

Protecting Our Environment

Recycling: An American Success Story

(NAPSA)—Recycling is one of the greatest environmental success stories, according to the National Solid Wastes Management Association (NSWMA) in Washington, D.C. Since 1980, the amount of solid waste that Americans recycle has jumped from around 10 percent to more than 33 percent. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that Americans recycled 63 million tons of waste in 2007 alone.

In more than 8,600 communities, Americans can take advantage of curbside recycling, where recyclables are placed in special bins and picked up by the local garbage collector. America's solid waste industry pioneered "single-stream recycling," where everything—metal cans, glass and plastic bottles, newspaper and cardboard—goes into one bin to make the collection process as easy as possible. As a result, more Americans now recycle household and workplace trash.

Keeping recyclables out of the waste stream accomplishes far more than saving space in your local landfill. Using recycled materials saves manufacturers money, resulting in lower prices for many consumer products. Recycling also conserves natural resources, saves tons of energy and reduces emissions that contribute to air pollution and climate change.

Just think: Making new glassware from recycled materials takes 30 percent less energy than starting from new materials. Recycled paper products require 40 percent less energy than paper made from fresh lumber. And manufacturing plastic or aluminum products from recycled material adds up to enormous energy savings—a 75 percent reduction for plastic and up to 95 percent for aluminum cans.



Recycling conserves resources, saves energy, reduces emissions and keeps costs down.

Experts estimate that recycling 7 million tons of metal results in fewer greenhouse emissions, equivalent to taking 5 million cars off the road for a year.

Recycling is a critical part of protecting our environment for future generations, and America's solid waste companies are major partners in helping communities increase the amount they recycle.

The industry continues to develop technology to make recycling easier. For example, it is building recycling facilities that use the latest automated scanning technology to make the sorting of materials faster and more efficient.

"Household recycling is so much more convenient today, and brings so many benefits, it's no wonder recycling rates are on the rise," says NSWMA president Bruce Parker.

For more information about boosting your own recycling rate, visit www.environmentalists everyday.org/recycling.