

CD and DVD Recycling

History and Uses

Compact Discs, more commonly known as CDs, became commercially available in 1982. Originally CDs were used for storing audio data, but with the development of DVDs (Digital Versatile Discs) and CD-ROMs (Compact Disc read-only memory); they can now be used for storing computer software, games, and films. More recently, Blu-ray discs have been developed as the successor to DVDs.

Examples include:

- Music CDs
- Computer software such as games for consoles and anti virus software
- DVD films
- Data storage discs

Did you know?

- That every year in the UK approximately 130 million CDs are sold.



Why recycle CDs and DVDs?

CDs and DVDs are made up of a variety of materials such as polycarbonate (a form of plastic), aluminium and paint. Their cases are either plastic jewel cases or paper cases and most jewel cases will also contain paper inserts.

All of these materials, if buried in landfill, not only become 'lost' resources but may pose a significant environmental impact and take a long time to break down.

Recycling makes environmental and economic sense. Recycling reduces the need for raw materials and using recycled products often requires less energy in the manufacturing process.

Plastics for instance are derived from crude oil, a limited fossil fuel, so by recycling discs and their cases this can help contribute to lower oil consumption, preserving stocks for longer.

Where to recycle CDs and DVDs

- Save your unwanted CDs and DVDs and take them with you on your next visit to your local **Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS)**, where a **blue wheelie bin** is provided for CDs and DVDs.
- CDs and DVDs cannot be placed in your recycling bin at home.



How are they recycled?

Once collected from HWRS CDs and DVDs are sent to Polymer Recycling to be recycled. The cases are removed along with any paper inserts. All paper is then baled, sent to paper mills and recycled into more paper products. The jewel cases are granulated and any contaminants removed. The left over plastic granules are then recycled into various plastic products such as more CD cases.

The discs themselves go through a special process, unique to Polymer Recycling, removing paint, aluminium and data. The recovered aluminium is reused as an insulation material.

The 'cleaned' discs are then granulated, blended and compounded into a high quality polycarbonate for further use in injection moulded applications such as burglar alarm covers.

The whole process at Polymer Recycling is carried out without chemicals and in a totally secure environment.

Did you know?

- West Sussex started recycling CDs and DVDs in June 2008. Since then, residents in West Sussex have recycled over 15 tonnes of CDs and DVDs. This is the same weight as 15,000 bags of sugar (1kg).

Other options – Reduce & Reuse

- Try using re-writable CDs and DVDs which can be used over and over again.
- Donate old music CDs and DVDs to charity shops.
- Use old CDs and DVDs for art and craft projects or as instant drinks coasters.
- Hang CDs and DVDs in allotments to stop the birds eating your vegetables!
- Use DVDs for storing data. The manufacture of DVDs requires fewer materials than CDs and can hold more data.

For further information about CD and DVD recycling visit www.polymerrecycling.co.uk

For other information about recycling in West Sussex visit www.recycleforwestsussex.org