RECYCLEBC

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY RECYCLING?

Scroll down to find out!

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

STEP 1

When you set your materials out at curbside, take them to your multi-family recycling location or to a depot, they are collected by a specialized truck that transports your packaging and printed paper to a recycling facility. These trucks are designed for efficient collection. Some have automated arms, compaction systems and even the ability to collect other waste types in separate compartments.

CURBSIDE AND MULTI-FAMILY

Most materials collected in the Recycle BC collection system are "multi-stream", which means that residents sort their materials.

Some Recycle BC collection areas collect glass at curbside or multi-family locations in a separate container.

DEPOTS

Difficult-to-manage materials, such as glass, plastic foam and plastic bags and overwrap are collected separately at Recycle BC depots so that they do not mix with other recyclables and spoil their recyclability. Most of these conveniently located depots also accept your packaging and printed paper. **For a full list of depots visit the Recycle BC website.**

Be sure to check your **Recycle BC Recycling Guide** or with your local municipality to ensure that you are sorting your material properly.

GLASS | PLASTIC FOAM | PLASTIC BAGS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

STEP 2

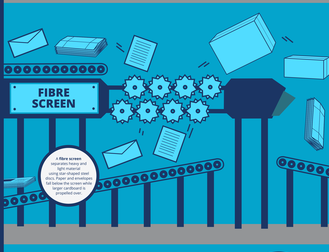
Materials are transported to a material recovery facility (MRF) and put onto a conveyor belt where they enter the sorting process.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

STEP 3

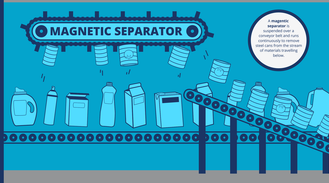
The materials travel along a series of conveyor belts where large non-recyclable items are first manually removed. The process then continues, using equipment such as fibre separators, magnetic separators, optical sorters and eddy currents to separate the different materials into their designated categories. The materials continue along more conveyor belts for further sorting into separate bunkers or a final quality control clean-up before dropping into a separate bunker.

FIBRE SCREEN



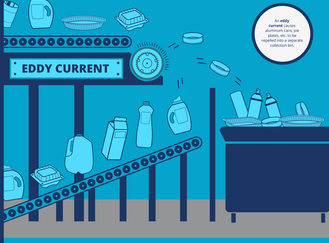
A **fibre screen** uses a rotating drum with light material using star-shaped stepped discs. Lightweight material fall below the screen while larger cardboard is propelled over.

MAGNETIC SEPARATOR



A **magnetic separator** is suspended over a conveyor belt and continuously to remove steel cans from the stream of materials travelling below.

EDDY CURRENT

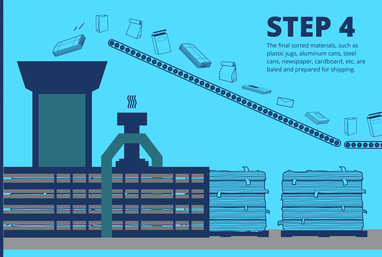


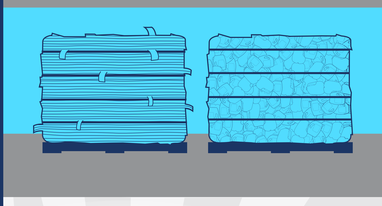
An **eddy current** causes aluminum cans, or other metals, to be repelled into a separate collection bin.

OPTICAL SORTER

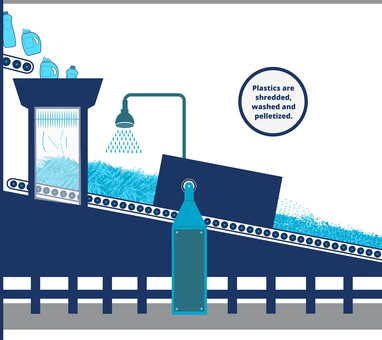
An **optical sorter** uses infrared light to detect material compositions. It then uses air jets to sort materials.

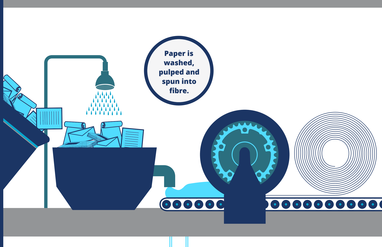
There are many optical sorters in a sorting facility.

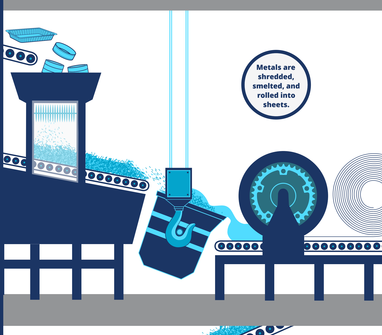

STEP 4
The final sorted materials, such as plastic jugs, aluminum cans, steel cans, newspaper, cardboard, etc. are baled and prepared for shipping.

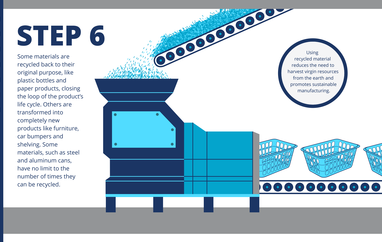


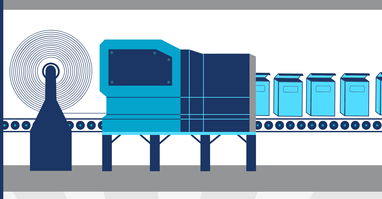
MATERIAL RECOVERY FACILITY
STEP 5
Once a full truck load of sorted bales is ready, the bales are shipped off to material remanufacturers to be processed into new materials.


Plastics are shredded, washed and pelletized.


Paper is washed, pulped and spun into fibre.


Metals are shredded, smelted, and rolled into sheets.


STEP 6
Some materials are recycled back to their original purpose, like plastic bottles and paper products, closing the loop of the product's life cycle. Others are transformed into completely new products like furniture, car bumpers and shelving. Some materials, such as steel and aluminum cans, have no limit to the number of times they can be recycled.
Using recycled material reduces the need to harvest virgin resources from the earth and promotes sustainable manufacturing.



STEP 7
Once the new products and packaging are created, they are packaged and sold back to you. Your materials are recycled into any of these products, plus many more!