

## Who Brought Single-Sort Recycling to Maine?

ecomaine did! Ours was the first single-sort recycling facility in Maine. The 20 communities that own ecomaine invested \$3.7 million in a single-sort recycling system in 2006 and, since then, our recycling tonnage has grown every year. We now process more than 35,000 tons of recyclables each year.

ecomaine is certified by the International Organization for Standardization for excellence in environmental management (ISO 14001) and by the Occupational Health & Safety Assessment Series (ISO 45001) for safety.

## See It in Action

Set up an educational tour of ecomaine's recycling facility, waste-to-energy plant, or landfill by calling 207-773-1738 or emailing [info@ecomaine.org](mailto:info@ecomaine.org).



Please pass this pamphlet on to a friend or recycle when finished!

# ecomaine

## Single-Sort Recycling

### How Does It Work?



[ecomaine.org](http://ecomaine.org)



### Single-Sort Recycling

## What Is Single-Sort?

Single-sort recycling means consumers place all household recyclables into one bin, separate from trash. This allows for recyclable paper, glass, metals cardboard, and rigid plastic containers labeled #1-7 to be thrown together in just one container.

Before ecomaine brought single-sort to Maine in 2007, each type of recyclable material needed to be sorted, stored and delivered in separate containers, which was time-consuming, costly and had a negative effect on the carbon footprint.

Because single-sort recycling is convenient, participation in recycling increases, and that's not just good for the environment — it has financial benefits for our member communities too! Municipalities typically pay less for ecomaine's recycling services compared to solid waste (trash) disposal. More importantly, diverting recyclable materials out of the waste stream prevents them from being stored in landfills forever.



## Where Does It All Go?

Our recyclables all get turned into new products, but first, these mixed recyclables all need to be separated from each other and baled by type.

Using a mix of mechanical, magnetic, high-tech optical sorting, and hand-sorting techniques, ecomaine is able to separate and bale mixed recyclables into nine different categories:

- Cardboard
- #1 PET Plastic
- Mixed Paper
- #2 Natural Plastic
- Aluminum
- #2 Colored Plastic
- Steel & Tin Cans
- #3-7 Plastic
- Glass

Once the paper, cardboard, metal, aluminum and rigid plastics have been baled by material type, ecomaine sells them on the open commodities market to be used in the manufacturing of new items. We keep the majority of our recyclables domestic to help limit our carbon footprint and support our own market.

Like the stock market, the market prices for recyclables fluctuate based on supply and demand for the material. Prices are also affected by the amount of contamination (non-recyclable material) found in each shipment.

Therefore, it is important to the success of recycling that you recycle properly and buy products made from post-consumer recyclables. This creates demand for post-consumer recyclables and a circular economy.



 Recycle Wisely with Our RECYCLOPEDIA App

More than 1,500 waste items are now searchable in the ecomaine RECYCLOPEDIA app, a waste encyclopedia which is free to download onto Apple and Android devices, or visit: [ecomaine.org/RECYCLOPEDIA](http://ecomaine.org/RECYCLOPEDIA).

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