

# SELECT RECYCLING STATISTICS

## **STEEL:**

- The steel industry's recycling rate is approximately 70 percent.
- Steel is made using one of two processes. The Basic Oxygen Furnace (BOF) process can incorporate 25 to 35 percent recycled steel. The Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) process can use nearly 100 percent recycled steel.
- Steel cans, including food, paint and aerosol cans, were recycled at a rate of 63.4 percent in 2006. Large appliances are recycled at a 90 percent rate in the United States..

Source: *The Steel Recycling Institute*

## **ALUMINUM:**

- Last year, 52 billion aluminum beverage cans were recycled, saving energy equivalent to 15 million barrels of crude oil—America's entire gas consumption for one day.
- More than 50 percent of the aluminum cans produced are recycled.
- Nearly 90 percent of automotive aluminum is recovered and recycled.
- Production of recycled aluminum ingot requires about 5 percent to 8 percent of the energy needed to produce primary aluminum ingot.
- Recycled aluminum accounts for nearly a third of the total U.S. aluminum supply.

Source: *The Aluminum Association*

## **PAPER:**

- In 2006, a record 53.4 percent of the paper consumed in the United States (53.5 million tons) was recovered for recycling. Paper recovery now averages 360 pounds for each man, woman and child in the United States.
- Recovery of old corrugated containers (OCC) rose 2.0 percent in 2006 to 25.2 million tons.
- The ONP recovery rate increased from 70.1 percent in 2005 to 72.3 percent in 2006.
- Recovered paper accounted for 36.9 percent of the U.S. paper industry's fiber needs in 2006, a slight increase from 2005. A record amount of recovered fiber was exported in 2006.

Source: *American Forest & Paper Association*

## **PLASTIC:**

- Overall, total post-consumer plastic bottle recycling increased 200 million pounds in 2005 to an all time high of 2.1 billion pounds.
- The total post-consumer HDPE bottle and jug weight collected increased to 922 million pounds for the year.

- The amount of post-consumer PET bottle scrap collected for recycling and sold in the U.S. was 1.17 billion pounds in 2005, an increase of more than 160 million pounds collected over the prior year.
- The overall recycling rate for post-consumer plastic bottles was 24 percent.
- The American Chemistry Council Plastic Division's 2007 markets update identified 1,334 businesses that handle and/or reclaim (sort, process and/or produce) post-consumer plastics domestically, and 203 businesses that broker plastics for export.

Source: *American Chemistry Council*

## **ELECTRONICS:**

- There are more than 500 companies in the United States that are considered to be electronics recyclers with more than 19,000 employees.
- Electronics recycling processes yielded approximately 1.3 billion pounds of recyclable material in 2005.
- The number of personal computers available for recycling is expected to reach approximately 60 million units a year this decade.
- The top 10 electronics recycling companies recycled nearly 65 percent of the total volume of electronics recycled, while the top five companies recycled nearly 43 percent.

Sources: *International Association of Electronics Recyclers and National Safety Council – Environmental Health Center Electronic Product Recovery and Recycling (EPR2) Baseline Report*

## **SCRAP TIRES:**

- The number of scrap tires consumed by end-use markets in 2005 numbered 259 million out of 298 million generated.
- About 188 million scrap tires were in stockpiles as of 2005.
- There are approximately 500 scrap tire processing facilities.
- In 2005, 155 million scrap tires were used as fuel, 48 million were used in civil engineering projects and 38 million were converted into ground rubber and recycled into products.
- 38 states ban scrap tires from landfills.
- A steel-belted radial passenger car tire contains an average of 2.5 pounds of steel.

Source: *Rubber Manufacturers' Association*

## **GLASS:**

- Glass companies can generally incorporate up to 70 percent of cullet into their glass mixtures.

- The U.S. glass container industry segment comprises more than 50 percent of all U.S. glass manufacturing and supplies 36 percent of the world's glass containers.
- In 2006, glass made up 5.3 percent of the municipal solid waste stream by weight, and of that, 25.3 percent of glass containers were recycled, including 30.7 percent of glass beer and soft drink bottles.

Source: *The Glass Packaging Institute*

## **AUTOMOBILES:**

- Recycling vehicles provides enough steel to produce almost 13 million new vehicles annually.
- The auto recycling industry helps recycle more than 11 million gallons of oil annually.
- Automotive recycling businesses employ over 46,000 people at approximately 7,000 businesses in the United States.
- Nearly 86 percent of automotive recycling companies are full-service, employing 10 or fewer people.

Source: *Automotive Recyclers Association*

## **APPLIANCES:**

- Steel accounts for 75 percent by weight of a typical appliance.
- The appliance recycling rate in 2006 was 90 percent, whereas the overall steel recycling rate was 68.7 percent.
- The steel used in appliances is made with a minimum of 25 percent recycled steel. In addition, internal steel components may be made using either 25 percent or virtually 100 percent recycled steel.
- Eighteen states have banned appliances from landfills.

Source: *The Steel Recycling Institute*

## **LEAD BATTERIES:**

- More than 97 percent of all battery lead is recycled.
- The typical lead-acid battery contains from 60 to 80 percent recycled lead and plastic.
- The lead from the batteries is cleaned and melted together in smelting furnaces. The molten lead is poured into ingot molds. When the ingots are cooled, they are removed from the molds and sent to battery manufacturers.
- The closed loop system set up by the battery industry captures and recycles an estimated 99 percent of the lead from spent lead-acid batteries.

Source: *Battery Council International*