

The National Recycling Database and Recycle Check



- **The Recycling Partnership is a mission-driven non-profit dedicated to improving the U.S. recycling system**—town by town, state by state, across the country.
- **We applaud California's leadership in passing policy that aims to improve the recycling system.** We want to help California's new recycling policies to be successful, and encourage adoption of packaging EPR elsewhere in the U.S.
- Recycling can be confusing. What is accepted in one city's recycling program may not be accepted in another. **7 in 10 people look to product labels for recycling information but the chasing arrows symbol can be misleading.** With SB 343's State Recyclables List, we know many packages will need to remove the chasing arrows to reflect accurate recyclability claims in California, while that packaging may be accepted in other programs throughout the U.S.
- **At The Partnership, we've built a database of local recycling information for over 9,000 U.S. communities covering 97% of the population**, including California. With this data, we can increase transparency and share easily-accessible and locally-relevant recycling information.

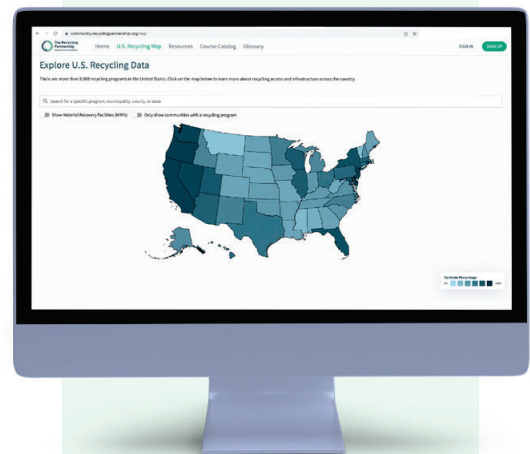
The National Recycling Database powers several solutions from The Recycling Partnership, connecting recycling information in real-time between communities and residents:

The Recycling Program Solutions Hub

The Recycling Program Solutions Hub is a free digital tool for local government staff to easily access a national map of local recycling programs, plus a host of robust resources, self-paced courses, and best practices to optimize and improve curbside, drop-off, and multifamily residential recycling programs.

It also provides more in-depth information about locally accepted materials lists that power consumer and resident-facing platforms (Recycle Check and Chat Bot) and share the most up-to-date recycling information by zip code.

When communities update and verify their profiles in the Hub, it also expands data in the National Recycling Database. The Hub just launched in late 2023 and already hundreds of communities across the country, including in California, are utilizing it.



Recycle Check

Recycle Check is a new platform connecting package-specific details with local recycling information for people across the U.S. It can be used as a dynamic link on a product webpage or as a QR code on a physical packaging label. The Recycle Check tool and Chatbot quickly show residents if the specific products and packaging they buy are accepted for recycling where they live using the power of The Partnership's National Recycling Database.

How often is the data in the National Recycling Database updated and verified?

Based on Census data, we researched the recycling websites of each U.S. community with 2,500 or more households (97% of the U.S. population) for publicly available information. A TRP-developed algorithm detects changes in each community's program to help us keep the database up to date. This, combined with our experts and the Community Hub data, make the Database the most comprehensive and up-to-date dataset on recycling available.

The Database conveys the same information a resident would see if they went looking online but it's packaged in a simple format. The community-to-resident interaction is an important one—local governments are eager to get residents to recycle and residents are eager for quick, clear recycling information. The Recycling Partnership developed Recycle Check to aid this local government-to-resident connection, reduce confusion, and help ensure better, localized recyclability claims.

What packages are eligible for Recycle Check?

Recycle Check provides dynamic access to local curbside residential recycling information for packages that pass industry design guidelines in order to help recyclable items get into the correct bin. It is best suited for packages that are recyclable where there is local infrastructure in some places but not everywhere. Some examples might include thermoforms/clamshells, beverage cups, aerosols, etc. Widely recyclable packages are also eligible, especially when access rates are still growing, as in the case of polypropylene (PP) and cartons. Recycle Check is not currently available for packaging materials with less than 10% acceptance by local recycling programs across the U.S.

Does Recycle Check track that items are actually getting recycled?

Recycle Check helps residents know what to put in their local residential recycling bin. It does this by relaying what their local residential recycling program says is accepted on the community's program website. It is in the community's best interest to only accept material that they are able to sort and recycle. We hope even greater transparency will be enabled in the future as digital product ID technology continues to grow in adoption, one day enabling tracking and tracing of individual products from sourcing through disposal. In the meantime, through targeted community outreach and engagement with our robust network of community partners, we are encouraging communities to further verify their local recycling accepted lists in the Recycling Program Solutions Hub.

What data will be incorporated in the future? What about reuse/refill and composting?

We are continuously working to improve and expand the data available in the National Recycling Database to include information such as additional acceptance lists, drop-off locations, results for recycling programs in other geographies, and more. We welcome collaborative partnerships to offer more and better data to improve recycling and reduce waste.

How can residents without a smartphone or with disabilities access Recycle Check?

We know more than 80% of the U.S. population have access to a smart phone. However, our goal is 100% inclusivity. Recycle Check information can also be accessed from a computer via our Chatbot. We are working to optimize our platform for accessibility and multilingual functionality as part of our near-term roadmap. Today, we know Recycle Check provides a depth of information that is not available on pack, connecting more people to better information on how to recycle correctly.