



# What we can recycle in Hillsborough County

Recycling rules depend on where you live. Find your community's recycling rules by searching online for "your city + recycling" or visit [TampaBayRecycles.org](http://TampaBayRecycles.org)



**Cardboard and paperboard**  
shipping, food and product boxes – flattened



**Cartons**  
broth, juice and milk cartons – caps attached



**Paper**  
junk mail, magazines, newspaper and printer paper – not shredded



**Glass bottles & jars**  
no lids – labels accepted



**Plastic**  
bottles, jugs, tubs and containers – caps on



**Metal cans & containers**  
steel, tin and aluminum – can lids partially attached

Place clean and dry items loose in the cart. No plastic bags or bagged recyclables.

# What does **NOT** belong in my recycling cart



**Plastic bags or bagged recycling**



**Foam packaging and containers**



**Other plastics**  
(cups, straws, cutlery and bubble mailers)



**Tanglers**  
(hoses, cords and clothes)



**Food waste and food residue**



**Batteries and electronics**



## When in doubt, leave it out!

Hillsborough County customers scan this QR code for more recycling do's and don'ts



# Three easy ways to find your provider if you live in a single-family home

Your recycling and garbage collection provider depends on whether you live in a city or Hillsborough County Solid Waste Service Area. Note: Hillsborough County's Service Area includes New Tampa, Tampa Palms, and Hunter's Green.

**1** Find your home on the map.

**2** Scan the QR code at the bottom of the page and enter your home address.

**3** Contact Customer Service

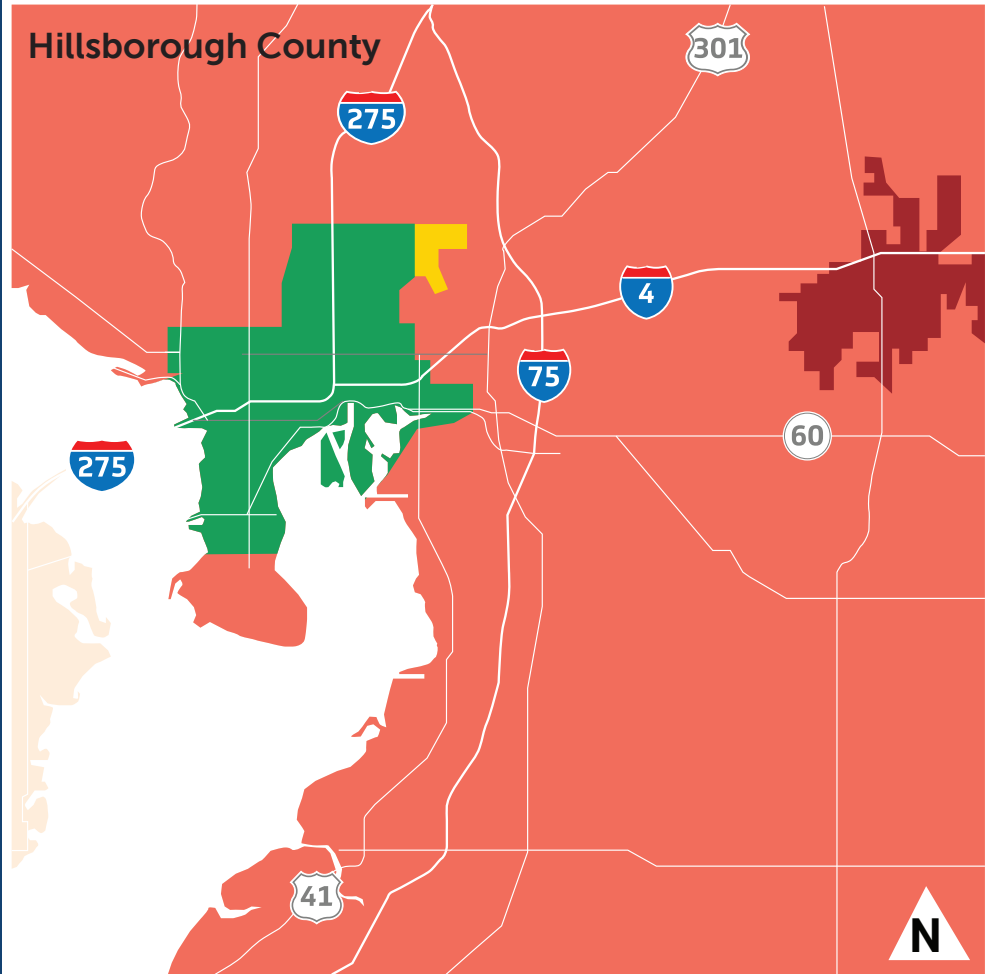
**Hillsborough County:**  
[HCFL.gov/Trash](http://HCFL.gov/Trash) or  
813-272-5680

