



**DUBLIN**  
S C R A P M E T A L

## RECYCLING FACTS

### Metal Recycling

- Recycling steel and tin cans saves 74% of the energy used to produce them
- Americans use 100 million tin and steel cans every day
- Americans throw out enough iron and steel to supply all the nation's automakers on a continuous basis
- A steel mill using recycled scrap reduces related water pollution, air pollution and mining wastes by about 70%.
- \*Every year we save enough energy recycling steel to supply L.A. with nearly a decade's worth of electricity
- Recycling one pound of steel saves enough energy to light a 60-watt light bulb for 26 hours
- Each Year, steel recycling saves enough energy to power 18 million household for 1year
- Every day Americans use enough steel and tin cans to make a steel pipe running from Los Angeles to New York... and back

### Aluminum Cans

- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours -- or the equivalent of a half a gallon of gasoline
- Once an aluminum can is recycled, it can be part of a new can within six weeks
- During the time it takes you to read this sentence, 50,000 12-ounce aluminum cans are made
- An aluminum can that is thrown away will still be a can 500 years from now
- There is no limit to the amount of times an aluminum can can be recycled
- We use over 80,000,000,000 aluminum pop cans every year

- The 36 billion aluminum cans landfilled last year had a scrap value of more than \$600 million (Some day we'll be mining our landfills for the resources we've buried.)
- During a one year period in the U.S., the recycling of steel saves enough energy to heat and light 18,000,000 homes
- American consumers and industry throw away enough aluminum in a year to rebuild our entire airplane commercial fleet every three months
- Used aluminum beverage cans are the most recycled item in the U.S., but other types of aluminum, such as siding, gutters, car components, storm window frames, and lawn furniture can also be recycled
- Today, aluminum can recycling saves about 11.5 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh)—enough electricity to light a city the size of Pittsburgh for six years

## Water

- Americans now use an average of 100 gallons of water each day — enough to fill 1,600 drinking glasses
- American public water supply and treatment facilities consume about 56 billion kilowatt-hours per year — enough electricity to power more than 5 million homes for an entire year
- If all U.S. households installed water-efficient appliances, the country would save more than 3 trillion gallons of water and more than \$18 billion dollars per year
- Letting your faucet run for five minutes uses about as much energy as letting a 60-watt light bulb run for 14 hours
- A full bath tub requires about 70 gallons of water, while taking a five-minute shower uses only 10 to 25 gallons

## Lighting

- Lighting consumes up to 34 percent of electricity in the United States
- Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are an energy-saving alternative to incandescent bulbs — they produce the same amount of light, use one third of the electricity, and last up to ten times as long
- If every household replaced its most often-used incandescent light bulbs with CFLs, electricity use for lighting could be cut in half

- Where electricity is produced from coal, each fluorescent lightbulb used prevents 1,300 pounds (nearly 600 kilograms) of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and 20 pounds of sulfur dioxide from being pumped into the atmosphere

## Paper

- Each of us uses approximately one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree in paper and wood products per year
- Americans throw away enough office and writing paper annually to build a wall 12 feet high stretching from Los Angeles to New York
- 500,000 trees must be cut down to produce each week's Sunday newspaper
- If all newspapers were recycled throughout the year, we would save about 250,000,000 trees per year
- Roughly 1 billion trees worth of paper are thrown away every year in the U.S.
- The amount of paper and wood thrown away every year is equivalent to the energy needed to heat 50,000,000 homes for 20 years
- Recycling 1 ton of paper saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 2 barrels of oil, and 4,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity — enough energy to power the average American home for five months
- Americans use 85,000,000 tons of paper a year; about 680 pounds per person
- The average household throws away 13,000 separate pieces of paper each year. Most is packaging and junk mail
- Each ton (2000 pounds) of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4000 kilowatts of energy, and 7000 gallons of water. This represents a 64% energy savings, a 58% water savings, and 60 pounds less of air pollution

## Glass

- Glass never wears out -- it can be recycled forever. We save over a ton of resources for every ton of glass recycled -- 1,330 pounds of sand, 433 pounds of soda ash, 433 pounds of limestone, and 151 pounds of feldspar
- If all the glass bottles and jars collected through recycling in the U.S. in 94 were laid end to end, they'd reach the moon and half way back to earth
- Every month, we throw out enough glass bottles and jars to fill up a giant skyscraper

- The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle can run a 100-watt light bulb for four hours
- A modern glass bottle would take 4000 years or more to decompose -- and even longer if it's in the landfill

## Plastic

- Every year we make enough plastic film to shrink-wrap Texas
- Recycled plastic is also made into plastic lumber, clothing, flower pots, insulation for sleeping bags & ski jackets, car bumpers and more
- 26 recycled PET bottles equals a polyester suit. 5 recycled PET bottles make enough fiberfill to stuff a ski jacket
- Plastic bags and other plastic garbage thrown into the ocean kill as many as 1,000,000 sea creatures every year
- Americans throw away 25,000,000 plastic beverage bottles every hour
- Recycling plastic saves twice as much energy as burning it in an incinerator
- Bottled water costs between \$1 and \$4 per gallon and 90 percent of the cost is in the bottle, lid and label
- According to the Beverage Marketing Corp, the average American consumed 1.6 gallons of bottled water in 1976. In 2006 that number jumped to 28.3 gallons
- It takes over 1.5 million barrels of oil to manufacture a year's supply of bottled water. That's enough oil to fuel 100,000 cars
- In 2007 we spent \$16 billion on bottled water. That's more than we spent on iPods or movie tickets
- Plastic bottles take 700 years before they begin to decompose in a landfill
- If everyone in NYC gave up water bottles for one week they would save 24 million bottles from being landfilled; one month would save 112 million bottles and one year would save 1.328 billion bottles from going into the landfill

## Junk Mail

- If only 100,000 people stopped their junk, mail, we could save up to 150,000 trees annually. If a million people did this, we could save up to a million and a half trees
- The junk mail Americans receive in one day could produce enough energy to heat 250,000 homes
- The average American still spends 8 full months of his/her life opening junk mail

## Other Interesting Facts

- One gallon of used motor oil can contaminate 1 million gallons of water
- Most cars on U.S. roads carry only one person. We have so much extra room in our 140 million cars that everyone in Western Europe could ride with us
- Almost four million computer diskettes are thrown away every day, which equals over one and a half billion disks per year or a stack of disks as tall as the Sears Tower in Chicago every 21 seconds. It will take nearly 500 years for the disks to degrade
- More than 14.3 million tons of end-of-life vehicles (virtually every car taken off the road) were recycled in 2000 - enough cars to circle the earth more than one and three-quarter times