



SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

RECYCLE



Ring in the New Year with Recycling!

The start of a new year brings new opportunities to keep our community clean and sustainable. By recycling correctly and disposing of waste properly, we can all play a part in reducing landfill waste and protecting our environment in the year ahead.

During this busy time of year, we'd like to thank our MRF staff and the community for doing their part. This December update highlights ongoing operations at the Materials Recovery Facility.

As the year comes to a close, we appreciate the community's continued use of our CHaRMs. This December update provides a look at current activity at the facilities.

2025 was a big year for the SWDA, from opening the MRF, having our first tour of the Waste and Recycling Adventure Center, opening Alabama's first CHaRM, to rolling out curbside recycling in Baldwin County. Check out later in the newsletter for all the stats on everything recycling at the SWDA.

Have you been wanting to see what happens to your recycling after it is picked up from the curb or the CHaRM? Schedule a tour of the Waste and Recycling Adventure Center at baldwincountyswda.org.

Curbside recycling hasn't always been available throughout all of Baldwin County, but by the end of 2026, every resident will have access to convenient curbside recycling. This milestone will make it easier than ever for our community to recycle responsibly—no matter where you live.

Recycling gives materials a second life, reduces waste, and supports cleaner, more sustainable communities. From paint cans to new bottles, responsible recycling keeps materials in use and shows how every small choice makes a big impact.

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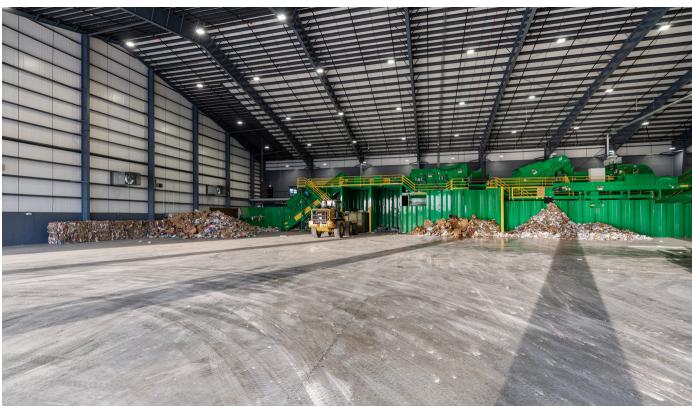
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MRF Update



January 20th marks one year since we officially began processing materials at the MRF—and what a year it's been! In December 2025 alone, the facility processed 410.57 tons of material and exported 229.45 tons.

In 2025 the SWDA exported- 1,894.11 tons of OCC; 830.54 tons of Mixed Paper; 215.73 tons of PET (Plastic #1); **86.52** tons of Aluminum; 43.56 tons of HDPE Color (Plastic #2); 40.61 tons of HDPE Natural (Plastic #2); 44.47 tons of Steel; 22.60 tons of PP (Plastic #5); and 19.81 tons of Plastic #7.

86.52 tons of equals 173,040 pounds aluminum - enough material to make millions of new cans which creates an endless recycling loop. Aluminum can be recycled over and over without losing quality!

Year in Review

2025



Processed a total of 3,655.06 tons of material and exported 3,272.27 tons of material at the MRF in 2025.

5,805 customers at the Fairhope CHaRM and 524 at the Magnolia CHaRM in 2025.



74 tours of the Waste and Recycling Adventure Center 1,415 people in total, in 2025.



2,100 customers signed up for curbside recycling in 2025.



 SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY BALDWIN COUNTY

Re-Discover Recycling in Baldwin County

Recycling isn't just about bins, symbols, or sorting—it's about rethinking how we value the materials we use every day. Re-Discovering Recycling means looking beyond disposal and recognizing opportunity: reducing waste, conserving resources, and giving materials a second life. When we recycle responsibly, we help create cleaner communities, support local economies, and build a more sustainable future. Small, mindful choices add up—and together, they make a real difference.

You can see recycling come full circle through the products being made today. KW Plastics transforms recycled materials into everyday items like paint cans, while Indorama turns recycled plastic into pellets that are used to create new water bottles. These real-world examples show how responsible recycling supports manufacturing, reduces waste, and turns used materials into products we rely on every day.