**City of Tampa:**  
[Tampagov.net/solid-waste](http://Tampagov.net/solid-waste) or  
813-274-8811

**City of Plant City:**  
[Plantcitygov.com/solid-waste](http://Plantcitygov.com/solid-waste) or  
813-757-9208

**City of Temple Terrace:**  
[templeterrace.com/182/Public-Works](http://templeterrace.com/182/Public-Works) or  
813-506-6570

## Solid Waste Service Areas



City of Tampa  
City of Temple Terrace  
City of Plant City  
Hillsborough County

**Find your collection  
provider:**





# Arguing about recycling?

It's not easy to know which items belong in your recycling cart. We answer your recycling questions so you can argue about something else.

Are items in my cart really recycled?

**Yes!** The items in your blue recycling cart are taken to a recycling facility where they are sorted and shipped to be turned into new products.

If a product has a recycling symbol, can I place it in my cart?

**Not always.**

The "chasing arrows" does not mean that an item is recyclable in your program. Ignore the recycling symbol and place only accepted items in your cart.

Plastic bottle caps – can I place them in my cart?

**In Hillsborough, yes when attached.**

In the City of Tampa, no. It's important to check your recycling program rules at least once a year because program rules vary.

**Hillsborough County customers:** Settle your recycling arguments by sending your questions to [Recycling@HCFL.gov](mailto:Recycling@HCFL.gov).

## GOING BEYOND THE TEXT:

### Chasing arrows

The "chasing arrows" symbol and a number between 1 and 7 is stamped on just about every plastic product that you can purchase today.

Most consumers interpret this symbol to mean that the product is recyclable. But that's not always true. That's because its main purpose isn't to indicate that the product is recyclable, but to identify the type of plastic it's made from – and many types of plastic are not recyclable in curbside recycling programs.

Research the issue of recycling labeling. Should manufacturers be required to change the way they use the chasing arrows symbol and label plastics? Why or why not?



Write a letter to the editor of the Tampa Bay Times advocating for or against this idea. Your purpose in this letter is to state your opinion and support it with evidence. A letter to the editor of a newspaper is a letter addressed to the editor and meant for publication in the paper. It is a way for individuals to share their opinions on current events and issues with both the editorial staff and the readership of the paper. Use the letters to the editor in the Tampa Bay Times or at [tampabay.com/opinion](http://tampabay.com/opinion) as models for your letter.

**Extension activity:** Submit your letter to the Tampa Bay Times at [tampabay.com/opinion/submit-letter](http://tampabay.com/opinion/submit-letter).

**Florida Standards:** SC.312.N.1.2; SC.312.N.1.3; SC.312.N.1.4; SC.312.N.1.6; SC.312.N.1.7; SC.4.L.17.4; SC.7.L.17.1; SS.8.FL.2.1; SS.912.FL.3.7; SS.912.FL.3.5; ELA.K.12.EE.1.1; ELA.312.EE.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.EE.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; ELA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; ELA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3



# Hillsborough County recycling program is growing!

Hillsborough County has been recycling since 1989. In 2013, the recycling program changed from a dual stream program with two recycling bins, to a mixed program with one recycling cart. **Since 2022, participation in the curbside recycling collection program has grown from 67% to 77%**, and two years of life have been added to the county's landfill, saving enough space to fill 800 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

**Thank you to our customers for your participation!**

## Tip:

Need to repair or replace your recycling roll cart? Call 813-272-5680 to speak with a customer service representative.

