



Recycling Tidbits

Plastic Film and Bag Recycling

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Dunn County Solid Waste has been very busy organizing and planning a plastic film and bag recycling program for Dunn County residents and businesses. This pilot program is actually for the entire United States! Thanks to partnerships between the American Chemistry Council, the Flexible Film Recycling Group, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Indianhead Enterprises, Inc., the Dunn County Community Foundation, and so many others, we are finally ready to announce June as the Plastic Film and Bag Recycling Awareness Month. What does this mean? It means we're going to really encourage you, the wonderful public, to recycle plastic film and bags.

Why is this program important?

Plastic film and bags are a problem at landfills and large material recovery facilities where recyclables are sorted. They blow around creating litter and get stuck causing problems with machinery and other rotating gears.

Plastic film and bags are also very valuable. They are needed



This is the worse case scenario of plastic film and bags getting caught and wrapped around gears at a MRF.

(and wanted) by manufactures to make products such as composite boards, car parts, new plastic film and bags, and other items. The film collected here in Dunn County will be recycled with Trex Company, Inc., a company that makes composite deck boards.

My favorite part about recycling plastic film and bags in Dunn County is that is has created 4 new positions at Indianhead Enterprises, Inc.; "a private not-for-profit organization which provides vocational services to individuals with disabilities and



Indianhead employees placing plastic film and bags into the baler.

other barriers to employment."

What can be recycled?

Residents and businesses can recycle clean and dry: plastic wrap around napkins, toilet paper and paper towel rolls. Then there's bread and produce bags, newspaper bags, dry cleaning bags, and plastic wrap around beverage cases.

Also eligible are air pillows and bubble wrap, food storage bags, retail bags, pallet wrap or stretch wrap, bags around clothing, film around electronic components, and a few other items. Visit plasticfilmrecycling.org for a

complete list.

What can't be recycled?

Any film or bag that tears or rips in a straight line cannot be recycled. This would include candy wrappers and crinkly cellophane film around snack cases or packaged snacks like chips or crackers. Biodegradable or compostable films, salt bags, or animal food bags are not recyclable either.

Last but not least, frozen food bags or prewashed salad bags are not recyclable either. This film is a multi-laminate, meaning there is more than one layer (and type) of film to keep materials fresh. Multi-laminates and all the other film described above are not compatible with the film we are collecting.

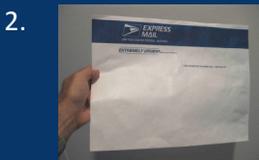
Where can I recycle this material?

Residents can drop materials off at any Area Collection Station, the Transfer and Recycling Center, City of Menomonie Drop-off Site, Marketplace Foods or Walmart. Do not put plastic film or bags in with curbside recycling as these materials can only be recycled through the drop-off locations.

Businesses interested in recycling plastic film and bags should contact Dunn County Solid Waste at 232-4017, to schedule a short inspection of materials. Once recyclability is verified, materials can be taken to Indianhead Enterprises; 1426 Indianhead Drive, Menomonie.

Stump the Grump

Does the plastic film get recycled or does it need to be landfilled?



Clean and Dry

Why do things need to be dry?

I cannot stress enough that plastic film and bags need to be dry - bone dry. Trex Company, Inc. uses a 1:1 ratio of plastic film and sawdust to make their products. If the film is too wet they have to raise the temperature of their furnaces; if the furnaces get too hot it burns off the sawdust, ruining the end product. Also, moisture will cause the plastic film to mold. Mold and mildew smell horrible and could cause health issues for Indianhead workers while the bales are being stored.

How clean does the material need to be?

Bags should be free of receipts, crumbs, and other food debris like mustard or mayonnaise. A small amount of dried food crumbs is okay as well as packaging tape and stickers. However, try to keep these items to a minimum please.

Site attendants and your lovely Recycling Specialist have found plastic bottles and tubs, paper, silica packets, foam, packing peanuts, and hangers mixed in with the plastic film and bags. Sometimes there has been so much contamination that

we've had to landfill film and bags that were mixed up and knotted around the unacceptable material. To keep our environmental impact at a minimum, and the recyclability of our film high, please remember to remove these items.



The Recycling Cycle

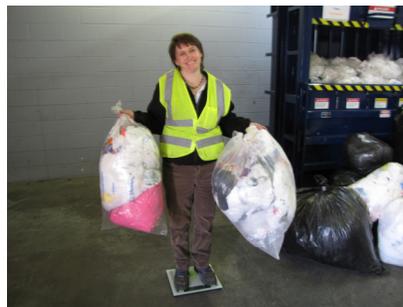
1. Bring clean and dry plastic film and bags, like the pictures below, to an Area Collection Station, the Transfer and Recycling Center, or the City of Menomonee's Drop-off Site for recycling.



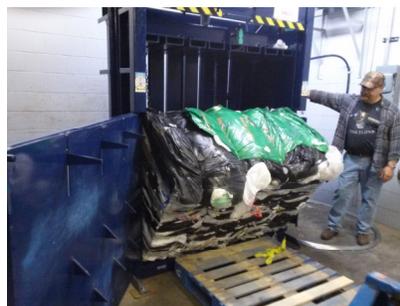
2. Place the clean and dry film into a covered container with a plasticfilmrecycling.org label.



3. Our staff members pick-up the film, weigh it and deliver it to Indianhead Enterprises, Inc. for recycling.



4. Indianhead Enterprises, Inc., bales and stores the material.



5. Indianhead Enterprises, Inc. sells baled plastic film and bags to Trex Company, Inc.



6. Trex Company, Inc. buys the material and recycles it into composite deck boards.





You're invited to join Dunn County Solid Waste and Indianhead Enterprises to our plastic film and bag recycling kick-off event. The festivities will take place Thursday June 12, at 12:30 pm.

The June kick-off will feature a short presentation which will include State Senator Sheila Harsdorf, Menomonie Mayor Randy Knaack, County Board Chair Steve Rasmussen and Indianhead Enterprises, Inc. Board President Bill

Johnson. A tour of Indianhead Enterprises, Inc., light refreshments and a door prize from Trex Company, Inc. will follow.

The kick-off will begin at 12:30 p.m., June 12, at Indianhead Enterprises, 1426 Indianhead Drive E, Menomonie, WI.

I hope to see you there!

Meet Casey

The Dunn County Solid Waste Division recently welcomed Casey Pieschek as the new LTE Recycling Assistant. This summer Pieschek will be working closely with the Recycling Specialist, Amanda Haffele, on special event recycling and recycling assessments at convenience stores, restaurants, and apartment buildings. He will also help with the launch of the new plastic film and bag recycling program.

Pieschek is a senior studying Communications/Public Relations and Resource Management at the University of Wis-

consin - Stevens Point. Inspired at a young age, Pieschek has always been interested in the environment, particularly environmental issues, such as recycling.

In college, Pieschek is an active member in many organizations and groups including the WWSP 90FM Promotions Team and the Cornerstone Press, a publishing and editing group. Besides school organizations, Pieschek is engaged in organized sports and also enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing and snowmobiling.



Stump the Grump

Recycle!



Plastic film around phone books can be recycled with plastic film and bags.

Recycle!



Tyvek envelopes can be recycled with plastic film and bags.

Landfill!



Crinkly film, like cellophane, cannot be recycled. It must be landfilled.