

How2Recycle Pro Label Rollout: Member FAQ

The How2Recycle Pro rollout marks an important shift for our program and for members. The new label designs are intended to improve consumer understanding and align with evolving regulations such as California's SB 343. This transition impacts all members, with changes to the label request process, proof requirements, and how older label requests are handled. For detailed information on what to expect, please refer to the [Members' Guide to the How2Recycle Pro Label Rollout](#), published in June. Additionally, SB 343-specific FAQ is included in the Supplementary MemberNotice: California SB 343 Impacts on Labeling Eligibility

This FAQ is designed to provide additional clarity to the Guide to help you navigate the rollout. It answers common questions about timelines, the Platform closure, post-closure processes, compliance considerations, and more. Please read this document carefully and refer back to it as you work through your label portfolio. Additionally, a CA SB 343-specific FAQ is included at the end of the [Supplementary MemberNotice: California SB 343 Impacts on Labeling Eligibility](#). If you have additional questions after reviewing, reach out to the How2Recycle team at how2recycle@greenble.org.

General Rollout and Platform Closure

Q: What is the How2Recycle Pro Label rollout?

The rollout transitions all members from Legacy Labels to the new Pro Label design, which was developed with SPC Packaging Design Collaborative input and consumer testing in 2024. The Pro design improves clarity, removes the chasing arrows iconography from all tiles except for Widely Recyclable, and supports compliance with new laws like California's SB 343.

It is not just a design refresh - the rollout also introduces new request form questions, updated statuses, and proof approval rules. This is one of the most complex system updates in How2Recycle's history, involving tens of thousands of active requests.

Q: When is the transition happening?

Legacy Labels will stop being assigned on August 25, 2025. The Pro Labels will be assigned to all requests starting September 4, 2025, after a short platform closure. Labels assigned to existing requests will be swapped out with the new labels, and all new requests will receive a Pro Label going forward.

Q: What is the timeline for the rollout?

- **August 25, 2025:** Platform closes to members.
- **September 4, 2025:** Platform reopens, Pro Labels go live.
- **February 1, 2026:** Last date Legacy Label proofs will be approved.
- **October 4, 2026:** California SB 343 effective date (packages manufactured after this must comply).

Note: The Platform reopen date is forecasted to the best of our ability, but it may shift if final label deliveries from design partners, label request form updates, or bulk deactivation tasks encounter delays.

Q: Can I submit new label requests during the closure?

No. The platform will be closed from August 25 to September 3, 2025. Due to the nature of the closure and the request form being updated, any request drafted during this time period may not capture all of the necessary information. Therefore, the ability to draft new requests during this time will be disabled.

Q: Can I download labels during the closure?

You will still be able to access all of your existing data in the Member Platform during the closure, including previously assigned labels. However, we strongly recommend that you do not download or apply labels during this period.

As part of the rollout, we will be uploading new Pro Labels and performing quality control checks to ensure every file is accurate. If you download labels during the transition, you risk pulling an outdated or incorrect version.

For the most reliable results, please wait until the Platform reopens to download and use your labels. This ensures that the files you apply to packaging artwork reflect the most current and compliant Pro Label design.

Q: What will happen to any label requests that are submitted just prior to the closure?

As part of the Platform update associated with the Pro Rollout, all requests that are still in the “Request Submitted” status during the closure will be moved to More Info. This is to ensure that the new required questions are applied to all new submissions, so that the packaging can be accurately assessed under the updated Pro Label criteria.

For these requests, please review the existing information, complete the new questions in the form, and then resubmit. Once resubmitted, your request will move back into the “Request Submitted” status and proceed through the review process as usual.

Post Closure

Q: I see a Pro Label on my request. Can I print it right away?

No. You must submit a new proof with the Pro Label applied to your packaging artwork. Once that proof is reviewed and approved, you can proceed with printing.

Q: How long will proof approvals take during the transition?

We anticipate increased volume during the rollout. Please expect 7–10 business days for proof review and approval through the end of 2025.

Q: Will the label assigned to my request reflect SB 343-related changes?

No. The Pro Label upload will be a one-for-one swap of the existing Legacy Label on your request. If the packaging is impacted by the downgrades related to SB 343, you will need to resubmit the request for reevaluation under the new criteria. More information on this process is included below.

