

# RECYCLING FACTS AND STATISTICS

## Paper Recycling

Paper cups consume trees, water, and chemicals, and dump them into streams and landfills- they are not recyclable. Paper cups are often wax-coated which reduces their biodegradability further. Paper products make up over 40 percent by weight , slightly higher by volume - of this country's municipal solid waste, by far the largest contributor. Every year nearly 900,000,000 trees are cut down to provide raw materials for American paper and pulp mills. **Source: Business Statistics, 1986**

### General Paper Facts

- 4100 kilowatts saved per ton recycled
- 60 pounds of air pollution reduced per ton recycled

**Source: National Polymers Inc.**

### By Recycling 1 ton of paper you save:

- 17 trees
- 6953 gallons of water
- 463 gallons of oil
- 587 pounds of air pollution
- 3.06 cubic yards of landfill space
- 4077 Kilowatt hours of e

### In the manufacturing process of Recycled Paper:

- 74% Less air pollution is generated
- 35% Less water pollution is generated
- 58% Less water is required
- 64% Less energy is required
- 31 billion gallons of water could be saved every month by installing water efficiency shower heads in our homes. **Source: Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries**

Paper and paperboard account for more than 60% of all materials diverted from the municipal solid waste stream for recycling and composting. More than one of every two newspapers, nearly 60% of all corrugated material and one third of all paper and paperboard packaging (compared to 12% of all other packaging) are being recovered.

**Source: American Forest and Paper Association**

## NEWSPAPER

Trees not only provide us with wood, paper, fruit, nuts shade, natural beauty and a buffer against noise, they play an important role in Earth's natural cycles. Trees capture carbon from atmospheric carbon dioxide, and release oxygen.

Trees also help prevent flooding and help control soil erosion.

Every week more than 500,000 trees are used to produce the two-thirds of newspapers that are never recycled. **Source: 1996 Environmental Defense Fund**

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## ALUMINUM

Aluminum can recycling saves 95% of the energy needed to make aluminum from bauxite ore. Energy savings in 1993 alone were enough to light a city the size of Pittsburgh for six years. Aluminum can manufacturers and their suppliers have programs in place throughout the country that have helped increase the number of recycled aluminum cans by 40% in just the past five years. [Source: Can Manufacturing Institute](#)

Making cans from recycled aluminum cuts related air pollution (for example, sulfur dioxides, which create acid rain) by 95%. Americans throw away enough aluminum every three months to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet. [Source: EarthWorks Group's- The Recycler's Handbook](#)

The Container Recycling Institute (CRI) estimates that the 36 billion aluminum cans landfilled last year had a scrap value of more than \$600 million. "We are literally throwing money away when we don't reclaim valuable resources," said Pat Franklin, Executive Director of CRI. "Over the past twenty years we've trashed more than 11 million tons of aluminum beverage cans worth over \$12 billion on today's market. Some day we'll be mining our landfills for the resources we've buried." [Source: The Container Recycling Institute, April 11, 1997](#)

## GLASS

Americans throw away enough glass bottles and jars every two weeks to fill the 1.350-foot towers of the World Trade Center.

- Most bottles and jars contain at least 25% recycled glass.
- Glass never wears out -- it can be recycled forever. We save over a ton of resources for every ton of glass recycled -- 1,330 pounds of sand, 433 pounds of soda ash, 433 pounds of limestone, and 151 pounds of feldspar.
- A ton of glass produced from raw materials created 384 pounds of mining waste. Using 50% recycled glass cuts it by about 75%.
- We get 27.8 pounds of air pollution for every ton of new glass produced.
- Recycling glass reduces that pollution by 14-20%.
- Recycling glass saves 25-32% of the energy used to make glass. Glass makes up about 8% of American municipal garbage. About 75% of America's glass is used for packaging. The average American can save six pounds of glass in a month. As late as 1947, virtually 100% of all beverage bottles were returnable. Every day, Americans recycle about 13 million glass jars and bottles. Germany recycles almost 40% of its glass. States with bottle deposit laws have 35-40% less litter by volume.

[Source: The Earth Works Group Recycler's Handbook](#)

Glass containers saves 9 gallons of fuel (oil) for every ton of recycled glass. Glass containers are used for new glass containers, fiberglass insulation, road beds (aggregate), concrete block, and glassphalt (asphalt).

[Source: Waste Management, Inc.](#)

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough electricity to light a 100 watt bulb for four hours. [Source: " Recycling and Buy Recycled Fact Sheets America Recycles Day](#)