

June 10, 2015

Volume 3, Issue 7



# Recycling Tidbits

## Plastic

### Inside this Issue

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| #1 and #2 Plastic Bottles and Jugs | 2 |
| Reduce Plastic Consumption         | 2 |
| Reuse Plastic Containers           | 2 |
| Plastic Makeover                   | 3 |
| Removing Labels                    | 3 |

### Stump the Grump

#### True or False:

Five water bottles can make enough fill to line a ski jacket.

#### Answer:

It's true! It takes only five water bottles to line a ski jacket.



Did you know plastic was a word that originally meant pliable and easily shaped? Today plastic refers to a type of material, the polymer. Polymers are long chains of atoms arranged in repeating patterns. Synthetic or manmade polymers are made from carbon atoms provided by petroleum and other fossil fuels. The length and patterns of each polymer is what makes them strong, lightweight and flexible, in essence plastic!

In 1869, John Wesley Hyatt, invented the first synthetic polymer to reduce the demand for ivory used in billiards. The creation of different types of plastics expanded throughout the 1900's. However, the production of plastic didn't really take off until World War II. During this time period, the need to preserve scarce resources is what drove the production of plastic to an all time high. According to the Chemical Heritage Foundation, plastic production increased by 300% during the war. In 1935,

Wallace Carothers created nylon to replace silk making it a big player in plastic production during this time. Nylon was used to make ropes, parachutes, body armor, helmets and other items.

Fast forward to 2015 and plastic is everywhere, from our electronics to appliances to dishes to our vehicles. Plastic has shaped the way we function as a society. It is lighter weight than other materials therefore reducing transportation costs and greenhouse gas emissions. It's strong, durable, and relatively inexpensive to make. However we must keep in mind that plastic is a man-made material which means it can't break down into anything Mother Nature can utilize. It takes approximately 450 years for a plastic bottle to break down into tiny pieces of plastic; therefore it never truly goes away. What can we do? Now that's simple. Buy plastic that we know can be recycled or reused.

- In our community we can recycle #1 and #2

plastic bottles and jugs.

- The Menomonie Market Food Co-op will recycle your #5 yogurt containers.
- Plastic film and bags can be dropped off at an Area Collection Station, Transfer Station, or any grocery store in Menomonie.
- Plastic around electronics is recycled when taken to an Area Collection Station or the Transfer Station.
- Carpet can be recycled (yes carpet is generally made from plastic) in Altoona with Dreamhouse Interiors, (715) 830-0759.
- Polyester clothes taken to a thrift store will either be reused or recycled into rags or insulation.
- Reusable plastic dishes, toys, and other miscellaneous items that are in good condition can be donated to a thrift store for reuse.

Dunn County Solid Waste Division \* Editor: Recycling Specialist, Amanda Haffele

[www.facebook.com/dunncountyrecycling](http://www.facebook.com/dunncountyrecycling) \* 715-232-4017

To unsubscribe from this newsletter, please e-mail [ahaffele@co.dunn.wi.us](mailto:ahaffele@co.dunn.wi.us).

# #1 and #2 Plastic Bottles and Jugs Only Please

As a reminder Dunn County currently only collects #1 and #2 plastic bottles and jugs. The reason for this is that these types of plastic containers have the highest resale value and are the easiest materials to recycle and process at a recycling facility. This is due partially to their uniform shape, streamlining of modern technology, and the fact that these materials have been recycled for a longer period of time therefore making equipment more efficient and widely available.

Other plastic containers can still be recycled elsewhere but they need to be collected and sold in large volumes to be competitive in the market. Since Dunn County has a small population we cannot collect enough to be competitive. Stockpiling material isn't an option for our small Transfer Station either. We don't have enough space inside to hold materials until we can sell. Plastics degrade when set out in the elements and lose value quickly so that isn't an option either.

The Solid Waste Director is working on finding a way to be able to collect more types of plastic containers. Until that day arrives, buy what can be recycled, reused or find alternative materials that are easier to recycle.



## Reduce Plastic Consumption

Reduce plastic consumption at work by keeping reusable ware in a desk drawer. When a potluck or surprise treat arrives you'll be prepared and not have to use plastic forks or cups.



Have a reusable water bottle with you at all times. Instead of buying a bottle of water fill up at the tap instead. I've read statistics that



there is between 4 and 7 cents worth of water in an actual water bottle. The

rest of what you pay for goes toward transportation, packaging, branding, etc.

Use glass food storage containers instead. They last longer and can be safely heated in a microwave.