*Our Growing Family*



**1 year old (2014)**  
So proud of how you've grown!



**10 years old (2024)**



**15 years old (2029):**  
How many customers will be recycling when I'm 15?



## GOING BEYOND THE TEXT:

### Keeping recyclables out of the landfill

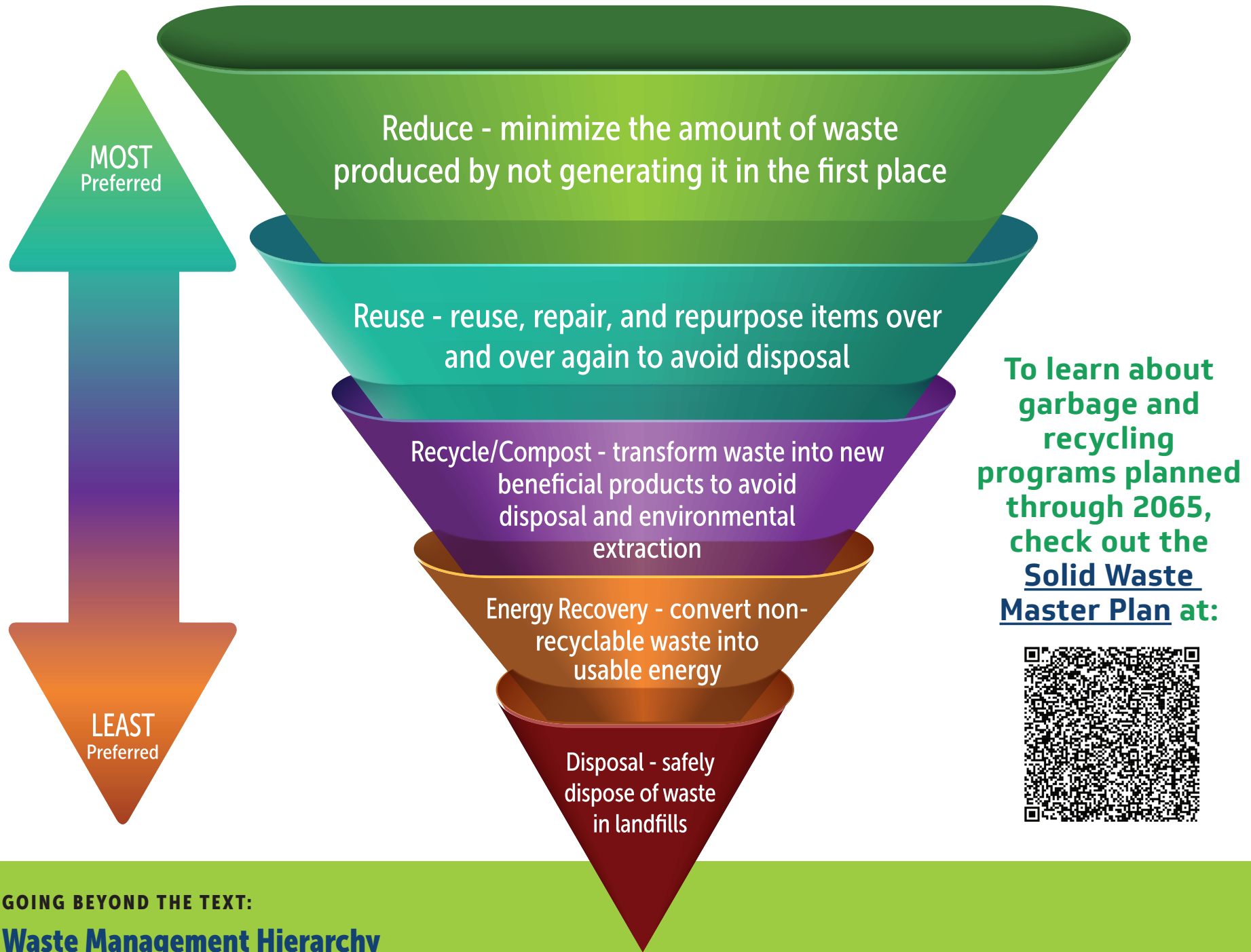
Did you know that recyclable materials are more dense than regular garbage? Garbage trucks can carry 9-10 tons of trash, while the same trucks can carry about 4-5 tons of recyclables. In other words, recyclables take up about twice as much space than garbage does in a landfill. This makes recycling even more important.

