

Where Do Your Collected Recyclables Go?

**Richmond Metro Area
Tidewater Area**

Processor: TFC Recycling Material Recovery
Facilities (MRF), Chester and Chesapeake, Va.

Glass Containers

Glass is collected in both curbside and drop-off systems and delivered to TFC Recycling for processing. Glass enters the processing system along with all other collected recyclables, and ends up as a broken mix of glass at the end of the plant. This material then goes to glass processors in North Carolina to be turned into color separated and processed glass material (called cullet) for use by glass manufacturers in the Mid-Atlantic area, or for other alternative uses such as manufacturing fiberglass or for use as aggregate. Glass as an aggregate can be used as filtering material, in tile manufacturing and decorative glass products, and in other engineering options.

Mixed Waste Paper and Office Waste Paper

Paper is sorted at TFC Recycling into various paper grades, and baled for shipment to paper manufacturing facilities in the Mid-Atlantic area, or for export to China. Mixed paper is most often used to make paper products such as liner board for cardboard boxes, tissue paper products, or product packaging material. White office paper is used to make new paper products, including printing paper. Newspaper is processed into new newspaper and also incorporated into liner board and product packaging material. Similar uses apply to the recycled phone books and business directories. Cardboard is marketed to companies that re-pulp the material to generate liner board for cardboard box manufacturing.

#1 and #2 Plastic Containers

Plastic containers are sorted at TFC Recycling into #1 and #2 plastics, and baled for shipment to plastic processing operations in the Mid-Atlantic area. The plastic material is reused to produce plastic containers, clothing, other plastic products, and carpets. One in every four plastic bottles recycled in North America becomes carpet or carpet related material. Examples of other plastic products include reusable shopping bags, parking lot bumpers, speed bumps, wheels for dumpsters, and rigid containers for recycling.

#4 Plastic Bags

Plastic bags used by grocery stores and other retailers can most often be recycled by returning these items to the retailer to be recycled. Bags collected at the individual stores are returned to the regional distribution centers where they are baled and shipped off to processors. The bags are shredded and washed, and then melted down and turned into plastic resin pellets by the processors which can then be used in a new manufacturing process. Some manufacturers such as a plastic lumber manufacturer can process the

plastic bags directly into their production mix. A plastic bag-to-bag program is being put into place by a national plastic bag manufacturer, with some pilot collection projects currently in place. This manufacturer does recycle its in-plant plastic bag waste back into its product.

Aluminum and Steel Cans

Metal cans/containers are separated from the mixed recyclables using magnets and other metal detectors into aluminum and steel streams. Both are bailed and shipped to manufacturers in the Mid-Atlantic area. The aluminum is processed back into aluminum sheet which can be used to produce new beverage containers as well as other aluminum products. The steel cans are processed into steel ingots which can be melted down and used to manufacture a wide range of metal products by foundries and manufacturers.

