

# Recyclable Newspaper Bags vs. Oxo-Biodegradable Newspaper Bags



**BRING IT BACK**  
YOUR STORE RECYCLES PLASTIC BAGS

## The Facts

Recyclable bags can be separated or recovered from the solid waste stream and used again or reused in the manufacture or assembly of another package or product through an established recycling program.<sup>1</sup> They can contain 100% virgin raw material or a combination of the virgin and recycled materials.

Recyclable newspaper bags can be returned to virtually any location that accepts grocery bags. The American Chemistry Council's web site [www.plasticbagrecycling.org](http://www.plasticbagrecycling.org) has a list of locations by state.

Recyclable newspaper bags are reprocessed and used to manufacture new products like plastic bags, low maintenance outdoor decking and railing, pallets, containers, crates, pipe, and other building/construction items.<sup>2</sup>

With increased education and environmental consciousness of newspaper subscribers, no recyclable newspaper bags need to go to the landfill.

Because recyclers refuse bags that are contaminated with degradable additives, oxo-biodegradable bags contaminate the recycling pool and are destined for the landfill.

According to ASTM WK 262, oxo-biodegradable polymers are excluded from consideration as acceptable environmentally biodegradable polymers.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Federal Trade Commission, materials in landfills degrade very slowly, if at all. This is because modern landfills are designed, according to law, to keep out sunlight, air, and moisture. This helps prevent pollutants from the garbage from getting into the air and drinking water, and slows the decomposition of the trash. With materials like paper and food taking decades to decompose, it is difficult to substantiate a claim that a product normally disposed of in a landfill is biodegradable.<sup>4</sup>

Oxo-biodegradable bags may or may not break down into pieces at a faster rate than recyclable plastic bags and there is no proof they will degrade any faster than any other plastic bags in a landfill.

When oxo-biodegradable bags get mixed with recyclable newspaper bags they contaminate the recycling stream and this could result in recyclers refusing to collect ALL newspaper bags. The end result would be that all newspaper bags will be destined for the landfill.

**Recycling helps reduce the strain on our landfills. Encourage your subscribers to return their recyclable newspaper bags to your local retail store or outlet. Local outlets that accept recycled bags are listed by state at [www.plasticbagrecycling.org](http://www.plasticbagrecycling.org).**

<sup>1</sup> Federal Trade Commission Green Guides ([www.ftc.gov/bcp/gnrule/guides980427.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/gnrule/guides980427.htm)) <sup>2</sup> Progressive Bag Alliance "Top 10 Myths about Plastic Grocery Bags"

<sup>3</sup> ASTM International (American Society for Testing and Materials) <sup>4</sup> Federal Trade Commission Green Guides ([www.ftc.gov/bcp/gnrule/guides980427.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/gnrule/guides980427.htm))



For more information about how you and your subscribers can recycle newspaper bags, call

**1-800-325-0216, [www.continentalproducts.com](http://www.continentalproducts.com)**