Read the article "Hillsborough County Recycles 426,000 Tons as it Marks 10-Year Anniversary of Single-Stream Recycling" at [hcfi.gov/newsroom/2024/02/20/hillsborough-county-recycles-426-000-tons-as-it-marks-10-year-anniversary-of-single-stream-recycling](https://hcfi.gov/newsroom/2024/02/20/hillsborough-county-recycles-426-000-tons-as-it-marks-10-year-anniversary-of-single-stream-recycling).

With a partner, write down the main points in the article. Next, using the full-page advertisements in the Tampa Bay Times as models, create an advertisement for recycling in Hillsborough County. Use the main points in the article to enhance your ad. Share your ad and what you have learned with your class.

**Florida Standards:** ELA.312.EE.1.1; ELA.312.EE.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.EE.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; ELA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; ELA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3; SC.912.L.17.14

# The best way to manage waste is based on U.S. EPA's Waste Management Hierarchy



## GOING BEYOND THE TEXT:

### Waste Management Hierarchy

According to the Hillsborough County Solid Waste Master Plan, 80% of our waste can be kept out of landfills with current (40%) or future (40%) programs. You can help protect the environment and save landfill space by reducing, reusing, and recycling responsibly.

Read the information about reducing your waste in Hillsborough County at [hcfll.gov/residents/sustainability-and-green/reduce-your-waste](https://hcfll.gov/residents/sustainability-and-green/reduce-your-waste). Next, look for articles in the Tampa Bay Times focused on waste in your community. What can students do to help reduce waste? Using the articles in the Times as models, write a newspaper article for your school newspaper focused on reducing waste. Be sure to include helpful tips from the website and from the articles you read.

**Florida Standards:** SC.312.N.1.2; SC.312.N.1.3; SC.312.N.1.4; SC.312.N.1.6; SC.312.N.1.7; SC.912.L.17.14; ELA.K12.EE.1.1; ELA.312.EE.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.EE.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; ELA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; ELA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3



# How the County puts it into action



Reduce Your Use Tampa Bay has received **more than 2,200 pledges** to **reduce the use of single-use plastic**. Take the pledge at [ReduceYourUseTampaBay.org](https://www.ReduceYourUseTampaBay.org).



The County partners with Goodwill to offer **three donation sites** for household goods. Since becoming a donation partner in 2022, Goodwill has **saved over 100 tons from disposal**.



In 2024, over **64,000 tons of recyclables**, which equals the weight of one **1,500-passenger cruise ship**, were collected in the county's curbside program.



Just as firewood in a campfire is reduced to ash, the Resource Recovery Facility burns garbage, reducing its size into ash, sending less waste to the landfill and saving space.



Because **Southeast County Landfill** is the county's **only active landfill**, it's important to **keep recyclable items out of the landfill**.



# Request a recycling presentation

Hillsborough County's Waste Reduction & Recycling team offers free presentations to schools, businesses and community groups.



[Request a Presentation](#)



Presentations are typically 15-20 minutes long and can be tailored to meet your needs. Questions? Email [Recycling@HCFL.gov](mailto:Recycling@HCFL.gov).

## GOING BEYOND THE TEXT:

### The Recycle Life Cycle

Watch the video "The Recycle Life Cycle" (2 minutes) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38lyLUtUSV4> and answer the questions below. While you're watching the video, write down any words that you don't know.

1. What types of non-recyclables must be manually removed by workers to avoid damaging the machinery?
2. Name three types of equipment used to sort recyclables.
3. What happens to the sorted and baled recyclables?
4. Recyclables placed in your blue cart must be \_\_\_\_\_.

Were there any words in the video that you don't know? Can you figure out the words' meanings by looking for clues in the sentences around them? Write down your best guess, and then look up the words in a dictionary.

As a group activity, make a list of the words your classmates identified and see which ones stumped the class. Next, use these words for a news scavenger hunt and see if you can find these words in the Tampa Bay Times. The group that finds the most words wins the game.

