

The “How” and “Why” of Aluminum Can Recycling

Did you know that the energy saved each year through recycling cans could light a city the size of Washington, D.C. for 3.7 years? Or that recycling aluminum creates 97% less water pollution than producing new metal from ore? Read on for more facts and environmental benefits of metal recycling.



One of the greatest benefits of aluminum and steel cans is the ability to recycle them infinitely with no degradation in quality. Compare this feature to paper, where the fibers get smaller each time it is repulped for recycling, or plastic, where there is a limit to the number of times it can be recycled into useful products before being discarded. Used aluminum cans that are recycled can be returned to a store shelf as a new can in as few as 60 days. This turnover rate means you could purchase the same recycled aluminum can six times per year!

Making a new aluminum can out of recycled materials uses only 5% of the energy required to produce it from virgin material. This efficiency is due, in part, to the fact that metal cans are constructed from one consistent material, making the recycling process simpler and more energy efficient.

The U.S. is the world’s largest beverage can market; Americans are said to dispose of enough aluminum every three months to rebuild our entire

commercial airline fleet! In this country, we recycle our cans at a rate of over 51%. While this figure is impressive compared with U.S. plastic recycling rates of about 22%, Brazil, Scandinavia and Belgium have beverage can recycling rates of over 80-90%!

Excited about recycling cans? If you live in the NYC area, you can recycle all types of metal cans, aluminum foil products, and small household metal items such as wire hangers and metal toasters. Rinse items first, but don’t fret much if your barbeque sauce is stuck to the aluminum foil; it can still be recycled!

Don’t forget to recycle beverage cans at food establishments and cafeterias as well. New York City Local Law 87 requires that food and beverage establishments have bins available for cans and plastic bottles.

What about at the office? Your office may or may not have a bin set up for metal and plastic

items, as commercial offices are not required to separate these materials by law. Contact your Great Forest consultant for more information about can recycling in your building.

Feature of the Month

Renovating Your Kitchen? Go Green!



Good Green Kitchens: The Ultimate Resource for Creating a Beautiful, Healthy, Eco-Friendly Kitchen by Jennifer Roberts, Gibbs Smith, Publisher, \$29.95

Good Green Kitchens profiles sample green kitchens and their creators, and offers a variety of tips and strategies for building, redesigning, or remodeling your own kitchen. The book also has an extensive list of eco-friendly products, manufacturers and retailers.

Also by Jennifer Roberts: *Good Green Homes: Creating Better Homes for a Healthier Planet* and *Redux: Designs That Reuse, Recycle, and Reveal*

https://www.oikos.com/shop/product_info.php?products_id=195&osCsid=b2cadb8c412f159fa8b3d8c77f8fcf8c

For More Info:

Recycling Today – June 15, 2006: “Silver is the New Green”. Accessible online at www.recyclingtoday.com.

www.grist.org/advice/ask/2006/07/12/foil/index.html?source=umbra – Grist’s “Ask Umbra” column on aluminum foil recycling

Great Forest has moved!



Our new address is:

2014 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10035

Our phone and fax numbers have remained the same.

Upcoming Eco-Events

The following events take place at **Solar One Environmental Education Center: 23rd Street and the East River**. All events are **FREE!** For more info, see www.solar1.org/about/events.

Solar-Powered Dance Series – Thursday – Saturday, August 3-5, 6-8pm.

Four Seasons, Four Saxes, New Forecasts – August 9, 6pm. Charley Girard's Broken Reed Saxophone Quartet's adaptation of Vivaldi's famous set of concertos, "The Four Seasons."

Stuyvesant Cove Park Association Presents: Ballroom Dancing – August 12, 5:30-7:30pm. Open air dancing with free dance lesson taught by Joe Palmer of Dance Manhattan Studio.

Electronics Recycling with Per Scholas – August 13, 10am-3pm. Bring your old computer equipment, cell phones, fax machines, and other electronic equipment to this collection event to help the environment and the community.

CitySOL: Showcasing Sustainability in the World's Greatest City, August 13, Noon-8pm, Free – The last of three CitySOL events featuring renewable energy-powered live music with emerging NYC acts, interactive exhibits showcasing key innovations, practices and policies for New York's sustainable future, and a green lifestyle marketplace offering apparel, electronics, household goods, media and much more. For more info, visit www.citysol.org.

The U.S. alone is now saving about one exajoule of energy - about 1% of total U.S. energy use - each year by recycling municipal solid waste.

News From Around the Planet



Garbage Trucks = Reef

In an effort to build an artificial reef off its southern coast to lure fish for local fishermen, Thailand sunk 189 old garbage trucks into the Gulf of Thailand in late June. The trucks had previously been used to collect refuse in the Thai capital, Bangkok.

The trucks were dumped as part of a project initiated by Thailand's Queen in 2002 to promote the fishing industry. Everything from cement blocks to used railway cars have been dumped in more than 40 locations off Thailand's coast. According to the Fishery Department, 43 species of fish are now living around artificial reefs, up from 15 species previously.

For More Info:

www.planetark.org/dailynewsstory.cfm?newsid=36984

Oakland, California Bans Styrofoam

During the last week of June, the City Council of Oakland, California approved an ordinance banning Styrofoam in the city. The ordinance, introduced by Councilmember Jean Ouan, is part of a citywide effort to be a 'zero waste' city by 2020, meaning producing no waste that ends up in landfills. Ouan said that foam waste is a blight on the community; up to 15 percent of litter collecting in storm drains consists of plastic foam, according to one study.

The ordinance requires restaurants and other food establishments to transition from non-biodegradable products to biodegradable and compostable disposables already being used widely.

The city plans to enforce the measure based on citizen complaints. Food vendors could face fines of \$100 to \$500 for non-compliance.

Oakland joins about 100 other cities, including Portland, OR and Berkeley, CA, in banning Styrofoam (also known as polystyrene foam) products.

For More Info:

www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2006/06/28/MNG65JLQJ411.DTL

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