

PROPER RECYCLING BIG BLUE BINS RULES & FACTS

A Guide to doing it right in Lawrence and Mercer Counties.

This program is 100% voluntary and is a public service offered by the County Commissioners and site sponsors to provide recycling opportunities to those living in areas with limited recycling. Residents are not required to use this program. Even when drop-off recycling is available, curbside recycling is the most efficient way to recycle.

Residents and businesses of **Ellwood City, Neshannock Township, New Castle, Shenango Township, and Union Township** in Lawrence County and **Farrell, Hermitage, Greenville, Grove City, and Sharon** in Mercer County are required by state and local laws to recycle at their home or place of business. Using the Big Blue Bins does NOT satisfy that requirement.

Only the following materials are collected in the bins: **magazines, newspapers, cardboard, office paper, junk mail, and other clean paper**. Do not deposit materials that are not listed as acceptable.

Leaving ANY materials, including recyclables, outside of the bins is a crime. This is littering and is clearly defined in the "Scattering Rubbish" sections of the Pennsylvania Crimes and Vehicle codes. The County and/or our partners reserve the right to prosecute alleged violators to the fullest extent of the law.

Placing items not listed as acceptable into the bins is also a crime. It is a violation of the County's Ordinance and Rules and Regulation for Solid Waste Management and the

County reserves the right to prosecute alleged violators to the fullest extent of the law. The contamination of recyclables with trash and unacceptable materials is expensive and a major reason behind the changes to recycling programs. According to industry experts, upwards of 20% of the cost of recycling is used to cover the expenses of removing and processing trash thrown into the recycling bins.

Every bin has a small white sign by the opening that states what belongs in it. Also, every site has at least one larger sign that reiterates the acceptable and unacceptable materials. As the signage indicates, sites are monitored by surveillance cameras.

Materials placed in the bins are the property of the county and its collection contractor. Taking items out of the bins is not permitted.

The Big Blue Bins are **emptied twice a week**: Thursday and Sunday nights. Most sites are emptied three times a week during major holidays.



<https://lawrencecountypa.gov/departments/recycling-and-solid-waste>

www.mercercountypa.gov/recycling



Recycling/Solid Waste Department
(724) 658-6925



The county does not receive money for the materials placed in the Big Blue Bins. To have the materials collected, hauled, and processed, costs approximately \$4,000 per bin annually. Money in recycling is made by the recycling centers after the recyclables have been processed and sold, not by the municipalities or haulers taking recyclables there.

Littering is expensive for communities. Abuse of the Big Blue Bins is a waste of tax money and takes away resources that would have been used to recycle more materials such as electronics and paint.

Leaving materials on the ground also:

- Makes the location look unsightly,
- Attracts additional abuse,
- Results in additional litter that blows through the neighborhood,
- Means that someone else has to pick it up/throw it away/put it in the bins.

Put yourself in the shoes of the people that live in the neighborhood, clean the site and surrounding area, and the people that care about the program.

BIG BLUE BIN RULES	
YES...	NO...
Residents Only Flatten Boxes Cardboard, Magazines, Newsprint, Junk Mail Close Lids after Use Keep Our Community Clean Think of Others, Especially the Neighbors and People Using the Bins After You	Plastic Bags Styrofoam/Polystyrene Trash Leaving Anything On the Ground Scavenging Parking in Front/Behind the Bins Anything Not Listed as "YES"
Sites Monitored by Video Surveillance Violators have been and will be prosecuted	

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