Q: Do I need to resubmit my label requests to get a Pro Label?

In many cases, no. Pro Labels will be automatically applied to label requests in Approved, Proof Needed, and Proof Pending Approval statuses. To finalize the transition, you’ll simply need to submit an updated proof showing the Pro Label on your packaging artwork.

However, there are some cases where resubmission will be required:

- If your package format is impacted by **SB 343 eligibility changes** (e.g., downgrades from Widely Recyclable).
- If your request predates other **recent eligibility changes** and does not include the new data we now require for assessment.

To make sure the appropriate Pro Label is assigned, you’ll need to:

1. **Duplicate and resubmit** the request using the updated label request form (new questions go live in September 2025).
2. **Deactivate the old request** to avoid confusion.

This process ensures your packaging is assessed accurately under the most up-to-date How2Recycle Pro criteria. The following steps are provided to help you understand if resubmission is required:

Step 1: What status is your label request in?

- **Approved / Proof Needed / Proof Pending Approval** → Go to Step 2
- **Draft / More Info** → Complete any applicable new form questions and submit.
- **Deactivated (2022 or earlier)** → Resubmit required. Duplicate the request, complete any applicable new form questions, and submit.

Step 2: Is the format impacted by SB 343 or other assessment changes?

- **No** → **No resubmission needed.** Just submit a new proof with the Pro Label.
- **Yes** → **Resubmit required.** Duplicate the request, complete any applicable new form questions, and deactivate the old one.

Q: What's happening to my older label requests from 2022 or earlier?

These will be moved to Deactivated status and cannot be used going forward. If the product is still in circulation, you must duplicate the request, complete the updated label form, and resubmit for reassessment.

Q: Why can't I use older labels if they're still technically accurate?

Our label form and assessment criteria have changed significantly. We need complete and updated data to ensure accuracy and compliance under current standards.

Q: What if I don't see a Pro Label assigned to my request?

It may be because your request is in the Deactivated section or hasn't reached Proof Needed status. During the platform closure, label requests approved in 2022 or earlier will be moved to Deactivated. A comment will be added to affected requests to indicate that it was moved to Deactivated due to the age of the request. These older requests do not include sufficient data to be accurately reassessed under the new label criteria and platform structure. If a label from one of these older requests is still being used on active packaging, it is the responsibility of the member to ensure it is up to date.

Q: How do I update a deactivated label request?

1. Log into the Member Platform and locate the deactivated request.
2. Use the "Duplicate" function to create a new request with the same packaging.

3. Complete the updated label request form, including any new questions or data fields.
4. Submit the request for reassessment.
5. Once reviewed by the How2Recycle team, the appropriate Pro Label will be assigned based on the current Guidelines for Use.

Q: How do I duplicate and resubmit a current label request (i.e. one impacted by SB 343 changes)?

1. Log into the Member Platform and locate the request
2. Use the “Duplicate” function to create a new request with the same packaging
3. Complete the updated label request form, including any new questions or data fields
4. Submit the request for reassessment
5. Deactivate the former request to avoid confusion and ensure accurate accountability of active products in your portfolio
6. Once reviewed by the How2Recycle team, the appropriate Pro Label will be assigned based on the current Guidelines for Use.

Q: Will the rollout affect how long it takes to get new labels?

The assessment process for new requests will remain consistent, but turnaround times may be slower in Q3–Q4 2025 due to volume. While we’re not able to increase overall staffing, we are actively reorganizing our internal resources to provide additional support in the areas that will be most impacted, particularly label assessment and proof review. We’re doing everything we can to ensure a smooth rollout and minimize delays during this busy transition period.

Q: Can I still use my previously approved R&D or Pre-qualification requests?

If those requests are from 2022 or earlier, they may have been deactivated. You’ll need to duplicate and resubmit them using the updated label request form. If the packaging format is impacted by recent recyclability assessment changes, you should duplicate and resubmit the request to ensure all the needed specifications are captured in the request and the appropriate pre-qualification is assigned.

SB 343-Related Changes

Q: Are the Pro Labels compliant with California’s SB 343?



Yes. The Pro Labels were redesigned with SB 343 compliance in mind, particularly by limiting use of the chasing arrows symbol. However, label assignment does not guarantee compliance. It is your responsibility to review your full packaging for compliance with state-specific laws.

