

Fun Recycling Facts

- ♻️ Your recycling efforts accomplish much more than just reducing the amount of trash that you throw away. Recycling provides many environmental benefits such as saving energy and natural resources, and preventing the pollution that can occur during the extraction and processing of new raw materials. Please use these fun facts on posters, in school newsletters, etc. so that the students at your school will have a more complete understanding of the benefits of recycling.
- ♻️ The overall recycling rate of steel products in the U.S. is 66%.
- ♻️ Using scrap metal instead of iron ore to make new products reduces air pollution by 86%, reduces water pollution by 76%, and saves 74% of the energy and 40% of the water.
- ♻️ Virtually all steel products produced in the U.S. have some post-consumer content, usually a minimum of 25%
- ♻️ Steel has no memory, so a steel can could be made into a car, which could then be recycled into a refrigerator, which could be made into a child's wagon and so forth.
- ♻️ Aluminum is made from bauxite ore. Because the U.S. has very limited reserves of this metal, we must import 85-90% of the bauxite that we use. From an economic perspective, recycling aluminum is important because it can help decrease our trade deficit.
- ♻️ The turnaround time for an aluminum can is only six weeks. This means that the can you recycle today can be back on store shelves, filled with your favorite beverage, in only a month and a half.
- ♻️ Recycling aluminum saves 95% of the energy required to produce it from virgin materials.
- ♻️ Each one of us produces approximately 4 ½ lbs. of trash per day.
- ♻️ It takes 1330 lbs. of sand, 433 lbs. of soda ash, 433 lbs. of limestone, 151 lbs. of feldspar, and 15.2 Btus of energy to produce just one ton of glass.
- ♻️ It takes 1,050 recycled milk jugs to make a 6-foot plastic park bench.
- ♻️ A recycled fleece jacket uses 25 soda bottles as a raw material.

- ♻️ About 50% of the polyester carpet produced in the U.S. is made from recycled #1 PET plastic.
- ♻️ Two lbs. of red worms, *Eisenia foetida*, can consume 3-5 lbs. of food scraps per week.
- ♻️ Turf experts agree that grass clippings do not produce thatch because they are 80% water and decompose quickly.
- ♻️ Recycling 1 ton of aluminum saves the equivalent of 2,350 gallons of gasoline.
- ♻️ Used paper and paper products make up the largest proportion of our trash—about 40%.
- ♻️ About 35% of the world's commercial wood harvest is used to produce paper.
- ♻️ About 1/3 of all trash is some form of packaging.
- ♻️ In 1972, it took almost one pound of aluminum to make 21.75 cans. Today, through light weighting, a process which uses less material to make a new can, 1 pound of aluminum makes 30.13 cans – a 30% increase.
- ♻️ It takes approximately 3688 pounds of wood, 28 billion Btus of energy, 216 pounds of lime, 76 pounds of ash, 360 pounds of salt cake, and 24,000 gallons of water to make just one ton of virgin, bleached paper.
- ♻️ One gallon of recycled oil can produce the same amount of motor oil as 42 gallons of crude oil—while requiring only about a third of the energy.
- ♻️ The federal government's policy of purchasing only copier paper made from 30% recycled content will result in 450,000 to 500,000 fewer trees cut down annually for paper production and 16,000 tons of carbon absorbed annually by the trees that remain standing.