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## A message to our community

**A**s an employee-owned company, Recology is united through our mission and vision for a better world. It is our responsibility as owners of our business to build a work environment and contribute to a community that respects, protects, and celebrates all its people.

For more than 100 years, Recology has provided innovative resource recovery services to our San Francisco customers. Over the past century, we have also become integral members of the Bay Area community, growing and evolving in ways that our company's founders could never have expected or imagined.

Over the past month, however, we find ourselves reflecting on our business — our approach, our culture, and our employee community. While diversity, equity, and inclusion are key principles of our hiring practices and internal workplace culture, it is clear that we have not done enough, and we must do better.

We have spent the past weeks listening to our employee-owners, learning from the conversations and protests happening across the globe, and reflecting on the actionable steps we can take as

a company and as individuals to help our country move forward.

We will continue this process, learning from local advocacy and racial justice organizations, and leaning into opportunities to engage with each other and our community more fully.

Our first step toward progress is focused internally, providing an outlet for Recology employee-owners to share their ideas as we evaluate opportunities to make meaningful and lasting changes within our organization. We are also implementing measures to support our black colleagues now and, in the future, acknowledging their anger, sadness, and frustration. While Recology operates in more than 140 distinct communities, including San Francisco, we speak with one voice when we say, Black Lives Matter.

We fully realize that this is the beginning of a long and complicated journey, and change at Recology will not happen overnight. We will continue to communicate with our customers as we advance these shared goals and hope you will support us on this journey toward a more equitable and just world.

The remainder of this newsletter contains much of our familiar content. We hope to continue evolving this content to reflect the real change we know is required.

## We verify SF recycling becomes new products

In the course of one year, Recology sends materials collected from San Francisco's curbside recycling program to 25 mills, foundries, and manufacturing plants.

Our priority is to send bales of recycled material to domestic facilities whenever possible.

We tour processing facilities and exchange digital photos with them to confirm all sorted materials from San Francisco get recycled.

Bo Duong is the commodities marketing manager for Recology San Francisco, which sorts and bales the materials city residents and businesses place in their blue recycling bins.

Bo visited eight processing facilities last year that purchased recycled materials from Recology San Francisco. Buyers are usually well-established companies we have worked with many years.

China, formerly the largest buyer of recycled materials, pulled back from the market two years ago.



**Bo Duong, commodities marketing manager, Recology San Francisco.**

And efforts are underway to develop more manufacturing infrastructure in the U.S. to fill the void.

Recycled glass bottles and jars and

metal cans go to domestic manufacturing facilities. Plastic bottles go to both domestic and foreign mills depending on the supply needs of individual plants.

The value of recycled materials goes up and down based on global economies and supply and demand. As Bo points out, we know the materials we ship get recycled because the mills pay for them. Therefore, they want to recycle as much as possible to recover their investment.

Some cities paused their recycling programs this spring, saying they did not have the building space to enable employees to abide by social distancing. Recology implemented several additional safety protocols and is keeping San Francisco's recycling moving during the coronavirus outbreak.

For all these reasons and more, San Franciscans can be confident that the bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard they place in their blue recycling bins truly get recycled.

[Help aid COVID response →](#)

The best way to contact us is through email: [CustomerService@RecologySF.com](mailto:CustomerService@RecologySF.com)

## HELP AID THE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

# Recycled bottles become glass vials for vaccines

Just four materials — bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard — form the basis of San Francisco's curbside recycling program. Always place the big four in your blue bin and you can take satisfaction in knowing you are an advanced recycler.

The coronavirus outbreak has made recycling these materials more important than ever. That's because manufacturers need basic recycled materials to make the packaging necessary to ship essential supplies.

Vaccines, for example, are transported in glass vials, which are made primarily from recycled glass. When a vaccine for COVID-19 is developed, we will need billions of glass vials. So, glass manufacturers and the EPA sounded a joint call asking cities, people, and businesses to recycle all their empty glass bottles and jars. This same request went out in the U.K. and other parts of the world.

The glass bottles and jars we put in our recycling bins in San Francisco get made into new glass containers right here in the Bay Area. That's a local recycling loop that keeps valuable resources out of the landfill and supports local jobs.

And food and beverages that come in glass containers taste better and are better for you than those sold in plastic packaging. That's because glass is clean, tasteless, and an excellent insulator. Plastic packaging often contains PFAS and parabens that can leach into your food causing health impacts.

Recycled cans, such as aluminum and tin cans, stay in the U.S. and get made into new metal products.

Recycled paper and cardboard get made into new paper products such as cardboard boxes, which now play a key role in commerce as almost everything ships in cardboard boxes.

Many forms of packaging for individual products are made from multiple materials. That makes them difficult, and sometimes impossible, to recycle.

But the big four of recycling — bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard — are efficiently sorted and baled at



Recycled bottles and jars become glass cullet (above), which is used to make new containers such as glass vials for transporting vaccines (left).

Photo: O-I

Recycle Central, the large material recovery facility Recology operates on San Francisco's Pier 96.

To appeal to consumers, many brands have increased the percentage of recycled content in their products. That shift caused manufacturers to engineer their production systems to utilize more recycled glass, metal, and fiber.

Using recycled materials is also far more energy-efficient and less polluting than extracting and processing virgin materials.

For all these reasons and more, when we need to buy something that comes in packaging, we are encouraged to think about recycling and to choose products packaged in glass, metal, paper, or cardboard.

When we do so, we send a powerful message with our consumer dollars to

product and packaging companies. Say "yes" to materials that can be recycled and "no thank you" to packaging made from multiple materials.

Go bottles. Go cans. Go paper and cardboard. All four are core to the recycling loop. All four help manufacturers produce the products we seek and the packaging necessary to ship those products to homes, medical facilities, and businesses including cafes, restaurants, and stores.

For information about additional materials accepted in San Francisco's curbside recycling program, look for stickers on bin lids, flyers, and signage posted where bins are stationed. To easily access information on your computer or smart phone, check out these sites: [Recology.com](https://www.recology.com) and [SFRecycles.org](https://www.sfrecovery.org).

CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR QUICK TIPS, EVENT INFO, RECYCLING NEWS, AND MORE:



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