**Florida Standards:** ELA.K12.EE.1.1; ELA.312.EE.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.EE.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; ELA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; ELA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3



[The journey of recyclables](#)





Hillsborough County contracts with Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful (KTBB), a non-profit organization and affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, to provide litter control and environmental education programs.

## Small acts make a great impact!

**KeepTampaBayBeautiful.org**

or call **813-221-8733**  
to get involved today!

- **23,830 volunteers contributed 96,830 hours**
- **252,240 pounds** of litter removed
- **730 miles** of roadside cleaned
- **440 miles** of waterways cleaned
- **630 hours** of education and outreach

**Community impact valued at over \$3.1 million!**

By hosting events such as the After Gasparilla and Hillsborough River Coastal Cleanups and providing community presentations on waste reduction and litter control, KTBB plays a key role in protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for county residents and visitors.

## Consider getting involved in:

## Adopt-A-Road Program:

Give back and maintain public rights of way, parks, and shorelines.

## Community Cleanups:

All supplies are provided.

## Hillsborough Trash Free Waters Program:

Hop on the pontoon boat to collect litter from the Hillsborough River.

**Learn how to volunteer by scanning the QR code:**



## GOING BEYOND THE TEXT:

## All about litter

Littering pollutes the environment, harms wildlife, lowers property values and threatens human health.

- Litter and trash clog storm drains and sewers, causing flooding in our neighborhoods.
  - Litter and trash make their way through drains to end up on our beaches and in our waterways.
  - Wildlife and pets get poisoned by, tangled in and injured by litter and trash.
  - Littered open containers and debris such as tires become breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes.
- Tossing away a piece of litter only takes a moment, but the consequences can last for years, decades or even longer.

First, match the litter on left with the time it takes to decompose, or break down, in nature on the right.

Next, work individually or in small groups to find images of each item in the Tampa Bay Times. Cut or print out the images. Use your images to create an anti-littering poster or infographic. Share your poster and what you have learned with your classmates. Display your posters in your classroom or another area of your school.



- Paper
- Plastic bag
- Plastic bottle
- Orange or banana peel
- Aluminum can
- Packaging foam
- Cigarette butt
- Food wrapper
- Glass bottle

5 years  
2-4 weeks  
2 years  
More than 1 million years  
10-20 years  
80-200 years  
1,000,000 years  
450 years  
5 years

**Sources:** Environmental Protection Agency; National Park Service

**Florida Standards:** SC.312.N.1.2; SC.312.N.1.3; SC.312.N.1.4; C.312.N.1.6; SC.312.N.1.7; SC.912.L.17.14; ELA.K12.EE.1.1; ELA.312.E.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.E.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; LA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; LA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3; ELA.312.C.2.1

**ANSWERS:** Paper - 2-4 weeks; Plastic bag - 10-20 years; Food wrapper - 5 years; Glass bottle - 1,000,000 years



# Household Hazardous Chemical Collection

All Hillsborough County residents can participate in collection events to drop off unwanted household chemicals. A state-issued photo ID with a Hillsborough County residential address is required.

## WHAT TO BRING

### Household Chemicals:

Adhesives, aerosols, cleaners, nail polish, peroxide, rubbing alcohol



### Paint Products:

Paint, stain, solvents  
*Limit: ten 1-gallon and five 5-gallon containers*



### Automotive Products:

Antifreeze, gasoline, diesel, motor oil, car cleaners



### Pool Chemicals:

Chlorine, muriatic acid, cleaners, clarifiers



### Flares and Ammunition:

Marine and road flares, ammunition



### Lawn and Garden Chemicals:

Fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, poisons



### Propane and Helium Tanks:

*Limit: 30 pounds or less*



### Mercury-Containing Devices:

Fluorescent bulbs, mercury thermostats & thermometers.  
*Limit: Ten bulbs 4-feet and longer*



### Certain Batteries:

Auto & motorcycle, lawn mower, marine, single-use and rechargeable batteries, including Ni-Cd, NiMH, Lithium, Lithium-Ion.

