

# WHICH #6 ITEMS CAN BE RECYCLED?

## FOOD SERVICE

Take out containers (*clamshells*), cups (*without paper labels*), bowls (*that individual servings of beans, potato salad & slaw come in*), etc., can be any color as long as they are



## "CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN!"

"Clean" means no remaining FOOD, DRINK OR DIRT. What was in the cup or on the plate is unknown.

Stained items are "clean" if you can rub your thumb over the stained area and your thumb doesn't look shiny afterward. Some items may just need to be wiped with a napkin (sandwich crumbs). Others may need soap & water (chips and dip, spaghetti, refried beans, etc.).

We cannot put dirty foam in the densifier. It contaminates all other clean foam and makes it worthless. It makes the densifier sticky which causes crumbled foam to clump up and jam the machine.

## PACKAGING FOAM



**A REMINDER:** Foam packaging or food service products "break or snap in two" when bent. If foam bends, it's #4 plastic, not the #6 that can be recycled through densifying. Packaging foam must have all **TAPE and PAPER LABELS REMOVED** before recycling. Some foam may have cardboard backing that also needs to be removed.

**FOAM RECYCLING IN CENTRAL OKLAHOMA**  
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### **MEDIA SOURCES:**

**University Lutheran Church & Student Center**  
- [www.ulcsc.org](http://www.ulcsc.org) "Green Team" webpage

**Facebook:** Search for "Churches Caring for Creation" FB page for information, inspiration, collection and densifying events, and all things "green".

## WHY FOAM IS BAD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT •••

"Expanded Polystyrene (EPS)," the #6 in the recycle triangle found on plastic containers, and named "Styrofoam" by its inventor, the Dow Chemical Corporation, is a known carcinogen if eaten, burned in incinerators, or left to leach into the soil by placing it in the landfill instead of being recycled. It will essentially remain, crushed, dirty and broken, 500 years from now; It doesn't decompose. The cup you drank your morning coffee from will remain in the environment "forever."

"Foam" wreaks havoc on the environment. One of the main concerns is that it's not biodegradable and therefore takes up a lot of space in landfills, which adds to the pollution problem. If littered, EPS foam sometimes breaks into smaller pieces that are more difficult to clean up. Another argument against EPS foam is that it's made from nonrenewable fossil fuels and synthetic chemicals, which can also contribute to pollution. EPS foam sometimes makes its way into waterways and can have disastrous effects on animals that may confuse it for food or nesting material.

In 2019, coalition of local churches called "Churches Caring for Creation," decided to work together to develop a program with the goal of safely recycling #6 plastic. This goal has spread to the public collection of foam in 6 central Oklahoma communities.

## WHERE CAN I RECYCLE FOAM WEEKDAYS?

A "Styro-Station" where foam can be dropped off for safe recycling is located at:

University Lutheran Church & Student Center  
914 Elm (1<sup>st</sup> block south of Lindsey)

Styro-Station is easily accessed off the church parking lot located on College, behind the church.

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. A drop-off box is placed outside the door if the office is closed.

Items to recycle include foodservice containers and packaging foam, but no packaging peanuts. Because all foam must be "clean, Clean, CLEAN" to densify into solid plastic logs, all items brought to recycle must be grease-free, food and drink-free, and have tape and paper labels removed.

**++ Please bring egg cartons *WHOLE* as they are recycled to a family poultry farmer in Seminole, OK.**

## WHAT HAPPENS TO FOAM AFTER IT'S COLLECTED?

The foam logs are placed on pallets and stored under a protective cover because plastic deteriorates when exposed to light. (Think about plastic outdoor furniture left out in the sun.)

A major national plastics recycler has expressed interest in securing our densified logs. They will sell and transport the foam to manufacturers who make new items from recycled foam. Some of these items include picture frames, crown molding and decorative trim for ships, motor homes and airplanes in which keeping weight to a minimum is beneficial.

It's more economical to make new foam items from recycled foam than using virgin chemicals. Any proceeds of this sale will be returned to the foam densifying program to pay for equipment, gasoline, and densifying supplies.

## WHERE ELSE CAN I RECYCLE FOAM?

Public Libraries in several Central Oklahoma towns are hosting collection/densifying events in 2022. Additional dates will be added as they are scheduled.

**(Saturdays from 10 - Noon unless noted otherwise.)**

06/04 – Noble Public Library

06/25 – Shawnee Public Library

07/09 – Norman Public Library (Central)

08/06 – Moore Public Library

08/13 – Norman (HHWF)

08/27 – Noble Public Library

09/10 – Newcastle Public Library 10 – Noon

Blanchard Public Library 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

09/17 – Shawnee Public Library

10/22 – Norman Public Library

11/12 – Norman (HHWF)

1/7/23 – Shawnee Public Library

