

Source: <http://www.aluminum.org/industries/production/recycling>

Recycling ALUMINUM



Nearly 75 percent of all aluminum ever produced is still in use today. Infinitely recyclable and highly durable, nearly 75 percent of all aluminum ever produced is still in use today. Aluminum is 100 percent recyclable and retains its properties indefinitely. Aluminum is one of the only materials in the consumer disposal stream that more than pays for the cost of its own collection.

Aluminum producers and recyclers in the aluminum industry work with individuals, communities and businesses to enable both curbside and industrial recycling programs. UBC (used beverage container) recycling is the most readily recognized of the recycling programs. Aluminum is also recycled at the end of life from products such as cars and building parts. Window frames, wire, tubing and electronics are additional examples of aluminum that is recycled at the end of life.

Take-Away Facts

- **The most valuable material in the recycling bin**
Aluminum is the most recyclable of all materials. Discarded aluminum is more valuable than any other item in the recycling bin.
- **Aluminum cans lost to landfills**
Americans throw away nearly \$1 billion worth of aluminum cans every year.
- **A billion dollars in recycling profit is open**
The aluminum industry pays out more than 800 million dollars a year for recycled cans. The U.S. industry can recycling rate is approximately 67 percent, thus nearly a billion dollars of recycling profit can be gained.
- **Recycling from can to iPod**
Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to listen to a full album on an iPod. In 2007, in an open letter to Apple, Steve Jobs encouraged the company to expand its own product recycling efforts. The company has set a goal of 70 percent recycling efficiency by 2015.

Aluminum Recycling

Recycling collection

Aluminum is recycled through a variety of programs. The most commonly recognized consumer programs are curbside and municipal. In these programs, items like beverage cans, aluminum foil, aluminum baking trays and pie pans are recycled. The aluminum industry actively supports the **Curbside Value Partnership**, which is a program dedicated to increasing participation in curbside recycling programs and to measure this growth using solid data. Within the industry, building and automotive parts are collected for recycling. More than 90 percent of the aluminum in building and automotive parts is recycled at the end of use. All of these items serve as a feedstock and are sent to aluminum recyclers to be melted down in the secondary production process.

Recycling continuously

Aluminum is one of the most recycled -- and most recyclable -- materials on the market today. Nearly 75 percent of all aluminum produced in the U.S. is still in use today. Aluminum can be recycled over and over again without any loss to quality. In fact, **an aluminum beverage container can be recycled and back on the shelf in 60 days.**

Recycling is economical

The economics of aluminum also contributes to its position as one of the most-recycled metals in the U.S. Unlike many other materials, aluminum more than pays for its own recycling in the consumer and industrial waste stream. The reason: demand for aluminum continues to skyrocket and recycling aluminum saves more than 90 percent of the energy required versus producing new metal.

Recycling in WWII

During WWII, **aluminum foil** was so vital to the defense effort that families were encouraged to save strips of foil. In many towns, the foil balls could be exchanged for a free entry to a movie theater. Government-sponsored posters, ads, radio shows, and pamphlet campaigns urged Americans to contribute to scrap drives. A New York radio station, WOR, debuted the radio-sketch show "Aluminum for Defense" in 1941.