



# Facts & Figures

## Recycling at Work

- According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as much as 45 percent of the 250 million tons of municipal waste generated in 2010 was from commercial and institutional locations such as business and government offices, retail establishments, schools and hospitals.
- More than 80 percent of US workers polled said they believe it is important to work for a company or organization that makes the environment a top priority.
- Employees who feel they can make an impact on social and environmental issues while on the job are twice as satisfied with work as those who don't.
- 83 percent of consumers think companies should try to accomplish their business goals while still trying to improve society and the environment.

## Recycling in the United States

Our national recycling rate of 34.7 percent annually:

- Saves the energy equivalent of 165 gallons of gasoline for every ton of mixed paper.
- Avoids greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to removing more than 34 million cars from the road each year.

## Aluminum

- The amount of energy saved just from recycling cans in 2011 is equal to the energy equivalent of 23 million barrels of oil, or nearly three days of all U.S. oil imports.
- Used aluminum cans are recycled and back on the shelf as new cans in as few as 60 days.

## Electronics

- In 2011, 25 percent of consumer electronics at the end of their useful "lives" were collected for recycling.
- Only 8 percent (by weight) of all mobile phones no longer in use in 2009 were collected for recycling. That means that 129 million phones, or about one for every other person, were either kept, reused, or thrown away.

## Glass

- In 2011, Americans threw away 8.3 million tons of glass. That amount could fill enough tractor trailers to stretch from New York to Los Angeles and back!
- A glass container can go from a recycling bin to a store shelf in as few as 30 days.

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## Paper

- In 2011, Americans recovered 65.6 percent of U.S. paper— up from just 27.8 percent since 1990. However, we threw away \$2.3 billion worth of paper!
- 80 percent of U.S. paper mills (115 mills) relied on recycled paper as of 2010. In fact, it supplied 37 percent of their material.

## Plastics

- In 2011, \$3.2 million worth of plastics were wasted in the United States. That's enough for 10,000 households to live on the U.S. median income for seven years.
- Every pound of recycled PET used in place of virgin material reduces energy use in plastic production by 84 percent and greenhouse gas emissions by 71 percent.

## Plastic bags and films

- Americans recycled nearly twice as many tons of plastic bags and film in 2011 (430,000 tons) as we recycled in 2005 (230,000 tons).
- Only 11.1 percent of plastic bags, sacks, and wraps were recycled in 2011. That means 3,480 tons – or \$696,000 worth—were discarded!

## Steel

- Steel producers in the United States use more than 70 percent recycled steel.
- Recycling steel and tin cans saves between 60 and 74 percent of the energy used to produce them from raw materials.

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