



## Department of Public Works Jefferson County, Washington

623 Sheridan Street  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
360-385-9160

### **PRESS RELEASE**

March 31, 2022

Recycling changes are coming to Jefferson County. Starting June 1, 2022, bottles and jugs will be the only type of plastics accepted for recycling. While completing the Department of Ecology -mandated Contamination Reduction and Outreach Plan (CROP) mixed plastics were identified as the leading cause of recycling contamination, specifically plastics other than bottle or jugs.

Bottles and jugs have high levels of recyclable resins. This gives them a higher value and a strong domestic market. Other plastics have lower resin levels resulting in minimal market value. Those can end up in the trash here in the U.S. or sold to buyers in poorer countries with lower environmental standards and fewer worker protections. Often these plastics can be found in our oceans or burned in dumps in the countries without the infrastructure to properly manage them.

Solid Waste tipping fees subsidize the cost of our recycling program. Because of this, it does not make sense to continue accepting items that have low to no recycling value. Also, it is misleading to accept items for recycling that we know are very likely not being recycled.

We hope that this information will lead to residents being more selective with the packaging they purchase which will send a message to the manufacturers that they should be more responsible for the impact these materials have on our shared environment.

Jefferson County Public Health will be launching a broad education campaign to alert our customers of the June 1, 2022 changes to the County's recycling program.

For more information on this change, please go to the Solid Waste web page at <https://jeffersoncountysolidwaste.com/recycle/recycling-changes/>.

Contact:

Laura Tucker  
Jefferson County Public Health  
360-385-9491  
ltucker@co.jefferson.wa.us