

Energy Matters

From Garbage Can To Power Grid

(NAPSA)—This may come as a pleasant surprise: The nation's solid waste and recycling industry—the same companies that pick up household trash and haul it away—may also be lighting and heating your home.

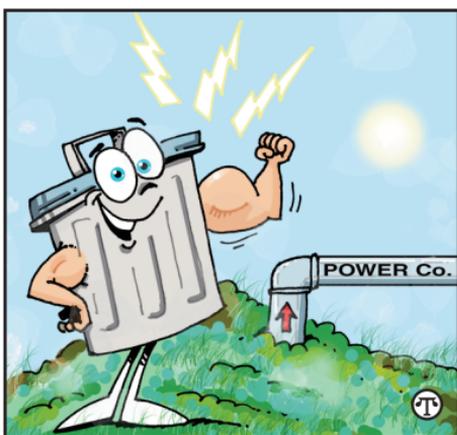
That's because they're turning garbage into "green energy."

Here's How

Trash decomposes and produces gases such as methane. Innovative technology developed by solid waste management companies captures the gas and pipes it to utilities, where it's turned into electricity or transported directly to manufacturing plants, schools or other buildings and used to power heating and cooling systems. The entire process is carefully managed to prevent leaks or odors.

Through this process, the solid waste industry provides clean, low-cost, renewable energy to 1.8 million homes a year. Landfill energy projects save hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for schools and government agencies—including NASA, which uses landfill-gas energy to heat buildings at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland; and the University of New Hampshire, which uses a pipeline from a neighboring landfill to provide the school with as much as 80 percent of its energy. Big companies such as Honeywell and Dell also save millions of dollars by using power generated from landfill gas for offices and manufacturing sites.

What's more, lots of trash that doesn't get landfilled instead gets converted directly to energy at waste-to-energy plants, which produce enough additional electricity to power 1.6 million homes. In fact, waste-based energy from trash and biomass produces more



Many Americans are warming to the bright idea of using trash to heat and light homes, schools and other buildings.

of America's renewable energy than any other source.

Many Benefits

Waste-based energy saves money and helps advance national security by reducing reliance on foreign oil.

Plus, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, waste-based energy projects save more than hundreds of millions of barrels of oil a year—the equivalent of eliminating air pollution from nearly 20 million cars.

"People will be surprised when they learn about our industry's role in producing affordable 'green energy' and helping to reduce our dependence on foreign oil," says Sharon H. Kneiss, president and CEO of the National Solid Wastes Management Association.

"This is a truly significant environmental achievement. It makes us feel very proud of our people and the commitment of the thousands of companies, large and small, that make up our industry."

Learn More

Further facts are at www.environmentalisteveryday.org.