



Consumer News

San Diego City Attorney's Office

Spring 2017

Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit (CEPU)

In This Issue

- **How to Recycle Beauty Products**
- **What You Can Do to Reduce Household Hazardous Waste**
- **Read information regarding recycling by City of San Diego's Environmental Services**

www.sandiego.gov/environmentalservices/recycling/residential/curbside/yes

Contact Us

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SPRING CLEANING: How to Recycle Beauty Products

It's the time of the year to do some spring cleaning. As we go about donating our gently used clothes and tossing away unnecessary items, how many of us know what to do with our left over or expired beauty products? Are they recyclable? What about plastics?

Per the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, [33 million tons](#) of plastic waste was generated in 2014, representing 12.9 percent of total [Municipal Solid Waste \(MSW\)](#). Only 9.5 percent of the total plastic waste generated in 2014 was recovered for recycling.

RECYCLING SHAMPOO AND/OR CONDITIONER BOTTLES, LOTIONS AND OTHER PLASTICS

Are all of our empty shampoo, conditioner, gel, hairy dye, lotion, etc. bottles recyclable? Plastic household containers usually have a number on the bottle that indicates the type of plastic they are, this is known as the Resin Identification Coding (RIC). This information can be used to determine whether the plastic is recyclable.

All containers must be empty and clean before being disposed of into the recycling bin. If you have unused containers, think about donating the bottles to your local charities. If some are partially full use up the remaining product and recycle the container. Remember to also recycle any [empty aerosol containers](#). You can toss empty aerosol containers into your recycling bin for pick up.

KNOW YOUR PLASTICS?

SPI Resin Identification Code:

- 1 – Polyethylene Terephthalate
- 2 – High-density Polyethylene
- 3 – Poly Vinyl Chloride
- 4 – Low-density Polyethylene
- 5 – Polypropylene
- 6 – Polystyrene
- 7 – Mixed plastics

File a Complaint with Us

Call our hotline

- (619) 533-5600
- 9:00am to 5:00pm
- Monday through Friday

Fill out the complaint form

- www.sandiego.gov/cityattorney/divisions/communityjustice/cepu
- Mail the form, or
- E-mail the form

Agency Reference Sheet

Consult the reference sheet for list of agencies that investigate consumer complaints

The RIC helps waste management agencies determine whether or not the item can be recycled. To find out which plastics can be deposited into your recycling bin [check with your municipality](#) and find out what plastics they accept, they all vary depending on the equipment they have.

RECYCLING COSMETICS

How do you properly dispose of any empty cosmetic containers? Some containers may be thrown into the recycling bin to be recycled if they have a number on the container. If the container does not have a number, there are several options one can take to properly dispose of the containers.

Some cosmetic retailers are doing their part and will take back their own brand of cosmetic containers to be recycled and may provide incentives for doing so. [MAC](#), [Kiehl's](#), and [Aveda](#) are a few of the companies that will take back their empty containers. [Origins](#) is the only company that will take back any cosmetic brands empty container for recycling.

[Terracycle](#) is a company that will take any brand's empty hair care, skin care, and cosmetic packaging. First you must sign up on their website and tell them the type of waste you will be sending them. Second, place your filled liners into a shipping box. You have to make sure that the liners are properly sealed and not dripping. Seal your box securely. Lastly, print out a UPS label from your account and mail your package from any UPS mail station.

RECYCLING NAIL POLISH AND NAIL POLISH REMOVERS

[Household Hazardous Waste](#) (HHW) is any leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable, or reactive ingredients. Each person in the United States produces an average of [4 pounds](#) of HHW each year for a total of about 530,000 tons/year, according to the U.S. E.P.A. Nail polish and removers are considered to be HHW.

Any leftover polish or removers in your home can be taken to your local HHW collection center to be properly disposed. Once the product has been removed the bottle can be recycled.

If you have empty containers of nail polish or removers, check with your collection agency to see if you can recycle your empty containers.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO REDUCE YOUR HOUSEHOLD WASTE?

- 1) One of the things you can do to reduce your waste is to purchase only the amount you need.

Written by Andrea Cruz-Oliva

The information provided in this newsletter is intended to convey general information and is not intended to be relied upon as legal advice

The San Diego City Attorney's office cannot provide legal advice to private parties.

- 2) Reuse the products by donating unused portions to friends or community organizations.
- 3) Reuse empty bottles for other purposes around your home.
- 4) Properly dispose of any HHW. Once the containers are empty, recycle them.
- 5) If you cannot reuse any of the empty containers, check to see if they are recyclable and if they are, recycle them or send them back to some of the retailers mentioned.

Let's do our part to reduce our carbon footprint.

Please visit the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) for additional information.

The Role of CEPU in San Diego



The Unit prosecutes violations of law that arise from consumer transactions or actions that damage the environment.