



**75% recycled content can liners;
includes a minimum of 10% post-consumer content.**



Can Liners 101: *The Truth about “Green” Can Liners*

As demand for green products has increased a variety of “green” can liner options have appeared but all green liners are not created equal (green).

Here are some things you should know:

In the 1990’s the FTC fined manufacturers making false or misleading claims as relates to the biodegradability of products. The bottom line of these actions is that marketing products whose final destination is the landfill, as biodegradable, is false and misleading – ***nothing degrades in a landfill.***

On June 9, 2009 the FTC once again became involved in this arena when it took action against several manufacturers and retailers making biodegradable claims. ***Again, the FTC reinforces that nothing degrades in a landfill.***

Furthermore, the FTC is once again reinforcing their Green Guidelines as to what terminology can be used to market environmentally conscious products.

Today three options exist in “green” can liners:

- Compostable Liners
- Biodegradable Liners
- Recycled Content Liners

Compostable Liners – Compostable liners are high end specialty liners that biodegrade in professionally managed composting facilities. While growing in number, those facilities are in the minority and not readily available to everyone for waste management due to the limited number of sites and are generally **not economically realistic as a result.**

Biodegradable Liners - Some can liner manufacturers claim that their products totally degrade in two (2) years when disposed of in a landfill. The FTC maintains that this cannot happen in a landfill where trash gets buried on a daily basis. Biodegradable plastics need air, water and organisms in order to degrade. Landfills are anaerobic sites that entomb trash and landfill sites do not want the garbage to degrade creating methane and possible leaching into the water table.

Recycled Content Liners - Products made from recycled plastics and carrying third-party certification have several green attributes. Recycled content liners take trash out of the waste stream that would otherwise end up in landfills. **In addition liners made with primarily recycled plastics use approximately ½ the energy to manufacture compared to liners made with virgin plastic**^[1]. Third-party certification insures that the products are made with recycled plastic (post-consumer and post-industrial) and guarantees that they are purchasing a product that meets product label claims.

[1] Source – EPA





Traditional Resin Life Cycle



Oil shipped to resin manufacturing facility (reactor) becomes resin pellets



Pellets shipped to poly manufacturing facility, becomes finished product – consumer/industrial products, virgin trash liners, poly bags/packaging



Poly product is used by consumer/end user



Consumer disposes of poly item and it enters a landfill



Recycled Content Liner Resin Life Cycle

AEP purchases post-consumer post-industrial scrap and pellets.



Post-consumer waste includes: dry cleaner bags, shopping bags, packaging, pallet wrap, etc
Post-industrial waste includes: manufacturing waste, misprints and over-runs



AEP recycles this into resin pellets and purchases additional recycled resin pellets



AEP uses a combination of these recycled resins and limited amount of virgin resin pellets in production of Earthsense Commercial™ can liners – It's Certified!



Who is SCS?



SCS (Scientific Certification Systems) launched the Environmental Claims Certification Program in 1990 as the nation's first scientific program for independently certifying environmental claims on manufactured goods and materials.

All claims are certified in accordance with US Federal Trade Commission Environmental Marketing Claims guidelines and ISO-14021 standards for environmental claims.

The SCS certification logo appears on thousands of individual products and helps businesses, government agencies and consumers to make the best-informed decisions.

What is LEED?

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

✓ Nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings

How does LEED work?

✓ Building products, such as certified recycled content trash liners, contribute to achieving LEED points

✓ The purchase of certified recycled content liners can help in achieving LEED credits

What are the benefits of LEED certification?

✓ LEED certification is third-party validation of a building's performance

✓ LEED certified projects blend environmental, economic, and occupant-oriented performance

✓ LEED certified buildings cost less to operate and maintain, are energy- and water-efficient, have higher lease-up rates than conventional buildings in their markets

✓ LEED certified buildings have reduced operating costs, healthier and more productive occupants, and conserve our natural resources

Other benefits of LEED certification:

✓ Physical demonstration of the values of the organizations that own and occupy LEED certified buildings

✓ Insurance reductions

✓ Grant monies

SCS Certified  Can Liners qualify for LEED Credits

Why is buying a certified recycled content can liner meaningful?

According to the U.S.-Environmental Protection Agency (US-EPA) report "Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Management of Selected Materials in Municipal Solid Waste," recycling low-density polyethylene plastics saves about half (50%) of the energy and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of virgin plastic trash bags. And *Wasteonline.org* states, "plastic production uses 8% of the world's oil production; 4% as feed stock and 4% during manufacture. 1.8 tons of oil is saved for every ton of recycled polyethylene product."

The benefits to buying recycled are clear: **it helps the environment!**

Did you know:

Survey showed that 57% of private or public companies and 55% of not-for-profit organizations have green purchasing policies.

EcoMarkets Report