

Recycling Made Easy

BY : EMILY BISHOP

Lightbulbs, batteries, plastic foam: All items that are recyclable, but not without a little effort. Given the hustle and bustle of everyday life, it can be difficult to make the time to take these items where they need to go to be given a new life.

Ridwell is a subscription service that specializes in sustainability, and they aim to make recycling easy. When you sign up for Ridwell, you'll receive bags in which to store your plastic film, threads, and other hard-to-recycle items. Every two weeks, Ridwell comes by to pick up your stuff.

More niche items, such as electronics and glasses, fall into "featured categories." Due to the extremely location-specific nature of recycling these items, featured categories rotate on every pickup.



Natale Szabo, the Community Manager for Bellingham, says that Ridwell partners with area specific organizations, nonprofits, and artisans to find these items new homes.

"The idea is to just help people recycle more and make it extremely convenient," says Szabo.

Founder and CEO Ryan Metzger got the idea for Ridwell when he and his son were trying to get rid of old batteries. They asked neighbors if they also had dead batteries in need of disposing, and soon a recycling carpool was born.

Ridwell has expanded beyond Metzger's neighborhood and is now found in more than 40 cities. Most recently, the service has expanded to Denver, Colorado. Since starting in 2017, Ridwell has grown to over 35,000 members.

"It helps connect a lot of people who may want to make sure that their items are reused locally, or they may really want to support a local organization doing great work, but they don't necessarily know about it," says Szabo.

As a consumer, there's a lot of research to do when figuring out what non-standard items are recyclable and what to do with them. Ridwell makes recycling these items convenient, but it also increases people's awareness about how many items are recyclable. Additionally, it creates an ecosystem of reuse within participating communities.

"It allows this connection where Ridwell kind of acts as the link between people who have stuff that they don't necessarily need, but they want to make sure that it's responsibly reused, and the people and organizations and groups who need that stuff and know what to do with it," says Szabo.

Signing up for Ridwell is as convenient as the service it offers. Just visit their website, fill out a form, and you're good to go. You can start supporting local sustainability and reusability with just the click of a button.

888.982.7785, ridwell.com