

BEYOND RECYCLING

Earth Day 2020 - Recycling

Recycling

Recycling has been a hot topic over the years and many people are either religious recyclers or simply don't find the act to be impactful enough to participate. This process of reduce, reuse, recycle is both effective and ineffective in its own ways; however, recycling is slightly better than throwing everything into the trash. This comparison can be seen through educating people on the pros and cons of recycling, the impacts of recycling on the environment, and the recycling options available in their local communities.

Just like every other political and world-involved topic, recycling presents well-structured arguments in both the opposition and the defense. Many individuals who don't participate believe that recycling fails in its cost effectiveness. Other arguments also include that there is a lack of participation in recycling programs and that the transportation of recyclable materials can be both costly and dangerous.

However, there are also very positive aspects to recycling including decreased pollution, decreased landfill waste, and environmental safety (Renewable Resources Co). These different aspects and points hold their own importance and even though recycling may not be as successful as people hope, it is still a better alternative to sending everything to the landfill. This especially plays a large role on the environment.

Landfills are among the biggest contributors to soil pollution. [Roughly 80% of the items buried in landfills could be recycled.](#)

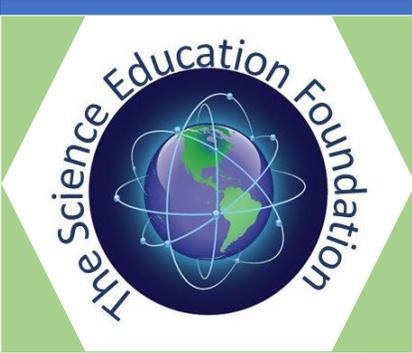
The United States recycling rate is about 34.5%. If we were able to increase that rate to 75%, the effect would compare to removing 50 million passenger cars from U.S. roads.

Recycled glass is substituted for up to 95% of raw materials.

Recycling just two aluminum cans saves the same amount of energy it takes to power a PC for one day. – Rubicon Global

Environmental Impacts including Protection of Habitats and Ecosystems

Recycling has a huge impact on the environment that living organisms call home. The act of recycling reduces the amount of trash that builds up in landfills which releases harsh chemicals. Those products that are recycled end up only using a fraction of the energy needed to reproduce a product. This leads to preservation of natural resources, like coal, due to less energy consumption needed to produce the final product ("Recycling Facts"). Finally, recycling can help protect habitats and ecosystems from destruction. Habitats of living organisms are not only taken up in the areas of landfills but are also destroyed in the process of seeking more resources. For example, jungle habitats are destroyed and bulldozed for the logging of trees which are then used to produce paper products ("Recycling is



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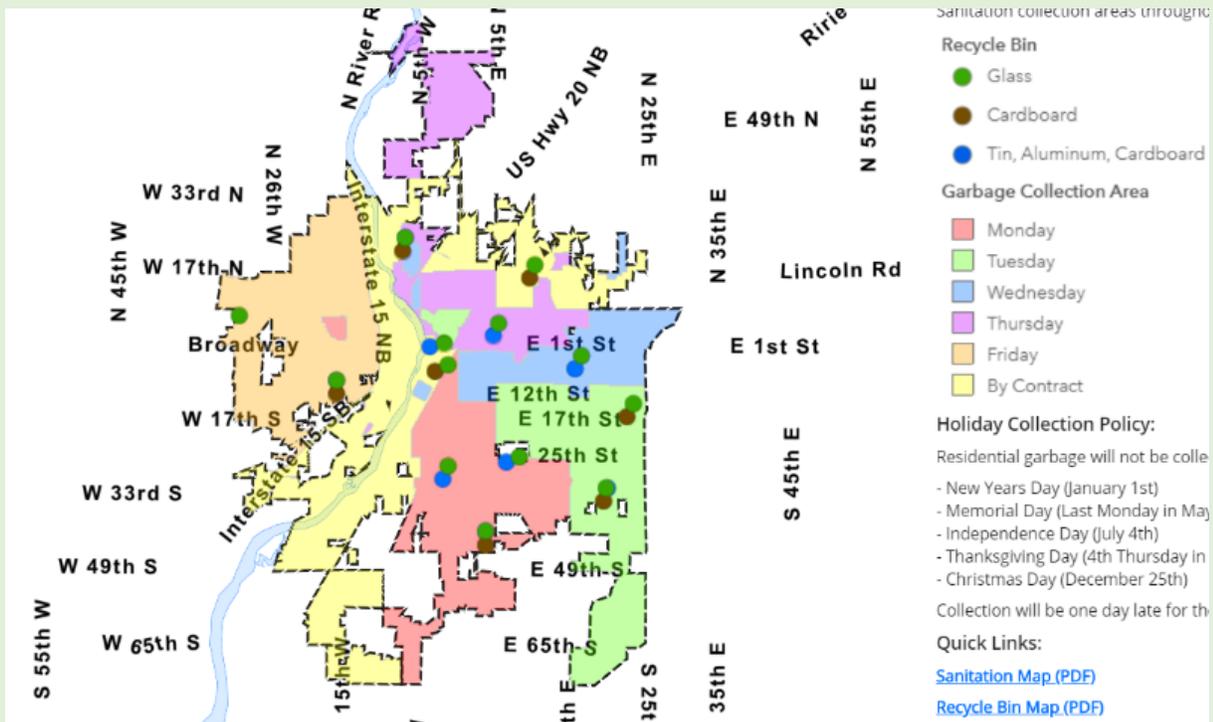
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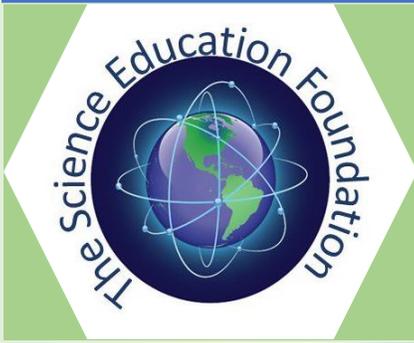
Important”). While needing paper is inevitable, recycling can help reduce the need to continually log new ground. This in turn helps to protect habitats from the risk of deforestation. These are the effects of recycling on a very large scale, but there are certainly ways that people can help in their own communities.

Idaho Falls Community Recycling Programs

Many of the more populated cities have programs and ways that people can help in the recycling process; Idaho Falls is one of those cities. The city of Idaho Falls has established 13 collection bin locations in which recyclable materials can be dropped off. These bins accept glass, aluminum, cardboard, and tin (“Recycling”).

There are also a variety of private businesses in the city that allow for curbside pickup of recycling containers. Many businesses and work facilities may also have their own recycling programs. All in all, recycling is only as effective as its participants. One person working alone can make a change but people working together create success.





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