market for it, and it's going to get recycled. What we do send to disposal is the non-acceptable stuff that people put in their bins. If you talk to someone who's worried about their recycling going to the landfill, just send them to our Recycle Better™ page. Put the right stuff in your bin and we'll recycle it.



Please call us at **800-CASELLA** to discuss how your community can Recycle Better!