


The New Steel. Sustainable, World Leader in Recycling.



www.steel.org



More steel is recycled each year than all other materials combined, including aluminum, glass and paper. Not only is steel scrap essential in the process of making new steel, it's the only material that can be recycled over and over without ever losing its quality. And because steel is magnetic, it is easy to recover from construction debris, demolished buildings, junked automobiles and old appliances. For example, nearly 100 percent of the steel recovered from the World Trade Center was recycled. Steel accounts for less than six percent of construction landfills, compared to wood at 45 percent. Today, there are more than 2,600 steel scrap processors in North America.

Steel Recycling Rates:

- In 2006, almost 70 million tons of steel were recycled, for an overall recycling rate of 68.7 percent.
- **Container:** In 2006, the industry remelted over 18 billion old cans into new products. The U.S. recycling rate for steel cans in 2006 was 63.4 percent – the highest rate for any packaging material, including aluminum cans.
- **Automotive:** In 2006, over 14.5 million tons of steel was recycled from automobiles. Since more steel was recovered from scrapped vehicles than was used in the production of new cars, the recycling rate for automobiles was 103.8 percent.
- **Appliance:** Also in 2006, over 2.7 million tons of steel was recycled from appliances in the United States, at a rate of 90.0 percent. This is up from 40 percent in the early 90s.
- **Construction:** Structural beams and plates continue to be the most recycled steel product year-in and year-out, at a 97.5 percent rate. Just as importantly, more and more reinforcement bars are being recycled and in 2006, it was estimated that 65 percent of them were delivered to the recycling stream.

Steel's Sustainability through Recycling

- For every ton of steel recycled, we conserve over 4,000 pounds of raw materials, including 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,400 pounds of coal, and 120 pounds of limestone.
- Steel is the only material that has a guaranteed recycled content because old steel is used as a raw material to make new steel.
- According to the EPA, recycled iron and steel save the nation 74 percent of the energy that would have been needed to make new steel. That energy would be enough to electrically power about 1/5 of the households in the U.S. (or about 18 million homes) for one year. For every pound of steel recycled, we save enough energy to light a 60-watt bulb for 26 hours.