Label standards for hauler-supplied containers

Dakota County Ordinance 110, Solid Waste Management, was amended in 2019 to implement strategies in the 2018-2030 Solid Waste Master Plan to reduce waste going to landfills, improve the quality of materials recycled, and make progress toward the state's goal to recycle 75 percent of waste by 2030.

New hauler requirements in Ordinance 110 to label containers include:

1. Haulers must provide container labels that follow County waste abatement messaging standards. Specifically, all recycling, organics, and trash containers (e.g., carts, dumpsters, roll-offs, compactors) must be properly labeled and must:
    - Indicate the material type collected, and use the term Trash, Recycle or Recycling, and Organics (if collected). Other waste types must be labeled with the materials accepted.
    - Show images consistent with County standards of materials accepted in recycling and organics (if collected) containers.
    - Be color-coded (blue for recycling, green for organics, gray or black for trash).
    - Be visible and legible to users.
    - Include preparation requirements consistent with County standards, where applicable.

Label Placement: Labels are intended to be an educational tool to help generators properly dispose of waste. Place labels where they are visible, such as on the lid of a cart and the front and sides of a dumpster. Avoid areas that could be damaged by truck lift equipment or a mechanical arm.

Dakota County developed the following standardized standards to be used by haulers to meet ordinance requirements for labeling containers. It includes the required label content, terminology and images.

For questions or review of messaging, contact solidwastecompliance@co.dakota.mn.us or 952-891-7557.

All images and icons can be found on the county's education resources webpage.

Recycle label



All recycling labels on hauler-supplied containers must include:

A. Required content and terminology

1. **Title term**: Recycle or Recycling
2. **Subtitle terms:**
   - Paper and Cardboard
   - Cartons
   - Cans
   - Glass
   - Plastics
3. **Material preparation statement**: Empty and dry
4. **Label color:** Blue

B. Required icon and images

- Alternative images and icons may be used with county approval.

Required images that show what to recycle

- **Icon:** All labels must contain the recycling arrow (mobius).



- **Images:**
  - Paper and Cardboard images may be combined (e.g., Paper and Cardboard) or kept separate.

Grouping	Required image
Paper and Cardboard (flattened)	

Cartons	
Metal cans	
Glass	
Plastic	 

Required icons and content for items not accepted in recycling containers

- Do not bag recyclables
- No plastic bags or plastic wrap
- No tanglers (cord, hoses or chains)
- No food
- No batteries

Item	**Required icon**
Do not bag recyclables	
No plastic bags or plastic wrap	
No tanglers, cords, hoses or chains	

No food	
No batteries	

Allowable alternative images and icons

- Alternative images and icons must be approved by the county before use.

What to recycle:

- Alternative images and icons must include these items:

Recyclable item type	Must include images or icons of each of these items
Paper grouping	• Newspaper • Magazine • Cardboard box (must be flattened)
Carton grouping	• Juice carton with a cap on • Milk or half-n-half carton with a cap on
Metal can grouping	• Food can • Beverage can
Glass grouping	• Brown beverage bottle • Clear food jar with cap on
Plastic grouping	• Water bottle with a cap on Milk jug or laundry detergent jug with a cap on
Recycling symbol icon	• Blue or white recycling symbol
Recycling triangles for plastics	• Different colors of triangles and numbers allowed

What to keep out of the recycling

- Alternative images and icons must use this content and corresponding images or icons:
  - Do not bag recyclables
  - No plastic bags or wrap
  - No tanglers, cords, hoses or chains
  - No food
  - No batteries

Organics label



All organics labels on hauler-supplied containers must include:

A. Required content and terminology

1. **Title term:** Organics
2. **Subtitle term:** Food scraps
3. **Label color:** Green

B. Required images

- Alternative images and icons may be used with county approval.

Required images for accepted organics

- **Icon:** There is no icon requirement that represents organics, but the county recommends an apple core.



- **Images:**

Grouping	Required images
Bakery and dry goods	
Meat, fish and bones	

Vegetables	
Fruits	
Eggs and eggshells	
Dairy products	

Required images for items not accepted in organics:

Grouping	Required images
No recyclables	
No yard waste	
No trash	

Allowable alternative images and icons

- Alternative images and icons must be approved by the county before use.

What belongs in the organics:

- Alternative images and icons must include the items:

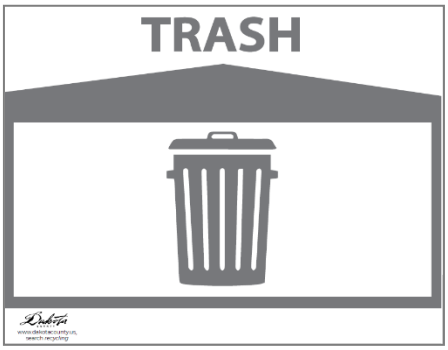
Organics item type	Must include images or icons of each of these items
Bakery and dry goods	• Sandwich (bread) with bite mark
Dairy products	• Cheese

Eggs and eggshells	• Eggshell
Meat, fish and bones	• Chicken leg with bite mark
Produce: fruits and vegetables	• Apple core • Vegetable scraps

What to keep out of the organics
Alternative images and icons must use this content and corresponding images or icons:

- No recyclables
- No yard waste
- No trash

Trash label



All trash labels on hauler-supplied containers must include:

A. Required content and terminology

1. **Title term:** Trash
2. **Label color:** Gray or black

B. Required images

- No trash images are required.
- The county recommends a trash can icon.

