

You name it, we recycle it

By Sally Gracie
[Methow Valley News](#)

The Methow Valley recycles.

Whether you are a permanent resident, a part-timer or a visitor here for a long weekend, you have choices that will keep your trash out of the landfill.

Since its opening in 2001, Methow Recycles, a non-profit corporation, has processed more than 5,000 tons of materials. Its many volunteers put in just about as many work hours a year – 2,000 – as the three paid part-timers do. Betsy Cushman is the go-to person for Methow Recycles and its first paid employee. Methow Recycles (www.methowrecycles.org) is located south of Twisp on Twisp Airport Road. You'll see the landfill and recycling gate a skip up the road on the right. Methow Recycles accepts cardboard, glass and most plastic bottles, paper, small batteries, compact fluorescent bulbs, even computers and TVs. Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Check the website for details or call 997-0520.

Methow Recycles is the hub of the valley effort, and two local businesses work in cooperation with it. Don Davidson came to the Methow Valley from Seattle, where he worked in the solid waste and recycling industry. Today he operates Methow Valley Sanitation (997-8862), which provides curbside trash pickup to subscribers, but he also serves on the Methow Recycles board. Don has been involved with Methow Recycles since its inception. He helped with the original feasibility study and wrote the business model. The facility was at first a "self-haul" outfit, where individuals and businesses would deliver their own recyclables, but today Don's trucks pick up drop boxes of cardboard from both valley grocery stores and the school district. He was also instrumental in working with Methow Recycles to set up the new facility at Horizon Flats in Winthrop.

If you live in or are visiting Winthrop or Mazama, the drop-off facility at the top of Horizon Flats (across from North Valley Lumber) is open during daylight hours for the season. Bins there accept these items only: flattened cardboard, aluminum and tin cans, newspaper, and glossy paper. Methow Sanitation collects the roll-off containers and delivers them to Methow Recycles.

Another spoke in the recycling hub is a new business, Methow Recycling Roundup (www.recyclingroundup.com), started last year by Casey Bouchard. Casey worked with Betsy Cushman to define services that would improve the "capture" of material generated by valley visitors as well as serve residents. He has designed services to meet these needs. Methow Recycling Roundup offers on-site collection of all recyclable commodities being accepted by Methow Recycles.

Casey's goal is to make recycling convenient and affordable. Visitors may take advantage of Recycling Roundup's single-stream prepaid bag service at three popular Winthrop vacation rentals: River's Edge Resort, Mazama Country Inn and River View Inn. Casey charges \$5 for the bags, a fee that may be passed on to visitors who choose to use them. Conscientious visitors no longer need to bag up their mixed recyclables when they pack their suitcases as Casey picks the bags up, sorts the materials, and delivers them to Methow Recycles. Casey hopes to expand the bag service to other businesses this summer.

Recycling Roundup's Community Hub Service is already in operation at the Methow Valley Ranger District, where a centralized bin is provided. [Tappi](#) in Twisp also uses this service. Many other businesses and vacation rentals recycle independently.

Casey feels that "in the next 10 years the Methow Valley can become a model for rural recycling." With the commitment of valley residents and visitors, and the dedication of people like Betsy Cushman and Don Davidson, Casey's vision may come to pass.

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