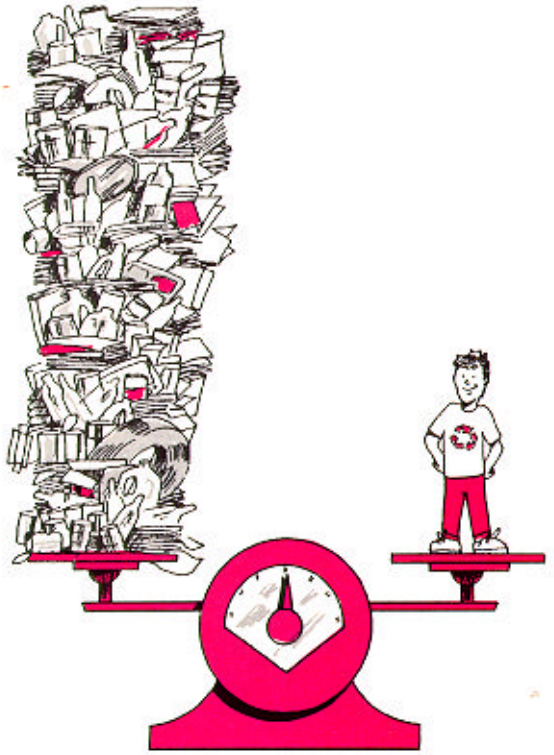
RECICLE! MACH MIT BEI DER WIEDERVERWERTUNG

YOU CAN MAKE A TON OF DIFFERENCE



RECYCLE

EPA

United States Environmental Protection Agency

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リサイクルしましょう RECICLE! 請回收使用 RECYCLEZ! MACH MIT BEI DER WIEDERVERWERTUNG

RECICLE! リサイクルしましょう RECYCLEZ!

Recycle — It Makes Sense!

Call it garbage, solid waste, refuse, trash! It's the waste we produce in our homes and businesses. We throw it into cans and put it out for pickup. Our trash, plus our neighbors' and everyone else's, adds up to a massive pile of waste. In fact, each year our nation generates enough garbage to fill a convoy of trash trucks reaching halfway to the moon. And the convoy keeps growing longer every year!

What's in Our Trash?

National averages show:

38%	Paper
18%	Yard Trimmings
8%	Metals
8%	Plastic
7%	Glass
7%	Food Waste
14%	Other

Where Does Our Trash Go?

What happens to last night's empty soft drink cans and bottles? And where does this morning's discarded newspaper go? For many years, most have gone to landfills. Now, many of these landfills are almost full. This is causing landfilling costs to soar, forcing many of our communities to raise fees or taxes to pay the additional costs. Landfilling is no longer the easy answer.

In some communities, the waste goes to an incinerator that burns it and recovers energy. Incinerators reduce the volume of waste, but landfills are still needed to bury the ash that burning produces. Both incinerators and landfills are expensive and can take a long time to locate and build. In a growing number of communities, the morning newspaper is recycled, yard trimmings are composted, and cans and bottles are recycled or reused.

67%
Landfilled

17%
Recycled

16%
Incinerated

Once Is Not Enough

The Solution

Because there's not one simple remedy for our trash problem, we need to consider a combination of solutions to manage it. Reducing and reusing waste, recycling, burning trash for energy recovery, and landfilling are all parts of the solution. Federal, state, and local governments are seeking answers as they study and plan for current and future needs. Citizens in every community need to be involved in finding the best solutions and making them work.

Recycling is just one important remedy for the garbage problem. It's an effective solution because it reduces the amount of waste for disposal. And individuals like you can be part of the solution by recycling at home and at work. You can use recycled and recyclable products, organize recycling programs, and encourage your neighbors to recycle. Just as we contribute to our nation's increasing garbage problem, we can all contribute to its solution by recycling.

What Is Recycling?

"Recycling" means separating, collecting, processing, marketing, and ultimately using a material that would have been thrown away. This morning's newspaper can be recycled for another morning's news or other paper products. Cans and bottles can be crafted for other uses.

Quality products and packaging are being made from recovered materials. We can all help create markets for recyclables by buying and using these products.

Why Should We Recycle?

- Recycling reduces our reliance on landfills and incinerators.
- Recycling protects our health and environment when harmful substances are removed from the waste stream.
- Recycling conserves our natural resources because it reduces the need for raw materials.

A Closer Look At Recycling

A National Goal of 25 Percent

EPA has set a national goal of reducing and recycling 25 percent of our waste. Some communities have set similar goals and are on their way to achieving them, and others are just beginning recycling programs. Your support and involvement are essential in meeting these goals. To start, you can encourage your local government and businesses to start recycling programs or expand their current ones, and to use recycled materials.

What Can We Recycle?

Each local recycling program is designed to handle specific materials. Commonly recycled materials include:

- **Paper** — Newspaper, office paper, cardboard, and other paper types.
- **Yard trimmings** — Grass, leaves, and shrub and tree clippings are recycled by composting.
- **Glass** — Bottles and jars (clear, green, and amber).
- **Aluminum** — Beverage containers.
- **Other metals** — Steel cans, auto bodies, refrigerators, stoves, and batteries.
- **Used motor oil** — Vehicle crankcase oil.
- **Plastics** — Soda bottles, milk jugs, bags, and detergent containers.

What Do We Do with Our Recyclables?

Local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private enterprises run several kinds of collection programs.

- **Curbside collection** is the most convenient way for a household to recycle. These programs offer scheduled pickups of separated, recyclable products from the curb—like trash collection. Unfortunately, curbside pickup is not available in some of our communities.
- **Drop-off centers** are sites set up for us to leave materials for recycling. They serve as convenient central pickup locations for processors or recyclers.
- **Buy-back centers** pay consumers for recyclable materials.
- **Waste companies** buy recyclables from offices, businesses, institutions, schools, and industries.

Let's Clean Up Our Act!

Recycle at Home!

- Find out if there is a recycling program in your community.
- If so, participate in the program by separating recyclables and taking them to your local drop-off or buy-back center, or put them out for curbside pickup.
- Don't throw away what you can use again — plastic containers, for instance, can be used many times.
- If you change your own auto oil, take it to a local service station or recycling center.
- Leave your grass clippings on the lawn or compost them with leaves.

Shop Smarter!

- When choosing between similar products, select the one with the least unnecessary packaging.
- Use products in containers that are recycled in your community, and things that can be repaired or reused.
- Support recycling markets by buying and using products made from recycled material.

Get Involved!

- Get involved in planning for your state and local solid waste management.
- Inform government officials about the benefits of recycling.
- Encourage state and local governments and businesses to recycle and to use recycled material or recyclables.
- Participate in or start a voluntary recycling program with a local college, church, union, or community service organization.
- Organize a recycling program where you work.

How to Start!

Call the EPA Solid Waste Hotline at 1-800-424-9346 (in D.C. call 703-412-9810) for additional information on how to contact recycling coordinators in your area. Or call your state or local government or local waste hauler.

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