

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMALL CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR PLANET!

WHEN YOU THROW SOMETHING AWAY, WHERE DOES IT GO?

EVERY YEAR, AMERICANS CREATE

254 MILLION TONS

OF TRASH

167 MILLION TONS

END UP IN LANDFILLS AND INCINERATORS

BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

YOU CAN DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF TRASH THAT IS THROWN AWAY BY

TAKING A FEW EASY STEPS:

REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF MATERIALS YOU USE, WHICH



REDUCES THE AMOUNT OF WASTE YOU CREATE.

REUSE MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE



RECYCLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE



YOU USE

AND THOSE

YOU THROW AWAY

RETHINK THE MATERIALS

BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE'RE USING AND HOW TO REDUCE THE WASTE WE PRODUCE, WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLEANER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT IS MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)?

OUR TRASH, OR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE, IS COMPRISED OF VARIOUS MATERIALS AMERICANS COMMONLY THROW AWAY AFTER BEING USED.



MSW DOES NOT INCLUDE INDUSTRIAL, HAZARDOUS, OR CONSTRUCTION WASTE.



DID YOU KNOW?

ABOUT 96% OF FOOD

THAT COULD BE COMPOSTED

ENDS UP IN LANDFILLS AND INCINERATORS.

THE IMPACT

RECYCLING HELPS TO CREATE CLEANER LAND, AIR, AND WATER, AND BETTER HEALTH.

IN 2013, NATIONALLY, WE RECYCLED

AND COMPOSTED

87 MILLION TONS OF MSW.

ANNUALLY, THIS ELIMINATED MORE THAN 186 MILLION METRIC TONS OF CO₂ EQUIVALENT EMISSIONS REDUCED WHICH IS,

COMPARABLE TO REMOVING THE ANNUAL EMISSIONS

FROM OVER 39 MILLION PASSENGER VEHICLES.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING HELPS SAVE NATURAL RESOURCES.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING 87 MILLION TONS OF MSW...

SAVED ALMOST 1.1 QUADRILLION BTU OF ENERGY.

THAT'S THE SAME AMOUNT

OF ENERGY CONSUMED BY OVER 10 MILLION U.S. HOUSEHOLDS IN A YEAR.

EVERY TON OF PAPER RECYCLED

CAN SAVE THE ENERGY EQUIVALENT

OF 166 GALLONS OF GASOLINE.

RECYCLING 1 TON OF ALUMINUM CANS CONSERVES

EQUIVALENT TO 26 BARRELS OF OIL

OVER 153 MILLION BTUs,

OR 1,234 GALLONS OF GASOLINE.

OUR PROGRESS

OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, THE RECYCLING, COMPOSTING, AND DISPOSAL OF MSW HAS CHANGED.

4.40 LBS IN 2013

3.66 LBS IN 1980

WHILE THE AMOUNT OF MSW PRODUCED WENT UP PER PERSON PER DAY, RECYCLING HAS ALSO INCREASED.

<10% IN 1980

34% IN 2013

IN 2013, OVER 20 MILLION TONS OF YARD TRIMMINGS WERE COMPOSTED...

ALMOST FIVE TIMES AS MUCH AS IN 1990.

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF MSW GOING TO LANDFILLS DROPPED

FROM 145.3 MILLION

TO 134 MILLION TONS

2013

1990

HOW YOU CAN HELP

IN STORES:

- Shop for products made with recycled materials.
- Buy items with less packaging.
- Buy refillable, reusable containers.
- Bring reusable cloth or canvas bags to the grocery store.
- Buy only what you need or what you know you will use (applies to food as well).

AT HOME:

- Use energy-efficient light bulbs and rechargeable batteries.
- Reuse plastic bags.
- Ask to be removed from paper mailing lists.
- Don't throw anything away that can be reused or repaired.
- For unwanted used electronics, try upgrading the device to continue using it. Otherwise, donate or recycle it.
- Print on both sides of paper (and use recycled paper).
- Compost your food scraps and yard waste.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

If we all take small steps every day to reduce the amount of waste we produce, we can help protect our planet for generations to come.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/recycle.