

Why Recycle?



In nature, nothing goes to waste. Trees grow by pulling nutrients out of the soil when their roots burrow into damp earth allowing water to be carried to thirsty plant cells. The nutrients in the water come from material that has decayed and been put back into the soil by rain, sun and small animals that process the material. A tree throws nothing away. Its leaves degrade to become part of a nourishing cycle of life.



We, on the other hand, generate waste all the time. We have curbside service to pick up our waste and take it away, but generally, away does not mean changing back into something useful. It means going to a landfill or incinerator. Both of these ending places require resources to maintain them. They occupy land and use energy to maintain themselves and move material from your curb.



By recycling we operate in a more natural way. By recycling, what we waste is cycled back

into useful products. It isn't a perfect system. Recycling requires resources and energy and facilities do take up space but, recycling does reduce the amount of material being stored in landfills or burned in incinerators. Other benefits of recycling include:

Creating more jobs than disposal does

Using less energy than mining, harvesting, importing and otherwise processing raw materials

Creating less greenhouse gas than landfilling does

Recycled products are all around us:



Steel cans often contain recycled steel. Aluminum also contains recycled aluminum (good thing since it takes 5% as much energy to recycle aluminum as it does to make it from raw materials)



Glass containers often are made from recycled glass, saving energy.



Many paper products, from tissue to office paper and newspapers, contain recycled content.

And the list goes on. Many products are not labeled as containing recycled material but don't be surprised if you find out they do.

Recycling is not the only answer to waste and it never has been. For decades, you have heard that you should **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**.

Take a look at the order of those actions:

Reduce so you don't create waste in the first place.

Reuse so you don't use energy to haul and process.

Recycle whatever you can to reduce energy use, create jobs, reduce habitat destruction and reduce green house gas emissions.