

WHAT'S YOUR BETTERWORLD ISSUE? RECYCLING



"What we are living with is the result of human choices and it can be changed by making better, wiser choices."
-- Robert Redford

Each year Americans create about 240 million tons of solid wastes - about 4 1/2 pounds per person each day! Much of this waste ends up in landfills or is incinerated, but most of it can be recycled. Recycling is taking a product or material that is no longer being used and turning it into a raw material that can be used for something else. It is an easy but important way of helping to protect our environment from the pollution that our wastes can cause. Until 'modern times' recycling was a normal way of life. During World War II for example, 25% of all wastes were recycled, but by 1960 less than 8% of our wastes were recycled. Today, 32% of wastes are recycled in America and there are more than 10,000 curbside recycling programs!

You can help conserve resources by practicing the 3 R's - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. **Reduce:** Precycle - 1/3 of all garbage is packaging - buy products with minimal or recycled packaging; **Reuse:** Many things can be reused before throwing them out. **Recycling:** Take the National Recycling Coalition's Recycling pledge:

-- I pledge to find out what materials I can and cannot recycle in my community; -- I pledge to lead by example in my neighborhood by recycling; -- I pledge to recycle batteries, cell phones and other electronic waste; -- I pledge to email my elected officials to ask them to increase funding for my community's recycling programs. -- I pledge to tell five friends that recycling is the easiest thing they can do to slow global warming.

Recycling Day, on November 15, is an important opportunity to educate people about the importance of recycling for our environment, and how each of us can make a difference for a better world by recycling.

Do One Thing for a Better World

1. Take the Recycling Pledge
2. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
3. Hold an event to raise awareness about the importance of recycling
4. Urge elected officials to work to meet the EPA's goal of 35% recycling

Recycling Links

- America Recycles Day (americarecyclesday.org)
- Earth 911 (earth911.org/recycling)
- EPA Office of Solid Wastes (epa.gov/epaoswer)
- Kids Recycle! (kidsrecycle.org)
- Ntl. Recycling Coalition (nrc-recycle.org)
- Paper Industry Assoc. Council (paperrecycles.org)

DO ONE THING

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