

## How to Identify “Real” Recycled-Content Products

The product labels can be extremely confusing and sometimes that is no mistake. In order to ensure the greatest environmental benefit (by buying recycled) let us help you navigate through some of the tricky lingo.

**Recyclable Products (or Recyclable Packaging):** this means that the item itself can be recycled at the end of its life. Please remember just because there are recycling markets available (in some States) it does not necessarily mean that it is easily recyclable in your residential area. *There are people who are currently recycling cigarette butts but you would be hard pressed to find a local drop center in most cities.*

**Packaging Made from Recycled Content:** This means that the company has taken the step to make their packing recyclable (it has no bearing on the product itself). Many times people get confused about what exactly they are advertising the package or the product itself.

**Recycled Content Product (Made from Recycled Content):** The product is made from a raw material that would have previously been thrown away (or landfilled). These products may be made from a percentage of the recycled item(s) or fully from them. Some items may be made from internal recycled content (**pre consumer**). This means the items never made it to the public and were recycled in the manufacturing process itself. For example a shoe manufacturer formerly threw this material away but now collects it and produces this particular product line using it.

**Postconsumer Content:** This refers to products that are made wholly or partially from items that have been used by consumers or businesses and would be discarded but were instead recycled and reused. These raw materials have typically been collected by a collection center or curbside program and processed at a material recovery facility (MRF) and processed for reuse.