


## 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 can be used many times.
- Compost yard cuttings and leaves.
- If you change your own auto oil, take it to a local service station or recycling center.

### Shop Smarter!

- Avoid buying overpackaged products.
- Buy products in containers that are recycled in your community, and things that can be repaired or reused.
- Look for a recycling symbol on products you buy. Such symbols identify recycled or recyclable products. 
- Support recycling markets by buying 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 buy 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.
- Help to create new markets for recyclables.

### How To Start!

- Call the EPA Solid Waste Hotline at 1-800-424-9346 (in D.C., 382-3000) for additional information on how to contact recycling coordinators in your area.

Or call your state or local government or local waste hauler directly.

Office of Solid Waste  
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Washington, DC 20460

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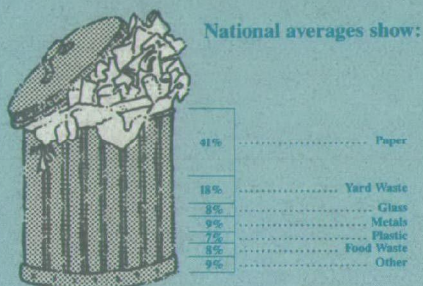


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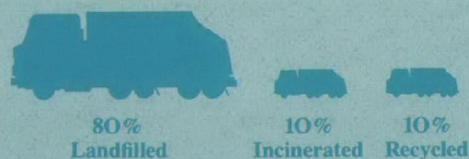


**The Problem**

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 half way to the moon. And the convoy keeps growing longer every year!

**What's In Our Trash?****Where Does 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 leftover 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 waste is composted, and cans and bottles are recycled or reused.

**Where Does Our Trash Go?****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 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 this solution by recycling at home and at work. You can buy 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 was 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.

**Why Should We Recycle?**

Recycling reduces our reliance on landfills and incinerators.

Recycling can cost less than landfilling or incineration.

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 National Goal Of 25%**

With everybody's help, recycling offers great promise for improved management of our trash. EPA has set a national goal of reducing and recycling 25% of our waste by 1992. 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 is essential to meet 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?**

**Paper**—Newspaper, high grade office paper, and cardboard are recycled.

**Yard Wastes**—Grass, leaves, shrub and tree clippings are recycled by composting.

**Glass**—Bottles and jars are often separated by color: clear, green, and amber.

**Aluminum**—Beverage containers are recycled.

**Other Metals**—Tin cans, auto bodies, refrigerators, stoves, and batteries are some examples.

**Used Motor Oil**—Truck, tractor, and automobile crank case oil are recycled.

**Plastics**—Soda bottles, milk jugs, and detergent containers can be recycled.

**What Do We Do With Our Recyclables?**

Several kinds of collection programs are run by local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private enterprises.

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