

Tales from Tim's Recycling Bin – Neither Paper Nor Plastic

"I wish I had known that years ago." a new resident told me after I said never put recycling in plastic bags because the bags are thrown into the trash unopened.

She's not alone in unwittingly using plastic bags to collect her recycling. Plastic bags are the number one problem at sorting facilities throughout the country. Workers are trained never to open them because they may contain, shall we say, unsavory material which could pose a health and safety risk. While loose plastic bags get wrapped around the machinery and the only way to remove them is for workers to climb onto the equipment and manually cut them off.



I understand the convenience of collecting bottles and cans in plastic bags. Leftover liquid can ooze everywhere. So, do what I do. Collect items in a container lined with a plastic bag. Then dump the material out of the bag into your cart. I reuse my plastic bags for my trash basket.

Same goes for paper bags. We call it nesting when bottles or cans get compacted on the truck and are trapped inside the bags. There's no way to get the bottles or cans back out and they eventually end up in the trash at the paper mill. Again, pour the recycling out of the bag. Then you can drop the paper bag into the cart.

Until next time, let everything hang loose in the cart my friends.