

# Separate your waste and give it a **second life**

Did you know that **42%** of the waste in the Netherlands is just thrown out with the residual waste? Every year, **76 million wheelie bins** full of industrial waste ends up in landfills - or is incinerated. After that, it can never be used again.

A shame because that way, many **valuable raw materials** are lost forever. And that while raw materials are becoming scarcer, and we have been using more resources than the Earth can handle for years. **Earth Overshoot Day**, the day when we use up all the resources the planet provides in a year, is worldwide on 28th July and in the Netherlands even on 12th April.

## It can be better!

And that starts with separation. When you separate waste, it can be recycled - into a new product or material. It becomes a raw material again!



## The benefits of separating waste



### You save valuable resources

Most of the materials in the products we use are extracted from the earth. Think of trees that are cut down for paper, petroleum for plastic and a laptop for which copper and cobalt are mined.

If you throw these precious materials away in the residual waste without separating them, they are lost forever - even if they are scarce resources that the economy can put to good use. But if you separate them into the right waste stream, the raw materials can be reused.

## Separated waste does not end up on one pile (no way)

Separated waste **only ends up** on one pile if the waste stream is too contaminated - e.g. if there are food scraps with the paper/cardboard.

Another myth is that separation at the source makes no sense because waste can be **post-separated** by the waste processor, e.g., with machines. For almost all waste streams, once they are in the residual waste, they cannot be separated by a machine - because they are too contaminated or too mixed. The cleanest way to separate is always at the source, by people.

So you yourself can make sure that as little industrial waste as possible is burned or dumped as residual waste: by separating properly!

## The less residual waste, the less CO<sub>2</sub>

When waste streams reach the residual waste, most of them are incinerated. That incineration releases **CO<sub>2</sub>**, and to combat climate change, we want to prevent this as much as possible.

Moreover, when incinerated, the raw materials from the waste are completely **lost**. That means CO<sub>2</sub> is also emitted again to extract and produce new materials. While recycling often takes less energy than extracting raw materials.

In short, by separating, you ensure that as much waste as possible can be recycled, thereby reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and environmental impact.

## This is what happens to your waste

