

• PVC RECYCLING •  
**ACT TODAY**  
FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW  
PVC RECYCLING FOR HOSPITALS

## Maximising Value and Avoiding Contamination

**Your PVC recycling bins are contaminated when people discard any non-PVC item in the recycling bins. This might include paper, drink cans, other recyclables or general waste. This undermines everyone's efforts, the program and any savings for your hospital.**

Avoiding contamination of the PVC Recycling bins with both clinical and general waste is very important for the following reasons:

- It ensures the safety of staff at the hospital and at the PVC reprocessor
- Unlike home recycling, PVC collections are not sorted at a recycling depot but are sent straight to the PVC reprocessor
- Non-PVC items block the reprocessors' machines which results in expensive shut down for maintenance and equipment repair. Ongoing contamination may result in the PVC reprocessors withdrawing from the program, which could cause the overall program to cease. This would mean your valuable medical PVC would have to go back into landfill or be incinerated, instead of being made into new products.

- Non-PVC plastics, such as wrap, will detrimentally spoil the final product with holes, lumps or discolouration.

Any bins or bags that are found to be contaminated will be deposited into hospital waste bins for landfill before they leave the hospital. Therefore any savings for hospital recycling and waste management will be lost.

PVC recycling is not possible if there is too much contamination. If a hospital or clinical area cannot segregate PVC properly then they may have to withdraw from the program.



A HEALTHIER TOMORROW  
RECYCLING IN HOSPITALS



Vinyl Council Australia



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# If In Doubt, Throw It Out!

Ways to avoid contamination of PVC recycling systems at your hospital:

## 1. Set up PVC recycling so that it's as easy as possible for staff

- Identify easy access areas for recycling
- Clearly label PVC recycling areas with posters
- Clearly label PVC recycling bins with stickers
- Keep scissors and artery forceps by the PVC recycling bins
- Ideally recycling should be easier than walking to the rubbish bin.

## 2. Clearly label PVC bins and recycling areas.

You can order posters and bin labels through the website.

## 3. Ensure thorough training of nurses at the launch of the program.

A training video, presentation and training quiz are available on the website. Please use what suits your needs. Baxter Healthcare can also provide assistance in training if required and the Vinyl Council of Australia can advise on motivations, the benefits of recycling and finished products.

## 4. Ensure training of the environmental/support services staff.

This team can also identify contamination, evaluate and report on the program's progress.

## 5. Establish a pilot so that any kinks can be worked through.

Each clinical area is different and the program is most successful when the planning team works with the clinical champions in the early stages of PVC recycling. Reward people for starting the program, and for successful, clean collections in the long-term. Get on top of any contamination as soon as you see it occurring to prevent bad habits from forming.

## 6. Evaluate contamination of the bins.

All kinds of things get placed into PVC bins by accident e.g. coke cans, kidney dishes, syringes. An evaluation form is available on the website.

## 7. Remind staff about the program until PVC recycling becomes 'part of what we do'.

The teams which recycle PVC the best are those who don't even think about it, they just do it. We recommend that you show the training video to staff at 3 month and 6 month intervals to ingrain the practice, or sooner if necessary. This will depend upon the number and nature of your staff/workforce.



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