

WHAT ARE FILM PLASTICS?

"Film Plastics" means flimsy malleable plastics like a plastic bag or saran wrap or the thick tarp like plastic used for hoop houses in agriculture.

Film plastics can theoretically be recycled if...

1. You have a single kind of film plastic like all clear LDPE Plastic #4. Plastic bags are often made from different types of plastic and dyed different colors, having just one kind and color can be challenging.
2. They are clean and free of contaminants. The great thing about plastic bags is how little material they need to be made. That also means that just having a receipt or single other item inside of it when you take it someplace to be recycled it will have a very high contamination rate. Film plastics by their nature snag onto and cover things easily. This makes them especially challenging to sort through in a materials recovery facility where most recyclables are processed.
3. You have a lot of it. You need volume to justify the expense of sending it someplace, usually far away. Another great thing about film plastics and other plastics like Styrofoam, is that they comprise very small amounts of material. Typically to make something worth recycling you need a lot of it and it is hard to accumulate a large volume of clean single-type film plastics.

https://lessismore.org/system/files/430/original/Plastic_Bags_Are_Trash_Flyer.pdf

There a pilot program in Santa Barbara City run by Ablitt's dry cleaners. They have volunteers and staff that sort through film plastics that folks can drop off. They take clear LDPE Plastic #4. So this includes drycleaner bags and some other plastic bags.

For information visit Ablitt's website: <https://ablitts.com/film-plastic-recycling/>