**Today’s Recycling CRISIS:**

China is the world’s largest buyer of recyclable material. The Chinese government recently imposed new rules severely restricting the levels of contamination allowed in the recyclable material they accept. These changes have had catastrophic consequences on the recycling industry in the US and globally.  For example, bales of mixed paper were allowed to have approximately **5% contamination in them, or 92 pounds of trash, in a 1,850 pound bale of recycled paper.** Beginning in 2018, China changed those restrictions to a**0.5% contamination rate, or 9 pounds of trash in a 1,850 pound bale of recycled paper**.  Consequently, recyclers are now having a difficult time meeting these requirements and a lack of US-based end users is complicating this problem.

**What is contamination?**  
Contamination is any non-recyclable item (trash) that gets mixed into a bale of recyclable material. When bales of recyclables arrive in China, they are cut open and sorted through. Items such as plastic bags, clothing, medical waste, Christmas lights and any other non-recyclable items are considered “contamination.”

**What can residents do to Reduce Contamination of Recyclables?   Educate yourself** on what items your waste hauler accepts for recycling.  Do **not** throw items in the recycle bin unless you know for sure it is recyclable. **When In Doubt, Throw It Out!**Make sure that**wet, non-recyclable items are disposed of in the garbage.**

**ACCEPTABLE ITEMS**  
**Glass:**  
• Clear, blue, brown and green glass food & beverage containers  
√ Rinse thoroughly to ensure they are free of contaminants and residue.  
√ Remove caps or lids and dispose of them in the trash.  
√ It is not necessary to remove labels and neck rings

**Metal:**  
• Aluminum beverage cans  
• Steel and bi-metal food & beverage cans  
√ Rinse thoroughly to ensure they are free of contaminants and residue.  
√ Remove caps or lids and dispose of them in the trash.  
√ It is not necessary to remove labels

**Plastic:**  
• Plastic containers #1, #2 and #5 with a neck  
√ Rinse thoroughly to ensure they are free of contaminants and residue.  
√ Remove caps or lids and dispose of them in the trash.  
√ It is not necessary to remove labels and neck rings

**Cardboard, Newspaper and Cartons:**  
• All sizes of cardboard boxes dry and flattened.

• Shelf-stable and refrigerated food and beverage cartons (rinse cartons and remove and dispose of caps).  
• Newspapers.  
√ Remove packaging (Styrofoam “peanuts,” plastic bubble wrap, liners, etc.).  
√ Break down and flatten ALL boxes.

**Clothing and Shoes:**  
Clean clothing and shoes are accepted in the Salvation Army drop-off bin at our Recycling Drop-off facility located at 2685 Blackthorne Court, York, PA 17406. **If you have furniture, appliances or any other items for the Salvation Army, DO NOT BRING THEM TO THE RECYCLE DROP-OFF CENTER.**  Contact the Salvation Army directly for information on donating these items.

**UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS**

• **NEW:** **Paperboard**.  For example: no cereal boxes, shoe boxes, tissue boxes, pizza boxes or paper towel/toilet paper rolls.  **No office paper or “mixed paper”** such as: junk mail, envelopes, letterhead, copier paper, magazines, catalogues, post cards.

• Needles and medical waste - DO NOT place used needles or any other medical waste in your recycling! Doing so poses a potential health hazard! Place used needles in a plastic detergent bottle and dispose of in regular trash.

Household medical waste should also be included in regular trash.

• Food waste and food soiled material

• Broken glass

• Aerosol cans

• Drinking glasses

• Light bulbs and Christmas lights

• Windows, mirrors and ceramics

• Aluminum foil • Scrap metal

• Clothing hangers (metal and plastic)

• Hoses

• Chemical, oil and solvent containers

• Plastic grocery bags - Plastic bags including grocery; bread; vegetable; dry cleaning; newspaper and many more can be recycled at most grocery stores.  For more information, visit [www.abagslife.com](http://www.abagslife.com/).

• Plastic bubble wrap

• Plastic food wrappers

• Plastic utensils (forks, knives, spoons, etc.)

• Styrofoam (packaging “peanuts,“ styrofoam cups and bowls, etc.)

• Paper towels and tissues

• Wet paper and cardboard

• Electronic waste - By law, Pennsylvania residents and businesses may not dispose of electronic devices at the curb or in their trash.  Electronic devices include desk top computers; laptops; monitors; computer peripherals such as a keyboard, mouse, printer, etc.; televisions and e-readers.