

# The Countdown for Compliance with California's "Truth in Recycling" Law Begins

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In 2021, California [enacted](#) the SB 343 – "Truth in Recycling Law" – which generally prohibits companies from using the "chasing arrows" symbol or otherwise implying that a product or package is recyclable, unless the product or package is considered recyclable pursuant to specific criteria developed by the state's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery.

In general, a company can only claim that something is recyclable if (a) the material type and form is collected by recycling programs for jurisdictions that collectively encompass at least 60 percent of the population of California, and (b) it is sorted into defined streams for recycling processes by large volume transfer or processing facilities that (i) process materials and collectively serve at least 60% of recycling programs statewide; and (ii) send the defined streams to and reclaimed at a reclaiming facility consistent with the requirements of the Basel Convention.

On April 4, 2025, the Department [published](#) its final findings on materials that may be eligible to use the "chasing arrows" symbol or any other indicator of recyclability (the "Material Characterization Study"). Note, however, that the Material Characterization Study does not address whether the product is reclaimed at a reclaiming facility consistent with the requirements of the Basel Convention, so the findings from the study are not dispositive of recyclability.

The publication of the study triggered an 18 month grace period for companies to comply with the law. Although 18 months may sound like a long time, changing packages can require a lot of lead time, so companies may want to start on this well in advance of the October 4, 2026 deadline.

The Department is required to update its standards every five years. Companies will also have 18 months after those updates to comply, provided that a product or package met the recyclability requirements under the previous version of the standards. There are also other narrow exemptions for items that are covered by other state recycling laws, such as certain kinds of batteries and beverage containers.