**If you have questions,  
call 813 272-5680.**

## Collection events and locations: 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**First Saturday of the month**  
Sheldon Road Household  
Hazardous Waste Center  
9805 Sheldon Road  
Tampa, FL 33635

**Second Saturday of the month**  
South County Solid Waste Facility  
13000 U.S. 41  
Gibsonton, FL 33534

**Third Saturday of the month**  
Hillsborough Heights  
Solid Waste Facility  
6209 County Road 579  
Seffner, FL 33584



[Accepted Items &  
Event information](#)

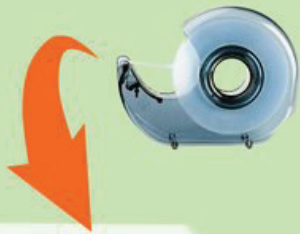


# Safely dispose of batteries

Batteries, including those found in cellphones, laptops, and power tools, if compressed, can cause a fire, harming workers and ruining recyclable materials. Batteries not labeled as “alkaline” should be taken to a drop-off location.



How to package batteries for safe transport to a drop-off location:



## TAPE & SEPARATE!

Cover all battery terminals with tape and separate them from other batteries



## HOT TIP:

Never place batteries in your recycling cart.

If you live in Hillsborough County, including the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City, scan the QR code to learn where to safely drop off batteries.



## Discarding Batteries

Free battery disposal is also available at retail locations as part of the Call2Recycle program.



# Community Collection Centers

Hillsborough County operates five Community Collection Centers (CCCs) to accept household items from its Solid Waste Service Area customers. Select services are available to residents of the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City.



[CCCs Near Me](#)

## Solid Waste Facility

Open Mon. - Sat.  
7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.,  
excluding holidays

	Bulky Waste/ Appliances	Paint, Batteries and Electronics	Recycling	Yard Waste	Donations
Alderman's Ford	✓	✓	✓		
Hillsborough Heights	✓	✓	✓		✓
Northwest County	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
South County	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wimauma	✓	✓	✓		
Who can use	County Solid Waste customers	All residents	All residents	County Solid Waste customers	All residents
Photo ID Required*	✓	✓		✓	✓
Property Tax Bill Required**	✓			✓	✓

\* Must show photo ID with a Hillsborough County residential address.

\*\* Must show attendant solid waste assessment has been paid.

## About NIE

The Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program (NIE) is a cooperative effort between schools and the Times Publishing Co. to encourage the use of newspapers in print and electronic form as educational resources – a “living textbook.”

Our educational resources fall into the category of informational text, a type of nonfiction text. The primary purpose of informational text is to convey information about the natural or social world.

NIE serves educators, students and families by providing schools with class sets of the Pulitzer Prize-winning Tampa Bay Times plus award-winning original educational publications, teacher guides, lesson plans, educator workshops and many more resources – all at no cost to schools, teachers or families.

In 2023-2024, NIE provided almost 10 million e-Newspaper licenses and 200,000 print newspapers to Tampa Bay classrooms.

For more information about NIE, visit [tampabay.com/nie](http://tampabay.com/nie), call 727-893-8138 or email [ordernie@tampabay.com](mailto:ordernie@tampabay.com). Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TBTNIE](https://facebook.com/TBTNIE).

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## Florida Standards

This publication and its activities incorporate the following Florida Standards for elementary, middle and high school students. SC.312.N.1.2; SC.312.N.1.3; SC.312.N.1.4; SC.312.N.1.6; SC.312.N.1.7; SC.912.L.17.14; SC.4.L.17.4; SC.7.L.17.1; SS.8.FL.2.1; SS.912.FL.3.7; SS.912.FL.3.3; ELA.K12.EE.1.1; ELA.312.EE.2.1; ELA.312.EE.3.1; ELA.312.EE.4.1; ELA.312.EE.5.1; ELA.312.EE.6.1; ELA.312.C.1.3; ELA.312.C.1.4; ELA.312.C.1.5; ELA.312.C.3.1; ELA.312.C.4.1; ELA.312.C.5.1; ELA.312.F.1.3; ELA.312.F.1.4; ELA.312.R.2.2; ELA.312.R.2.3; ELA.312.R.2.4; ELA.312.V.1.1; ELA.312.V.1.3; ELA.312.C.2.1