



## RECYCLING CONTAMINATION

Recycling helps conserve ever-diminishing landfill space as well as biodiversity harmed in the mining of new raw materials. It ensures that valuable resources are not lost and are able to be put back into use once again. However, if your recycling is contaminated with inappropriate items, your council's recycling program is inefficient and becomes more expensive to operate. Depending on what your council recycles, many materials are considered contaminants.

Recycling contamination occurs when non-recyclable items are mixed in with recyclables. Common con-

taminants found in household recycling include batteries, ceramics, light bulbs, pyrex, rocks, garbage and plastic bags.

While placing the wrong materials in the recycling may seem harmless, its consequences can be large. If there is too much contamination, manufacturers that buy the recycled materials will not accept the load, often resulting in the whole load being sent to landfill. By ensuring you are recycling the right materials, recycling is maintained as effective and viable and your waste is able to be recycled into new products.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- Ensure you are recycling correctly. Contact your local council and ask for a list of recyclables – all councils are different and information is available at [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au/](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au/), allowing you to search for what you can recycle in your locality.
- Talk to your friends and family about the effects of contamination.

### MORE INFORMATION

- [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/spd\\_lgov\\_murfy.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/education/spd_lgov_murfy.htm) - Environment NSW educative 'Murphys Recycling contamination Program.'
- [www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au/](http://www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au/) - lots of information on effective recycling