

Where does my recycling go?

Once your recycling has been picked up by the recycling truck it is taken to the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where the real work begins. At the MRF, recycling is separated through a combined system of high-tech conveyor belts and magnets and low-tech hand sorting. It can take as little as five minutes for recyclables to make it from the beginning to the end of the sorting process.

Unfortunately, not everyone places the correct items in their kerbside recycling bin, so separating the recyclables from contamination is a big part of the sorting process.

Did you know?

Recyclables contaminated by rubbish and materials that cannot be recycled in the kerbside recycling can cause big problems for the MRF - a single plastic bag can shut the entire MRF down by getting tangled in the gears of the machinery.



1

Bins at the kerbside awaiting collection.



2

Once a truck is full, recycling is taken back to the MRF.



3

Staff sort through the recycling by hand.



4

Sorted recyclables are baled and sent for processing.

Materials recovery

Materials Recovery Facilities can process 50 tonnes of recyclables in a day - by volume the biggest proportion of these recyclables is paper.

Once sorted the recyclables are baled and shipped to processors all over the world. From Tasmania, recyclables are often sent to Melbourne, Malaysia and China.

Once the product bales arrive at their final destinations, they are processed into many useful new products:

Aluminium

Aircraft and automobile parts. Wires and cookware due to its high thermal and electrical conductivity.

Cardboard

Reprocessed into new cardboard and paper products.

Paper

Reprocessed into new products such as newspapers, office paper, packaging and pencils.

PET plastic

Reprocessed into new plastic products such as soft drink bottles.

Steel

Reprocessed into new steel products such as bikes, paper clips or cans.



Did you know?

Recycling a single aluminium can saves enough energy to run a TV for 3 hours.



For more information on waste management and recycling, visit www.rethinkwaste.com.au