**Mid-Atlantic**

**10 FAST FACTS ON RECYCLING**

*Retrieved 4-26-15 from http://www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/solidwasterecyclingfacts.htm*

Most of the facts come from the Resourceful Schools Web site at <http://www.resourcefulschools.org/facts.html>

1. Every year nearly 900,000,000 trees are cut down to provide raw materials for American paper and pulp mills.

2. Every year we generate around 14 million tons of food waste which is 106 pounds of food waste per person 570,000 tons of this is composted for a 4.1% recovery rate. The rest, or 13.4 million tons is incinerated or landfilled and occupies 6.3 million cubic yards of landfilled MSW.

3. Americans throw away about 28 billion bottles and jars every year.

4. Americans make more than 200 million tons of garbage each year, enough to fill Bush Stadium from top to bottom twice a day!

5. It takes a 15-year-old tree to produce 700 grocery bags.

6. Disposable diapers last centuries in landfills. An average baby will go through 8,000 of them!

7. Each year American throw away 25,000,000,000 Styrofoam cups. Even 500 years from now, the foam coffee cup you used this morning will be sitting in a landfill.

8. In 1995, Americans recycled 9.5% of all plastic packaging, including 26% of all plastic bottles. Most of the plastic recycled is #1 PETE soda bottles and #2 HDPE milk bottles. Most of the #3 through 7 plastics are not easily recyclable.

9. In 1996 Americans recycled 21.6 million tons of corrugated cardboard for a 73% recovery rate in 1996 (industry data) By tonnage, corrugated boxes are the most recycled product in the waste stream. Corrugated boxes produced in the U.S contain 37% recycled content.

10. In 1998, 62.8% of the 102 billion aluminum cans produced were recycled. That totals 64 billion cans , 46 billion more than in 1991, Aluminum can recycling saves 95% of the energy needed to make aluminum from bauxite ore. Energy savings in 1998 alone were enough to light a city the size of Pittsburgh for ten years.

ON THE OTHER HAND . . . . .

11. The Container Recycling Institute (CRI) estimates that the 36 billion aluminum cans landfilled last year had a scrap value of more than $600 million. Over the past twenty years we've scrapped aluminum cans worth over $12 billion on today's market. Some day we may be mining our landfills for the resources we've buried.

12. There were 270 million scrap tires discarded in 1998, 84% of which were passenger car tires, 15% were from light and heavy trucks. These tires weigh 3.4 million tons. 177.5 million of these tires are being reused, mostly chipped and burnt for their high BTU content. Somewhere between 500 and 800 million scrap tires are in scrap tire piles across the US. Each passenger car tire contains 7 gallons of oil.

13. 98% of lead acid or car batteries are being recycled. Also a large number of rechargeable Ni-Cd batteries are being recycled. You can usually take these batteries back to where you bought them for recycling or go to <http://www.rbrc.org/call2recycle/> to find the nearest location. Essentially none of the disposal alkaline batteries are being recycled.