**Food for Thought:**

The average person generates 4.5 pounds of trash every day – about 1.5 tons of solid waste per year. Although the EPA estimates that 75 percent of solid waste is recyclable, only about 30 percent is actually recycled.

* Did you know that we generate 21.5 million tons of food residuals annually? If this food waste were composted instead of being sent to landfills, the resulting reduction in greenhouse gas emissions would be equivalent to taking more than two million cars off the road.
* The Z-Best Composting Facility in Gilroy, processes 350 tons of food waste and yard clippings everyday into nutrient rich soil amendments to be used for agriculture and landscaping.
* Almost any business can successfully divert food discards from landfills. Businesses with record-setting food diversion programs are recovering 50% to 100% of their food discards and reducing their overall solid waste by 33% to 85%.

**Construction and Demolition**

* If all the dimensional lumber used to build the 1.2 million new homes constructed in the United State each year were laid end to end, it would extend 3 million miles, the equivalent of going to the moon and back six and a half times.
* Home construction, remodeling and demolition projects are responsible for 25 to 30 percent of the nation’s annual **Bottles and Cans**
* In 2004, 55 billion aluminum cans were landfilled, littered or incinerated, that’s 9 billion more than were wasted in 2000. This is enough cans to fill the Empire State Building twenty times. It is also a quantity equivalent to the annual production of three to four major primary aluminum smelters.
* Because so many of them are recycled, aluminum cans account for less than 1% of the total U.S. waste stream, even so, the energy required to replace the just the aluminum cans wasted in 2001 was equivalent to 16 million barrels of crude oil, enough to meet the electricity needs of all homes in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, San Francisco and Seattle.
* During the time it takes you to read this sentence, 50,000 more 12-ounce aluminum cans are made. Let’s recycle them.

**Paper**

* Each ton (2000 pounds) of recycled paper can save:
  + 3.5 cubic yards of landfill
  + 17 thirty foot (pulp) trees
  + 7,000 gallons of water
  + 380 gallons of oil
  + 4100 kwh of energy

And, at the same time eliminate 60 pounds of air pollutants

* The amount of wood and paper we throw away each year is enough to heat 50,000,000 homes for 20 years.

1. The average American uses 650 pounds of paper each year – 100 million tons of wood could be saved each year if all that paper was recycled.
2. Americans use 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.
3. A typical family consumes 182 gallons of soda, 29 gallons of juice, 104 gallons of milk, and 26 gallons of bottled water a year. That's a lot of containers that can all be recycled!
4. About 80% of what Americans throw away is recyclable, yet our recycling rate is only 28%.
5. Every month Americans throw out enough glass bottles and jars to fill up a giant skyscraper (think: Empire State Building), but all of these jars are recyclable!
6. Plastic bags and other plastic garbage thrown into the ocean kill as many as 1,000,000 sea creatures a year! Ever heard of the [Great Pacific Garbage Patch](http://www.greatgarbagepatch.org/)? It's twice the size of Texas and is floating somewhere between San Francisco and Hawaii. It's also 80 percent plastic, and weighs in at 3.5 million tons.
7. Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees, two barrels of oil (enough to run the average car for 1,260 miles), 4,100 kilowatts of energy (enough power for the average home for six months), 3.2 cubic yards of landfill space, and 60 pounds of pollution.
8. More than 20 million Hershey's Kisses are wrapped each day, using 133 square miles of aluminum foil. Believe it not, ALL that foil is recyclable, but not many people realize it so most it goes in the trash!

Here are a potporrouri of interesting facts about [recycling](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/whatisrecycling.html) for your entertainment and education:   
  
  
***Interesting Recycling Facts*** ***/ Water***

* A running faucet wastes 2.5 gallons of [water](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/importanceofconservationofwater.html) each minute.
* A dishwasher uses 11 gallons of water per use.
* 75 percent of all water used in the household is used in the bathroom.
* A toilet made in 1992 or earlier uses up to 60 percent more water per flush than newer high efficiency toilets.
* Turning of the tap while brushing your teeth in the morning and before bedtimes can save up to 8 gallons per day. This is a savings of 240 gallons per month.
* Running your faucet for 5 minutes uses up enough energy to run a 60 watt light bulb for 14 hours.
* A full bath tub uses 70 gallons of water. A 5 minute shower only uses 10-25 gallons.

***Interesting Recycling Facts*** ***/ Paper***

* [Recycling](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/whyisrecyclingimportant.html) 1 ton of [paper](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/recyclingpaper.html) saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 2 barrels of oil, and 4000 kilowatt hours of electricity.  This is enough energy to power the average American home for 5 months.
* The [process of recycling](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/recyclingprocess.html) paper instead of making it from new materials generates 74 percent less air pollution and uses 50 percent less water.
* Manufacturing recycled paper uses 60 percent of the energy needed to make paper from new materials.
* Over 73 percent of all newspapers are recovered for recycling. About 33 percent of this is used to make newsprint the rest is used to make paperboard, tissue, or insulation.
* A little more than 48 percent of all office paper is recycled. This is used to make writing papers, paperboard, tissue, and insulation.

***Interesting Recycling Facts*** ***/ Metal***

* Recycling steel and tin cans saves 74 percent of the [energy](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/alternativeformsofenergy.html) used to make them.
* Americans throw away enough [aluminum](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/aluminumrecyclingprices.html) every month to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet.
* Americans throw out enough iron and steel to continuously supply all the auto makers in the entire nation.
* A steel mill using recycled scrap reduces water pollution, air pollution, and mining waste by about 70 percent.
* When you throw away an aluminum can you waste as much energy as if you’d filled the can half full of gasoline and poured it into the ground.
* Americans use 100 million tin and steel cans each day.
* Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a 100 watt light bulb for 20 hours, a computer for 3 hours, and a TV for 2 hours.

***Interesting Recycling Facts*** ***/ Plastic***

* Enough [plastic](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/recycleplastics.html) is produced in the United States each year to shrink wrap Texas.
* In 1998 Americans used 2 billion pounds of HDPE to make plastic bottles for household products. That’s the equivalent weight of 90,000 Honda civics.
* Approximately 88 percent of the energy is saved when plastic is made from plastic rather than from the raw materials of gas and oil.
* Enough [plastic bottles](http://www.benefits-of-recycling.com/recyclingplasticbottles.html) are thrown away in the United States each year  to circle the Earth four times