

# Recycling stats to blow the mind!

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- Each British household produces over 1 tonne of rubbish annually, amounting to about 31 million tonnes for the UK each year
- Every year, the average dustbin contains enough unrealised energy for 500 baths, 3500 showers or 5,000 hours of television.
- On average every person in Britain throws away their own body weight in rubbish every 7 weeks.
- Every 8 months Britain produces enough waste to fill Lake Windermere (the largest lake in England).
- In less than 2 hours Britain produces enough waste to fill the Albert Hall
- The cost of managing the municipal waste produced in England is around £1.6 billion per year

## Metal Recycling

### Aluminium

- If all the aluminium drinks cans sold in Britain were recycled, there would be 14 million fewer full dustbins per year.
- If all of the aluminium cans recycled in Britain in 1998 were laid end to end, they would stretch from Land's End to John O'Groats more than 160 times.
- In Britain, 75% of all drinks cans are made of aluminium.
- It's better news in industry – larger aluminium products, used in buildings and vehicles for example, have a 95% recycling rate. That's simply because they're more valuable.
- Amazingly, recycling it requires only 5% of the energy it takes to make new aluminium – and produces only 5% of the CO2 emissions.
- Just one recycled aluminium can saves enough energy to run a television set for three hours!

### Steel

- In industry, steel recycling is common – 'home scrap' generated by the steel manufacturing process is re-melted and used over and over again. It never leaves the mill, refinery or foundry.
- In Britain we use around 12.5 billion steel cans every year, or 600 per household, but nearly 10 billion of these still go to landfill.
- In 2005 we recycled around 50% of steel packaging including over 2.5 billion steel cans! The government target is to increase that to 54% by 2008.
- Producing steel from recycled material saves 75% of the energy needed for steel made from virgin material.
- Every steel can is 100% recyclable. It can be recycled over and over again into products like bicycles and of course new cans.

This information is largely taken from the following UK Government website (where you'll also find extra info):

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving>

## **Glass Recycling**

- The largest glass furnaces produce more than 400 tonnes – that's more than one million bottles and jars - each day!
- Glass can be recycled again and again without losing its clarity or purity.
- Milk bottles are reused an average of 13 times before recycling.
- The UK has more than 50,000 bottle banks
- One bottle bank can hold up to 3,000 bottles before it needs to be emptied.
- We use around 2.4 million tonnes of container glass in the UK every year.
- In 2005 we recycled approximately 1.2 million tonnes of used glass (known as 'cullet').
- Making glass bottles and jars from recycled ones saves energy. The energy saving from recycling one bottle will:
  - Power a 100 watt light bulb for almost an hour
  - Power a computer for 20 minutes
  - Power a colour TV for 15 minutes
  - Power a washing machine for 10 minutes [source: [www.britglass.co.uk](http://www.britglass.co.uk) ]
- Probably the most important thing about recycling glass is the energy saving – when using recycled glass to make new containers, 315Kg of CO2 is saved for every tonne of recycled glass used.

## **Paper Recycling**

- On average, each person in Britain uses over 200 kg of paper per year. 66% of this is collected for recycling.
- We use 12.5 million tonnes of paper and cardboard every year in Britain.
- Over Christmas as much as 83 km<sup>2</sup> of wrapping paper will end up in British rubbish bins, enough to cover an area larger than Guernsey.
- About one fifth of the contents of household dustbins consist of paper and card, of which nearly half is newspapers and magazines. This is equivalent to over 4kg of waste paper and card per household in Britain each week.
- Recycled paper made up 80.6% of the raw materials for UK newspapers by the end of 2006.

## **Textiles Recycling**

- Present clothes banks are only operating at about 25% capacity

## **Plastic Recycling**

- Recycling just one plastic bottle saves enough energy to power a 60W light bulb for six hours.
- It takes just 25 two litre pop bottles to make one adult size fleece jacket.
- 13 billion plastic carrier bags are used in the UK each year.

## **Green Waste Recycling**

- Every tonne of biodegradable waste produces 300-500 cubic metres of landfill gas.
- Landfill sites released a significant percentage of Britain methane emissions.