

## Reducing Excess Packaging

### Why we care

Grabbing a pre-packaged lunch can be a time-saver, but what about the packaging? About one-third of solid waste in the US is made up of packaging—much of it plastic. Plastic can be carried by the wind and washed into storm drains, then make its way to the ocean contributing to a mass of plastic debris. Marine mammals can mistake it for food, often causing death by starvation. The chemicals used to produce plastic endanger workers' health and create significant quantities of hazardous waste. Even when plastic is recycled, it is not recyclable in a “closed loop” like glass or aluminum.

### Simple, positive steps

- Reduce toxic chemicals.
  - Avoid #3, 6, and 7 plastics that are linked to harmful health effects.
- Reduce packaging.
  - Buy in bulk and bring your own containers.
  - Avoid foods in single-serving packages, like yogurt and applesauce.
  - Avoid over packaged items, such as microwavable meals and snack packs.
- Choose only recyclable packaging.
  - Avoid impossible-to-recycle plastic, such as foam meat trays and frozen food bags.
  - Avoid mixed-material packages, such as potato chip bags, juice pouches, and frozen food boxes.
- Recycle the rest.
  - Take non-curb-side plastics (clam shells, lids, medicine bottles, etc.) to Far West Fibers. <http://www.farwestfibers.com/Products-and-Services/Plastic.html>
  - Take foam peanuts to a mail service store.
  - Take block foam to Lake Oswego on January 21 (9:00-2:00), to Hillsdale on February 5 (10:00-2:00), or call 503 234-3000 for permanent sites.

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