



*City of Cortez Service Center  
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## ***City of Cortez Recycling Program – Q & A***

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### **1. Why the sudden adjustment in our recycling mix?**

In August of 2017, China announced to the World Trade Organization that they intended to stop Taking post-consumer materials (recyclables) from the United States and several other countries, due to increased contamination and damage to their own environment from taking contaminated recycling mixes from other countries. China audited their recycling factories in July and found that most of their factories could not meet their new environmental standards, so they decided to halt imports.

### **2. Since the City of Cortez has a source-separated recycling program, doesn't it pay off with us taking extra steps to separate our items?**

Yes it does. Because our residents separate their items, it is much easier for us to move material to market. In fact, we use Domestic markets whenever possible. Our collection efforts have been clean and did not in any way contribute to the China situation.

### **3. If we already use domestic markets whenever possible, then why do we need to separate our recycling even further than we already are?**

The estimation on the amount of recycling that the United States moved to China ranged anywhere from 60-90%. Imagine all the other groups in our nation's recycling industry trying to find new homes for their recyclables. This potential market glut means that the cleaner and more separated our commodity stream is, the more preferred our recycling commodities will be in the near future. Thus, the easier to move them to that market.

### **4. Why is it so hard for us to get our recycling to market?**

Same as in real estate – Location. Our location is outside of optimal trucking zones so companies that wish to move material out of this area face what is known as dead-head trucking rates. That means most entities need to pay round-trip shipping if they want to move materials to market.

### **5. How can I further separate my recyclables, & what should I do if I have limited space to store them?**

Start small - audit your household and start recycling the one material you produce most. Then when you are comfortable, begin with another material. You can use cans, boxes, or bags inside of the bins to hold your materials, separately. The City of Cortez allows residents to have two of our collection bins. You may also set out an additional container for recycling, but it needs to remain separated, and preferably labeled as "Recycling" so our refuse collectors don't throw them away.

### **Below is a Material List of Everything the City of Cortez Recycles.**

**Cardboard Mix:** Our program collects Brown Paper, Corrugated Cardboard, and Paper Board products (think cereal boxes, cracker boxes, etc.) as part of our cardboard collection program. *This mix is used in manufacturing the paper backing on sheetrock for the construction industry.*

**Mixed Glass:** Our program collects mixed glass jars and bottles – No Lids, Please. *When the market allows, these items are sometimes sold to Coors Bottling, but are generally crushed and mixed with aggregate for use in recycled beneficial applications.*

**Aluminum Cans:** Our program collects aluminum cans, pans, and foil, as part of our aluminum stream. *These items are the easiest to sell on the market and can be turned into any number of aluminum products.*

**Tin/Steel Ferrous Metals:** Our program collects tin and steel cans, as well as small ferrous items (pots, pans, etc.). If a magnet sticks to it, then it's a ferrous metal. *These items are moved to metal recycling markets.*

**Office Paper Mix:** Our Office Paper Mix includes magazines, junk mail, phone books, hard cover books (need covers removed), office paper, and plain paper.

**Plastic:** Our program collects Type 1 and Type 2 Plastic, but they need to be separated:

**Plastic Type 1:** Common Type 1 Plastic includes small water bottles, all soda bottles, clamshell containers, salad dressing and mouthwash bottles, and vegetable oil containers. Look on the containers for the recycle symbol, and look for the number **1** located inside the triangle. *Type 1 plastic PET or PETE (polyethylene terephthalate) can be sold on market where it is then turned into things like polar fleece, fiber, tote bags, furniture, carpet, and occasionally new containers.*



**Plastic Type 2:** Common Type 2 Plastic includes milk jugs, dish soap, laundry detergent, and shampoo bottles. Look on containers for the recycle symbol and look for the number **2** located inside the triangle. *Type 2 plastic HDPE (high Density Polyethylene) can be sold on market where it is then turned into laundry detergent and oil bottles, pens, benches, picnic tables, doghouses, and floor tile.*

#### SOURCE LINKS:

<http://www.waste360.com/recycling/pushing-back-china-s-recycling-mandates>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/04/20/weak-markets-make-consumers-wishful-recycling-big-problem/100654976/>

<http://agplasticconference.com/china-recycling-market-updates-policy-execution-industry-doldrums/>

<https://www.economist.com/news/china/21725815-how-new-rule-could-wallop-recycling-industry-china-tries-keep-foreign-rubbish-out>

<https://qz.com/122003/plastic-recycling-china-green-fence/>

**THE CITY OF CORTEZ IS COMMITTED TO RESPONSIBLE RECYCLING**