



# RECYCLING AND WHY IT MAKES SENSE

- **Did you know . . .**

The energy used to produce one day's junk mail in America is enough to heat 250,000 homes.

- Recycling a soda can saves 96% of the energy used to make one can from ore.
- The average person generates 600 times their adult weight in garbage during their lifetime.
- Americans go through 2,500,000 plastic bottles every hour.
- The plastic from five soda bottles can completely insulate a ski jacket.
- Recycling one ton of paper waste saves between 15 and 17 mature trees.
- One ton of recycled steel saves the energy equivalent of 3.6 barrels of oil and 1.49 tons of iron ore over the production of new steel.
- Recycling one ton of material saves 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
- Recycling one ton of glass saves the equivalent of nine gallons of oil.
- In one week, Americans throw away enough cans and bottles to circle the earth four times.

## Facts about recycling:

Trash by weight is 34.2% paper, 7.1% glass, 8.4% metal, 8.5% food waste, 9.1% plastic, 20%-yard waste and 12.7% other trash.

- Seventy-three percent of garbage is buried in landfills, 14% is burned in incinerators, and 13% is recycled.
- The U.S., while having 5% of the world's population, produces 25% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions.
- One acre of trees can absorb the carbon dioxide produced by driving a car 26,000 miles.
- Five recycled bottles make enough fiberfill to stuff one ski jacket.

## Rate of decomposition:

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Paper cup            | 5 years              |
| Foam cup             | 10-20 years          |
| Banana peel          | 1 week to six months |
| Cotton rag           | 1 to 5 months        |
| Tin can              | 100 years            |
| Plastic cup          | 50 - 80 years        |
| Aluminum can         | 100 - 500 years      |
| Glass bottle         | Indestructible       |
| Painted wooden board | 13 years             |

**Recycling conserves landfill space.** Material is kept out of the waste stream and out of the landfill.

- Recycling one ton of material saves three cubic yards of landfill space.
- Forty-five percent of all landfill trash is a paper product.
- Each person in the U.S. throws away 2.4 plastic bottles/day.
- Yearly, we dispose of 24 million tons of leaves & grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space.
- The number of tires disposed of annually in the U.S. total 1.8 million tons.

**Recycling conserves natural resources.** Wasting of our natural resources is reduced and our limited domestic supplies of certain raw materials are extended.