

Plastic Coding System



Have ever wondered what the number in the middle of the recycling symbol on plastic means? The list below will let you know. But, remember, in the Truckee Meadows it does not matter what the number is, as long as it is a bottle.

- 1 – Polyethylene terephthalate (PET or PETE). PET is the most recycled type of plastic and is found primarily in soft drink bottles. Recycled PET is used for synthetic carpeting (35% of all synthetic carpeting sold in the United States is made partly from old soft drink bottles.), fiberfill insulation, auto parts, tennis balls, shower curtains, paint brush bristles and even fleece jackets.
- 2 – High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE), second in recyclability. HDPE is found primarily in milk and juice bottles, detergent jugs, and some grocery bags. Recycled HDPE is often used for detergent bottles, recycling bins, and combs.
- 3 – Polyvinyl Chloride or Vinyl (PVC or V). Currently PVC is being recycled in small quantities. It has a low melting point and is used for vegetable oil bottles and food wrap. Recycled PVC is being used for drainage pipe and tile.
- 4 – Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE). LDPE's primary use is for grocery bags, which are being recycled through collection bins at most grocery stores. Recycled LDPE is used for garbage bags, motor oil bottles, irrigation pipes and plastic decking.
- 5 – Polypropylene (PP). PP can be found in flip-top lids, such as lids of shampoo and body wash bottles, syrup bottles, and ketchup bottles. Recycled PP has been used for auto batteries and plastic handles.
- 6 – Polystyrene (PS). PS, which includes Styrofoam, is used for hot beverage cups, fast food containers, egg cartons, and salad boxes. Recycled PS is used for desk accessories, toys, trash cans, packaging "peanuts", and insulation.
- 7 – Other. This includes the hundred of plastics not listed above. It also includes multilayered plastics that may contain many different types of plastics.