

# The New Steel. Appliance Recycling for Environmentally Friendly Consumers.

- The steel industry has worked to create pre-painted steels to reduce the overall cost to the appliance manufacturer—and consumers. And to keep steel “hip,” the industry has developed textured steels to give certain appliances an enhanced image.
- On the average, 75 percent of the weight of a typical household appliance is steel, of which 25 percentage points of this comes from recycled steel. A recent study performed for the Steel Recycling Institute and the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers determined that the steel weight of individual appliances is as follows:
  - Clothes washers, top load 94.5 lb
  - Clothes washers, front load 84.2 lb
  - Clothes dryers (gas) 100.4 lb
  - Clothes dryers (electric) 107 lb
  - Microwave ovens 28.8 lb
  - Dishwashers (steel interior) 26.7 lb, stainless steel content 43.4 lb.
  - Dishwashers (plastic interior) 27.6 lb
  - Room air conditioners 35.6 lb
  - Ranges (gas) 149.4 lb
  - Ranges (electric) 106.8 lb
  - Side by side refrigerator 152.5 lb
  - Top/bottom refrigerator 79.0 lb.
- Appliance recycling in North America continues to grow. In the year 2008, 90 percent of appliances were recycled in the U.S. by their owners, and the process will continue: What was once a refrigerator will be on its way to becoming part of tomorrow’s bridge span or automobile.
- Because steel is the engine that drives appliances out of the waste stream and into the recycling stream, household appliances are one of the most recycled commodities in the U.S.
- As appliance manufacturers have become more aware of steel’s place in the recycling infrastructure, studies indicate that these manufacturers are increasing the steel content in appliances to ensure that future appliances, when they reach the end of their useful lives, will head to the recycling stream.
- A new antimicrobial steel, AgION, designed to reduce bacteria, mold and fungus growth will help homeowners keep their houses cleaner and are low maintenance.