Opt for wood or cloth toys for the

kids whenever possible. These items are generally safer for the environment.

Buy in bulk. Less packaging means less plastic. As a special bonus, bulk items usually are sold at a discount to their smaller companions.

Use glass or stainless steel straws instead of plastic disposal ones.



## Reuse Plastic Containers

### Water Bottles



[wonderfuldiy.com/wonderful-diy-funny-hedgehogs-for-your-garden/](http://wonderfuldiy.com/wonderful-diy-funny-hedgehogs-for-your-garden/)

[www.housingaforest.com/sprinkler-fun/](http://www.housingaforest.com/sprinkler-fun/)

### Coffee Cans



[www.hometalk.com/1829050/fabulous-folger-s-coffee-plastic-container-upcycle](http://www.hometalk.com/1829050/fabulous-folger-s-coffee-plastic-container-upcycle)

[homesteadlifestyle.com/diy-plastic-coffee-can-chicken-feeder/](http://homesteadlifestyle.com/diy-plastic-coffee-can-chicken-feeder/)



### Bottle Caps



<http://www.icanteachmychild.com/feed-the-alphabet-monster/>

[www.lushome.com/22-creative-ideas-to-reuse-and-recycle-bottle-caps-for-beautiful-home-decorating-and-eco-gifts/117501](http://www.lushome.com/22-creative-ideas-to-reuse-and-recycle-bottle-caps-for-beautiful-home-decorating-and-eco-gifts/117501)



# Plastic Makeovers

Give plastic a face lift by repainting worn, scratched or outdated pieces.

Here are a few key points I've learned from the below do it yourselfers:

1. Fully clean and dry plastic before painting
2. Satin paints seem to fade less than gloss
3. Use a paint specifically for plastic
4. Paint in a well ventilated area

Below are a few of my favorite finds from blogger.

## Toys



[www.justalittlecreativity.com/2011/09/pimp-that-cozy-ride-little-tikes-car.html](http://www.justalittlecreativity.com/2011/09/pimp-that-cozy-ride-little-tikes-car.html)



[www.thehappierhomemaker.com/2013/04/plastic-playhouse-paint-makeover](http://www.thehappierhomemaker.com/2013/04/plastic-playhouse-paint-makeover)



[www.lillepunkin.com/2012/05/diy-project-spray-paint-plastic-outdoor.html](http://www.lillepunkin.com/2012/05/diy-project-spray-paint-plastic-outdoor.html)

## Baskets

[iheartplanners.com/2013/05/18/spray-paint-plastic-bins](http://iheartplanners.com/2013/05/18/spray-paint-plastic-bins)



# Removing Labels

I found many ways to remove labels with sticky residue and paint or print from plastic containers. I haven't tried them all but here they are:

To remove paint or print try using:

- 100% acetone
- Nail polish remover
- WD-40
- Mineral Spirits

\*As a side note all of these methods need to be infused with a little elbow grease.

[http://happymoneysaver.com/thrifty-tip-remove-ink-labels-from-plastic-containers/#\\_a5y\\_p=1924653](http://happymoneysaver.com/thrifty-tip-remove-ink-labels-from-plastic-containers/#_a5y_p=1924653)



To remove labels and sticky residue try using:

- Cooking oil
- Coconut oil
- Peanut butter
- Car wax (not liquid)
- Lemon essential oil
- Pure vinegar or a ½ water ½ vinegar solution
- Rubbing alcohol

\*Once again a little elbow grease will go a long way for these methods as well.

## Lawn Furniture



[tinysidekick.com/spray-painted-plastic-outdoor-chairs-update](http://tinysidekick.com/spray-painted-plastic-outdoor-chairs-update)

## Planters



[dihomestagingtips.blogspot.com/2011/02/how-to-faux-finish-plastic-flower-pot.html#.VW35k9JViko](http://dihomestagingtips.blogspot.com/2011/02/how-to-faux-finish-plastic-flower-pot.html#.VW35k9JViko)



[www.thespottedlamb.com/blog/diy-large-outdoor-planters-for-15](http://www.thespottedlamb.com/blog/diy-large-outdoor-planters-for-15)



[http://www.lazybudgetchef.com/2013/10/7-ways-to-remove-sticky-jar-labels.html#\\_a5y\\_p=1016294](http://www.lazybudgetchef.com/2013/10/7-ways-to-remove-sticky-jar-labels.html#_a5y_p=1016294)



<https://happilyoccupiedhomebodies.wordpress.com/2013/04/17/recycled-containers-labels-on-labels-off/>