Baldwin County Material Breakdown

173,040 pounds of recycled aluminum will produce approximately **5.4 million to 5.5 million** new standard 12-ounce cans

215.73 tons of PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate) will create approximately **19.8 million to 21.6 million** standard 500 mL (16.9 oz) water bottles

22.60 tons of PP can produce **75,300 one-gallon paint cans**

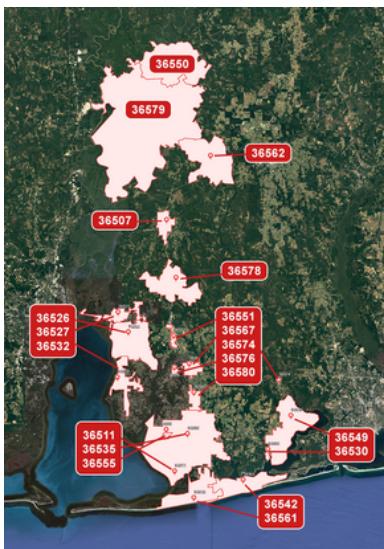
43.56 tons of HDPE Color can produce approximately **425,000 to 500,000** new 100oz detergent jugs

40.61 tons of HDPE Natural can produce approximately **600,000 to 650,000** new 1-gallon milk jugs

1,894.11 tons of old corrugated containers (OCC) can produce approximately **3.5 million to 4.8 million** new medium-sized corrugated boxes

All this can be done right here in Alabama!

Recycling Has No ZIP CODE!



Recycling hasn't always been available everywhere in Baldwin County, but that's changing. Countywide curbside recycling will be available by the end of 2026—every ZIP code, every community. Whether you're in Bay Minette, Daphne, Fairhope, Foley, Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, Robertsdale, Loxley, or nearby areas, curbside service is on the way. Recycling has no zip code, because caring for our environment is something we all share.

CHaRM Update



In December, the Fairhope CHaRM served 2,506 customers and received 3,556 recyclable items.

Holiday clean-outs and increased recycling contributed to higher traffic at the facility, highlighting the community's continued commitment to responsible disposal. The Magnolia CHaRM has served 524 customers. With 2 CHaRMs open we are excited to announce that construction has begun on the Orange Beach CHaRM, and is expected to be complete by March.

A Sustainable Valentines Day

Love More. Waste Less.

This Valentine's Day, show love for your special someone—and the planet—by choosing thoughtful, low-waste options:

- 🎁 Give experiences instead of stuff (dinner, events, time together)
- 🌹 Choose local or potted plants over plastic-wrapped flowers
- 🍫 Pick treats with minimal or recyclable packaging
- 💌 Skip glitter cards and choose recycled paper or a handwritten note
- 🍽️ Dine local or cook at home to reduce waste
- ♻️ Recycle right—cardboard, paper, and packaging belong in the bin when clean and dry

Small choices add up. Celebrate love sustainably this Valentine's Day 🌿

New Year, Recycle Right

Top 5 Recycling Mistakes to Avoid in 2026

Start the year strong by avoiding these common mistakes:

1. 🚫 Bagging recyclables – Keep items loose in the cart
2. 🍕💧 Dirty containers – Empty, rinse, and dry first
3. 🤔♻️ Wish-cycling – If you're unsure, don't guess
4. 🚨⚠️ Hazardous items – Batteries, paint, and chemicals need special disposal
5. 📦⬇️ Unflattened cardboard – Flatten boxes to save space
6. 🌿 Recycle right in 2026—it makes a real difference

