

# YOUR RUBBISH IS MY WORK!

## The waste streams of everyday items

**Hi!** I'm Gary and I've been working for the past twelve years for the city's waste management services. In this time I've learned a thing or two about how people deal with rubbish. People throw away so many things, and many of these items are practically new and reusable. For instance, technical equipment, clothing, furniture, and a lot of food. I sometimes ask myself why people don't just donate, repair or sell these things. My branch, the waste management sector, has already adjusted to the steadily increasing amount of rubbish: waste is separated by machines, cleaned, and then recycled depending on the rubbish type. It makes our work considerably easier when people already pre-sort their rubbish and throw it into the proper rubbish bin.

**TASK 1:** What happens to things when they are no longer needed? Match the pictures to Gary's descriptions:

This thing is quite valuable as a raw material! My colleague Jenny is an expert when it comes to disposing of these items. As soon as she receives them at the recycling station, she examines them with her colleagues to see if the items are still functioning. The recycling process is started in the melting furnace only once it is determined that the individual components cannot be reused.

Some areas of New Zealand have special drop off points where you can return these items after use to be sent off for recycling.

Other councils ask that these items be included with your ordinary household rubbish as their region has specially designed landfills to prevent leaching of harmful materials into the environment.

There are so many of these lying around on the streets, even though they can be recycled again and again without loss of quality. During the recycling process these items are separated based on the item's colour! If the materials land in the right bin, then they are recycled.

Recycling these items makes for good environmental sense. These items can wear down into smaller parts and pose a danger to our marine life. However I often still come across these things in the normal rubbish container. They are sorted out by my colleagues on the assembly line and are sent straight to the recycling centre.

### Did you know?

The word recycling means "to bring back into circulation." Recycling helps to reduce rubbish amounts and to save our precious natural resources.

**TASK 2:** Imagine there is a massive employee strike by the street cleaners, the rubbish collectors, and city cleaning personnel. Describe how your surroundings would look. How would one have to behave to prevent rubbish from accruing?