

# The Gainesville Zero Waste News

## Avoiding the Pitfalls of “Wishcycling” Recycling

Recycling is a thoughtful way to care for the planet, but sometimes, our good intentions can misfire through a practice called "**wishcycling**." Wishcycling happens when we toss items into recycling bins, hoping they are recyclable, without verifying if accepted locally. Although well-meaning, **wishcycling can actually cause problems for recycling systems and the environment.**

Wishcycling often includes items like plastic bags, greasy pizza boxes, or glass vases—things that may seem recyclable but are not. **These items can contaminate recycling streams, making it harder for facilities to process materials and turning good intentions into setbacks.** Removing contaminants requires extra time, resources, and energy, driving up the costs of recycling programs. A cleaner recycling stream leads to greater efficiency, less environmental impact, and more appealing materials for manufacturers. When we recycle correctly, we support creating new products, keeping the system sustainable, and maximizing environmental benefits.

**By taking a moment to check local guidelines,** we can ensure we are recycling the right items. Together, we can make recycling more effective, reduce waste, and help the planet thrive. So, skip the guesswork, recycle smartly, and turn good intentions into great results!

Get the answers to all your recycling questions at [gainesvillefl.gov/WhatCanBeRecycled](https://gainesvillefl.gov/WhatCanBeRecycled) or @ZeroWasteGNV on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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### Accepted for Recycling

