

Aerosol cans:



Aerosol cans are used to store everything from food to bathroom products to paint. While the can itself has the same value as other metal cans, the pressurized air inside and potentially hazardous contents make recycling a bit more complicated. Aerosol cans are made of either aluminum or steel, both of which are high-value metals that can be infinitely recycled into new metal products

The right way to dispose of an aerosol can will depend on :

1. Empty Cans
2. Partial Full Cans

General steps for disposing of Aerosol cans :

Empty Cans :

❖ Ensure that the can is empty :

- Do your best to use up all the product inside. If the can still has product inside, even if it's a nonhazardous product like whipped cream, your recycling program will not accept it. The easiest way to make sure it's empty is to shake the can and listen for liquid inside, or spray until nothing comes out.

❖ Plastic cap :

- Most aerosol cans come with a plastic cap, which should be removed and recycled separately

❖ **Refrain from modifying the can :**

- **DO NOT** puncture a hole in the can to remove any remaining product, as the can will explode and hurt you. You should also not attempt to remove the spray nozzle on top of the can.

❖ **Consider the contents of the can :**

- Not all aerosol cans are created equal. Some contain hazardous materials, so you may not be able to dispose of them in your regular trash or recycling. Check the can for indications that it contains hazardous waste. If the can has specific directions for disposal on it, make sure you follow them. In some cases, you may be required to take the can to a hazardous waste disposal center.

❖ **Verify with your town's recycling program :**

- Verify whether your community accepts aerosol cans with other metal cans, or whether they are classified as household hazardous waste (HHW). There are separate disposal options for each.

If there are no options for recycling an aerosol can in your area, you can throw it in the regular trash (as long as it is empty and the can does not indicate that it needs to be treated as a hazardous material).

Partial Full Cans:

1. Do not throw away an aerosol can that is not empty:

- a. aerosol cans are pressurized, they explode if they are exposed to high heat or flattened. This could even happen in the garbage truck, which could cause injuries.

2. Refrain from modifying the can :

- a. **DO NOT** puncture a hole in the can to remove any remaining product, as the can will explode and hurt you. When you bring a partially full aerosol can to a hazardous waste collection site, they may puncture it to remove the contents and allow the can to be recycled. While this can be done by trained professionals with specialized equipment, it should never be done at home!

3. Take your partially full aerosol cans to hazardous waste collection site :

- a. You can locate a collection facility near you by searching on your city's or county's website. You may need to pay a small fee to safely dispose of your aerosol cans, but it should not be significant.

