

Guidelines for Recycling Beach Clean-up Debris

PLEASE NOTE: The guidelines on the pages below were prepared for those doing beach clean-ups in Alaska who are working with Skagit River Steel and Recycling based in Burlington, WA.

If people are going to work with another recycling company, they need to get that companies' specifications and use those. That is, those wanting to recycle materials from beach clean-ups will have to identify the recycler BEFORE the clean-up and see what is acceptable and what is not and how materials need to be prepared.

This doesn't mean the recycling will be done at no cost-- the materials will have low value, but it DOES mean that the costs for recycling versus the costs for disposal will be much reduced.

The following guidelines were prepared by: Lois Young, Skagit River Steel and Recycling and Fran Recht, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to help those doing marine debris cleanups recycle materials if they are able, for increased environmental benefits and reduced disposal costs.

- One of the key things to remember is that recycling is a cooperative effort—it is labor intensive on both the clean-up and the recycling side, so the key is to sort and handle things to minimize handling logistics and labor needs.
- Try to group like with like (e.g. bottles with bottles, metal with metal, hard plastic buoy pieces with others)
- The other thing to remember is “if in doubt throw it out”. A dirty net, oil drum etc., may contaminate a whole load and unwanted materials like styrofoam get caught up in with recyclable materials, making sorting very labor intensive and jeopardizing successful recycling and future acceptance of materials.

ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS & HANDLING REQUIREMENTS

- Fishing gear– no organic material
- Tie up all fishing gear tightly (i.e. put in regular tarp, use a “tarp of old net”, or twist, fold or tie in as compact a bundle as possible)
- Keep polypropylene lines (e.g. crab pot lines) separate from other gear and bundle tightly, bag, or put in separate bin.
- Buoys, hard plastic fish boxes
- Plastic containers, water bottles and other bottles (caps ok, must be empty)
- Metal

March 2010, PSMFC

NON-ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS
– DO NOT SHIP TO THE RECYCLER-

- Styrofoam
- Bottles caps (by themselves –i.e. if not on the bottles) and other small plastic pieces
- Gas canisters, metal drums, or containers with any content. Call your hazmat coordinator for proper handling of any potential hazardous materials.

Contact Information:

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