Q: Will How2Recycle tell me which of my label requests are affected by SB 343?

No. While we'll provide general guidance and examples, we will not offer individualized notifications. Members should assess their own portfolios using the July 2025 Guidelines and the [Supplementary Member Notice: CA SB 343 Impacts on Labeling Eligibility](#).

Q: Which materials and formats are impacted by the SB 343 related changes?

The materials and formats impacted by SB 343, with examples of impacted packaging, are listed in detail in the [Supplementary Member Notice: CA SB 343 Impacts on Labeling Eligibility](#). Please ensure that you read that document in full and refer to the included list to determine whether packages in your portfolio are affected.

Q: Is anything being done to address the word “recycle/recyclable/recycling” on some of the instructions (e.g. the Store Drop-off label that says “Recycle if Clean & Dry”)?

Yes. Based on member feedback and our evaluation of SB 343, we are removing the words “recycle”, “recyclable”, and “recycling” from the instruction tabs on all labels. In most cases, this simply shortens the instruction - for example, “Flatten before recycling” will now become “Flatten”. You will see this change reflected on all labels assigned to new requests going forward. This change will apply to all new labels to further reduce compliance risk and improve clarity.

Because of the additional design and technical work required, the updated versions of the Pro Labels will not be ready at the exact time of rollout. Initially, you may see an earlier version of the Pro Label attached to your request. About 1–2 weeks later, we will swap in the updated version with the revised instructions. If you would prefer to use the updated version, we recommend waiting until it is available before applying the label to your packaging artwork.

We appreciate your patience during this short transition and hope this provides added reassurance about SB 343 compliance.

Legacy Labels

Q: Can I still use my Legacy Labels after the rollout?

After the rollout, Legacy Label Proofs will be approved through February 1, 2026. Beyond this date, only Pro Labels will be eligible for approval. Members can decide if they would like to use the Legacy Label between the Pro rollout and Feb 1, but must be aware of the implications on products sold in California if the product will continue to be manufactured past October 4, 2026.

Q: Why would I want to keep a Legacy Label?

This is up to your company and the printing timelines you may already have in motion. An example of this is if you have a product that is Widely Recyclable, and will remain Widely Recyclable, even considering the changes in California, then the legacy WR label is still appropriate and not in violation of SB 343. If you already have this product in print or already have the logistics in motion to print it soon, then it may make sense to keep it. However, members are advised to be completely aware of all of the changes that may impact their portfolio. We do recommend switching to the new Pro Labels as soon as is feasible.

Q: Why can't I keep the Legacy Labels forever, as long as they are compliant?

The goal of How2Recycle is to provide clear, consistent disposal instructions to consumers. Ideally, once the Pro rollout is complete and members begin to print Pro Labels on packaging, consumers will start to recognize the new symbology (with help from the How2Recycle Forward campaign). While we recognize that there will be a mix of labels out there in the world for some time, we intend for all packages to have transitioned over the next two years, so that consumers aren't confused by what they are seeing and know to look at the same reliable symbology to understand what to do with their empty packages.

Q: If my packaging has a Not Yet Recyclable (NYR) Legacy label, do I need to change it to the Pro version?

The Legacy version of the Not Yet Recyclable (NYR) label is compliant with California's SB 343 because it already uses a 45-degree slash through the chasing arrows symbol, which indicates that the packaging component should not be recycled.

That said, we've received consistent feedback from consumers over the years that they often don't know what to do with NYR packaging. To address this, the new Pro version of

the NYR label has been redesigned to be clearer and easier to understand, helping consumers make the right disposal choice.

While it is not a priority to replace existing NYR Legacy labels immediately, our intention is for all packaging to transition to the Pro label over the next several years. This will help reduce confusion in the marketplace and ensure that consumers are seeing the same clear, reliable symbology across all packaging when making disposal decisions.

How2Compost Labels

Q: Will How2Compost Labels be updated during this period?

No, the Pro Label Rollout involves the update of How2Recycle labels only, and does not include How2Compost Labels, or labels that are a combination of How2Recycle and How2Compost. We are in the process of updating How2Compost labels to be in compliance with SB 343. Once the label design and update is complete, your label will automatically be changed over to the new label, and a comment will be left to notify you.