

America Recycles Day - November 15th

Recommit to recycling for the health of the planet

PHILADELPHIA (November 10, 2009) - - Once a year the U.S. EPA officially reminds everyone that recycling plays a dramatic role in reducing pollution. This year American Recycles Day is celebrated on Sunday, November 15. It's a great day to recommit to recycling – an important activity that can have a positive impact on the environment.

The average American discards about 4.6 pounds of trash, also known as solid waste, every day. This trash goes mostly to landfills, where it is compacted and buried. thirty-three percent of solid waste, or 85 million tons, is recovered and recycled or composted; 15 percent, or 34 million tons, is burned at combustion facilities; and the remaining 54 percent, or 132 million tons, is disposed of in landfills.

But within your trash are many valuable resources which can be recycled and reused, such as glass bottles and jars, plastic detergent jugs, aluminum cans, paper containers and packaging, yard clippings and even food scraps. As the population grows and the amount of trash continues to grow, so will pressure on our landfills, our resources and our environment.

There is nothing new under the sun, according to the National Recycling Coalition. "...before the 1920s, 70 percent of U.S. cities ran programs to recycle certain materials. During World War II, industry recycled and reused about 25 percent of the waste stream."

America Recycles Day helps to raise awareness of the importance of recycling. The nation's composting and recycling rate rose from 7.7 percent of the waste stream in 1960 to 17 percent in 1990 and is currently hovering around 33 percent.

Your contribution matters. Last year the amount of energy saved from our combined recycling efforts (aluminum and steel cans, plastic and glass containers, newsprint and corrugated packaging) was equivalent to the amount of gasoline used by almost 11 million cars or the amount of electricity consumed by 17.8 million Americans in a year.

To bring the idea of what can be saved closer to home think about this: Americans throw away about 28 billion bottles and jars every year. Just by recycling one glass container, enough energy is saved to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours.

It all comes back to our individual efforts. Reduce, reuse, and recycle!

**For more information on recycling go to:
<http://www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/solidwasterecycling.htm>**

For more information on America Recycles Day go to: <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/americanrecycles.aspx>