

ENVIRONMENT WATCH

Aluminum's Key Role In Sustainability

by *Stephen Gardner*

(NAPSA)—When the aluminum industry launched beverage can recycling over 30 years ago, it was an idea whose time had come.

And today, with more environmentally conscious companies out there working for consumers who are demanding more and more products made from recycled materials, aluminum is once again helping to lead the way.

Consider the following:

- There is no limit to the number of times an aluminum can can be recycled.

- At current rates, one year of aluminum can recycling is equal to taking nearly 1.5 million cars off the road for one year.

- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to keep a 100-watt bulb burning for nearly four hours or keep a TV running for three hours.

- A can that is recycled can be back on the store shelf in as little as 60 days.

- Recycled aluminum requires 95 percent less energy than primary aluminum, generates 95 percent less emissions and creates 97 percent less water pollution than generating new metal.

Recycling is just one of the many ways that aluminum is sustainable. Not just cans are recycled—valuable aluminum is recovered from demolished buildings and recycled, too. Automakers are increasingly using strong, lightweight aluminum in their automobiles to increase gas mileage. When a car is at the end of its road, the aluminum is recycled here as well. In fact, 75 percent of all the aluminum ever produced is still in use today.



Photo credit: Rexam

An aluminum can that is recycled can be back on the store shelf in as little as 60 days.

“Recycling and sustainability have long been part of the ethic and culture of the aluminum industry,” said Steve Larkin, president of the Aluminum Association. “Recycled aluminum uses only 5 percent of the energy that you need to produce new, primary aluminum.”

The United Nations defined sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Aluminum fits that definition. From our workplace safety record, to our commitment to the communities in which we operate, to the flexible, versatile and recyclable material that is aluminum, aluminum is sustainable.

Stephen Gardner is vice president of communications at the Aluminum Association. The Association works to educate the public about the benefits of aluminum as a sustainable material.

To learn more, visit www.aluminum.org or call (703) 358-2960.