

# The City of Erie Recycling Information

**Tin Cans:** Tin cans are actually 99% steel with a thin layer of tin to help prevent rust. It can take up to 50 years for a tin can to decompose. All metal food and beverage containers are recyclable in the City of Erie.

**Aluminum Cans:** It takes 90 to 95% less energy to recycle an aluminum can than it takes to mine and refine bauxite ore, which aluminum comes from, for a new can. It can take over 500 years for an aluminum can to decompose. All metal food and beverage containers are recyclable in the City of Erie.

**Glass Bottles and Jars:** Glass is made from silica, which makes up sand. It is estimated that it takes 1,000 years for glass to decompose. All clear, green, and brown glass food containers are recyclable in the City of Erie.

**Plastic Beverage Containers:** Containers marked with all numbers **1 - 7 ARE RECYCLABLE.**

**#1 Plastic Containers** are made of PETE (polyethylene terephthalate). It is clear and durable, often used for soft drink containers. They are recycled into carpet, fleece clothing, and new bottles.

**#2 Plastic Containers** are made of HDPE (high density polyethylene). It is often used for milk jugs, shampoo, and detergents. They are recycled into new containers, recycling bins, plastic lumber, picnic tables, fencing, drainage pipes, and floor tile.

**#3 Plastic Containers** is made of Vinyl (polyvinyl chloride or PVC). It is used for wrapping foods and for film canisters. It can be recycled into speed bumps, flooring, and mats.

**#4 Plastic Containers** is made of LDPE (low density polyethylene). It is used to make grocery bags, garbage bags, lids, and bottle caps. It can be recycled into garbage can liners, floor tile, trashcans, and landscape timers.

**#5 Plastic Containers** is made of PP (polypropylene). It is used to make some food containers, yarn, fabrics, luggage, and car seats. It can be recycled into battery cables, brooms and brushes, ice scrapers, oil funnels, and pallets.

**#6 Plastic Containers** is made of PS (polystyrene). It is used to make cd covers and ink and toner cartridges. It can be recycled into egg cartons, desk trays, rulers, foam packing, and carry out containers. Foamed polystyrene, also known as styrofoam, such as egg cartons, insulated cups, and meat trays, are NOT accepted.

**#7 Plastic** is made of something other than the above six or a mixture of two or more types of plastic. It is sometimes used to make citrus juice, ketchup, or water bottles and baby food containers. It can be recycled into plastic lumber.

The estimated decomposition time for some plastic items are:

Plastic bags:	10 – 20 years
Film canister:	20 – 30 years
Nylon fabric:	30 – 40 years
Six-pack holder:	100 years
Polystyrene:	Indefinitely

**Source:** How Long Does Litter Last? A Supplement to the Litter IQ Board. PA Cleanways, 2002.