

HOW ABOUT WE JUST STOP RECYCLING?



Now and then, voices here and there give Recycling a bad rap. They tell us it's not working, it's a dead end. Does that mean we should just stop?

We could continue (or start?) to Reduce, Reuse, Re-Think and Re-Educate, which is all great, really great.

But would the planet really miss Recycling? What's the worst that could happen?

There'd be a **WHOLE** lot more Trash for starters! If there were no Recycling by the Town of Chatham in 2022 and 2023, all this would have gone along with the trash that was already headed out:

- *330 tons of Mixed Paper
- *578 tons of Corrugated Cardboard
- *102 tons of Newspaper
- *400 tons of Glass
- *49 tons of Aluminum/Tin cans
- *343 tons of Scrap Metal & Appliances
- *11 tons of Food Scraps

That's 1,813 tons or 3,626,000 pounds that didn't go into our trash; trees that didn't have to be cut down; natural resources that didn't have to be mined; extra water and energy not needed for virgin processing. This doesn't even include Plastics, Textiles, Books, Mercury Items, Mattresses, Rugs, E-Waste, Yard Waste, Construction & Demolition, Swap Shop items and more, all accepted at the Chatham Transfer Station. All of these things are kept **OUT** of the waste stream by Recycling.

So if someone tells you Recycling is a dead end, ask them to show a little respect.

Could Recycling be improved? Absolutely! For example, let's have fewer plastics categories; manufacturers and packagers be required to use only sustainable materials; better sorting technologies; consumers (and manufacturers, packagers) care more about their planet and neighborhoods.

And by all means, please buy wisely! Avoid plastics if you possibly can while decision makers work on the current glut (check out the U.N. Global Plastics Treaty now in negotiations). Choose aluminum, paper or glass, and reusable bottles, bags, etc. above all. But if you have to, find easily recycled plastic (1's, 2's, and 5's are best). And don't fall for the fossil fuel/chemical/plastics companies' current push to buy more and better plastic. It's still plastic, there's FAR too much of it and their fancy commercials can't change that.

Thanks for doing your share!

Not sure if an item is recyclable? Try Recyclesmartma.org's "Recyclopedia"!

Sometimes a town will accept what Recyclopedia may not indicate.

If you're not sure, please ask at your Transfer Station.

Next Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Sat, July 13, 9am to Noon, Harwich Transfer Station

Info: loveyourlocalwater.org

ChathamRecycles.org

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