

Aluminum Can Wasting Facts



In 2001, Americans bought **351** aluminum beverage cans per person (**twice** as many as in 1980) and wasted **70 more** cans per person than in 1980.



The quantity of cans wasted in 2001—759,625 tons—was equivalent to the entire annual production capacity of **four major aluminum smelters** in the Pacific Northwest and greater than the amount used nationally for **trucks, buses, bridges, street and highway** applications combined.



Since the first Earth Day in 1970, Americans have wasted over 910 billion cans worth over **\$15 billion**. If current trends continue, we will have squandered **one trillion** cans by 2003—or almost **3,600 wasted cans** for every man, woman and child in America.



Between 1990 and 2000, Americans wasted 7.1 million tons of cans: enough to manufacture **316,000 Boeing 737 airplanes**.



Laid end-to-end, the 50.7 billion cans wasted in 2001 would encircle the Earth **153** times.

Energy and Environmental Facts



Recycling used cans into new cans takes **one third** as much energy as making them from raw materials.



The energy required to replace the aluminum cans wasted in 2001 was equivalent to **16 million barrels of crude oil**: enough to meet the **electricity needs** of all the homes in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, San Francisco, and Seattle.



If 9 out of 10 aluminum cans were recycled, we could save the energy equivalent of **50%** of the annual oil production anticipated from the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**.



Replacing one wasted can requires the energy equivalent of about 0.5 kWh: enough to light a **100-watt bulb** for 5 hours, or to power an average **laptop computer** for 11 hours.



For every **six-pack** of cans wasted, the energy equivalent of **one beverage can full of gasoline** is squandered.



Over **3 million tons of greenhouse gases** were produced to replace the aluminum cans trashed in 2001 with new cans made from virgin materials.



Over **two hundred thousand indigenous people have been relocated** to make way for hydroelectric reservoirs in nine aluminum-producing countries.

Recycling Facts



After peaking at 65% in 1992, the aluminum beverage can recycling rate dropped to 49.2% in 2001—**the lowest rate in 15 years**.



In 2001, Americans consumed **9 billion more** aluminum beverage cans than they did in 1991, yet recycled **6 billion fewer**.