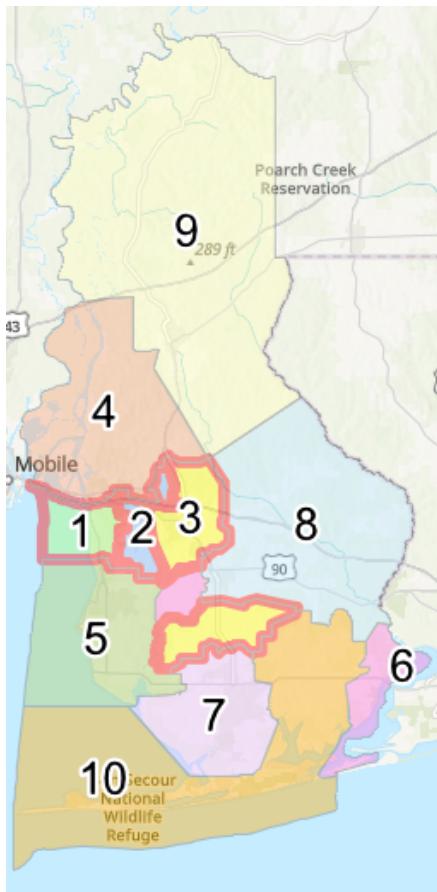
SWDA Christmas Party

On December 20th, the SWDA hosted its annual Christmas Party at the MRF, and this year's theme was Casino Night! The event was full of fun, laughter, and holiday cheer. Employees tried their luck at a variety of casino games, enjoyed delicious food from Cafe Acadiana, and spent quality time connecting with coworkers outside of the workplace.

It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the year's accomplishments, enjoy some friendly competition, and kick back with friends and colleagues. The SWDA team truly knows how to bring the holiday spirit to life!



Curbside Recycling



Want curbside recycling but not sure if it's available in your area? Check out this map to see when service will start near you.

Curbside recycling makes it easy to reduce waste and protect the environment—sign up today and start recycling right at your doorstep!

1. Daphne (inside/outside city limits, west of I-10 and south of I-10) **Active**
2. Belforest, Daphne (inside/outside city limits, east of I-10 and north I-10), Malbis, and Spanish Forts Stonebridge **Active**
3. Loxley and Summerdale (inside/outside of city limits) **Active**
4. Bromley, Carpenter, Crossroads, Hurricane, Spanish Fort (inside/outside city limits) Stapleton, Steelwood, Pine Haven, Whitehouse Forks **Active**
5. Barnwell, Clay City, Fairhope (outside city limits), Marlow, and Magnolia Springs (inside/outside city limits) **Starts February 2nd, 2026**
6. Lillian, Silverhill (inside/outside city limits), and Ono Island **Starts April 6th, 2026**
7. Bon Secour and Foley (outside city limits), Gulf Shores (outside city limits) **Starts June 1st, 2026**
8. Elsanor, Gateswood, Robertsdale (inside/outside city limits), Rosinton, Seminole **Starts August 3rd, 2026**
9. Bay Minette (inside/outside city limits), Blacksher, Georgetown, Gopher Hill, Latham, Little River, Lottie, Phillipsville, Rabun, Redtown, Stockton, Tensaw, and Vangordon **Starts October 5th, 2026**
10. Elberta (inside/outside city limits), Fort Morgan, Josephine, Miflin, Perdido Beach **Starts December 7th, 2026**

What to Recycle and Where

What Can You Recycle in Baldwin County and Where?

The Solid Waste Disposal Authority is committed to promoting environmental sustainability through our comprehensive recycling efforts. As part of our ongoing initiative, we are now accepting the following materials for recycling at our Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Residents can conveniently recycle these items in several ways:

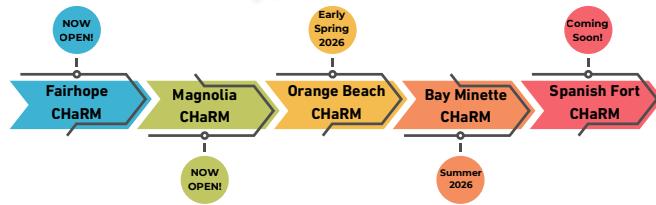
- **At any of our existing recycling drop-off locations** throughout the community
- **At one of our upcoming CHaRM (Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials) sites**, which will be opening soon to expand recycling options
- **And through future curbside programs** that will be launched in additional areas across the county

By utilizing these services, you are helping to save space in the landfill, conserve resources, and protect our environment for future generations. Stay tuned for updates on new locations and expanded services as we continue to grow our recycling efforts.

The following items will be accepted at the Solid Waste Disposal Authority CHaRM (Center Hard to Recycle Materials) Facilities.



CHaRM Timeline



Contact Us!

Main Office:
251.972.6878

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Waste and Recycling Adventure Center

Curious where your recyclables go? Take a tour of our Waste & Recycling Adventure Center! See the MRF in action and learn why sorting matters. Visit baldwincountyswda.org to schedule a tour!

Thanks for Reading!

This is a monthly publication so be on the lookout for the next edition in February 2026!

If you would like to be added to the newsletter list please email Jennifer Doan at
Jennifer.Doan@baldwincountyswda.org

For more waste and recycling information please visit: baldwincountyswda.org