



Calvert County Environmental Commission

Recycling

1. What is recycling?

Recycling means taking materials from products you have finished using and making brand new products with them. For example, most of the aluminum cans in the United States are made with recycled aluminum. So, if you drink juice or soda from a can, recycle that can instead of throwing it in the trash. That can will stay in the Recycling Loop and out of the landfill.

2. What items can I recycle in Calvert County?

The most up to date information detailing what can be recycled can be found on the Calvert County Department of Public Works (DPW) Recycling webpages.

[Materials Accepted | Calvert County, MD - Official Website \(calvertcountymd.gov\)](https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/Recycling)

[Full list of Materials Accepted | Calvert County, MD - Official Website \(calvertcountymd.gov\)](https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/Recycling)

3. Where can I get recycling bins?

Recycling bins (2 per household) are available to all Calvert County residents at Customer Convenience Centers and the Appeal Landfill (401 Sweetwater Rd., Lusby).

4. I don't want to pay for curbside pickup. Where can I take my recycling in Calvert County?

There are several Customer Convenience Centers located throughout Calvert County. Visit the Calvert County DPW webpage below for locations, phone numbers, hours, fees, and special events.

[Location, Hours, Fees | Calvert County, MD - Official Website \(calvertcountymd.gov\)](https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/Recycling)

5. How can I prevent contamination in my recycling?

Many substances can contaminate the items you'd like to recycle. Contamination is a major problem that occurs when non-recyclable items are mixed in with recyclable items or when recyclable items are placed in the wrong recycling bins. Examples of contamination in recycling might include items containing food residue or non-recyclable types of plastic mixed in with recyclable types of plastic. A good rule of thumb when you are unsure is 'when in doubt, throw it out.'

6. I am not sure if an item is actually recyclable. What should I do?

If you have viewed the pages of Calvert County DPW webpages provided above and are still not sure whether an item you have can be recycled, call your Customer Convenience Center or ask the attendant when you visit. You may also call the Appeal Landfill and ask to speak with recycling staff (410-326-0210). If you are still not certain that the item can be recycled, it is likely best to throw it away in order to avoid contamination.

7. Should I rinse the containers that I plan to recycle?

Rinsing recyclable containers that may create contamination in your recycling bin is never a bad idea, especially when you can do so without using large amounts of water. Think about using the same water that is already in your sink from washing dishes. You will have to decide if you think the effort needed to rinse hard to clean containers like peanut butter jars is worth the water or extra effort. Rinsing recyclable materials and recycling would be most effective to assist the Calvert County's recycling rate.

8. What is aspirational recycling?

Aspirational recycling (or "wish-cycling") is the action of feeling like something should be recyclable, so you throw it in the recycling bin under the assumption that if it's not, the individuals sorting through your recycling at the materials recovery facility (MRF) will simply take it out.

Unfortunately, this is far from the truth. While practices vary between cities and municipalities, more often than not if you perform aspirational recycling by placing something in your recycling bin that isn't recyclable, it will create contamination and may cause the whole load to be thrown out. When in doubt, throw it out.

9. I have seen my trash service put recycling in the same truck as the trash. What should I do?

If your trash service cannot make money by taking your recycling, it is highly likely that it will end up in the trash. While many providers are upfront about the services they provide, their business model may change. Providers that offer recycling generally have contracts with the facilities that process the materials. Contact your provider directly to ensure you are getting the service that you want. Talk to others in your community to see what their experiences have been. Residents who use a trash pick-up service can also still bring their recyclables to the Customer Convenience Centers.

10. What is Recycle Coach?

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, has partnered with Recycle Coach to launch a mobile app to help residents recycle in Calvert County. The app connects citizens with local disposal information, educational tools for all ages and collection requirements to make recycling a breeze.

With Recycle Coach, residents can:

- Receive instantaneous answers to recycling questions.
- Become recycling experts with a comprehensive "What Goes Where?" search tool, including local disposal information, disposal costs and recycling event dates.
- Help reduce the amount of waste in local landfills by learning how to make mindful and informed recycling decisions.

Citizens are encouraged to visit [Recycle Coach App | Calvert County, MD - Official Website \(calvertcountymd.gov\)](https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/recycle-coach) to learn more. Recycle Coach is available on desktop, mobile phones, or

through digital assistants including Amazon Alexa and Google Home. The free app is available for download on iOS and Android devices.

11. What other recycling resources are available?

[Recycling in Maryland](#)

[Recycling Resources: The Maryland Recycling Network](#)

[Reduce, Reuse, Recycle | US EPA](#)

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