

# **Steps to Recycling Materials**

## **1. Collection and Processing.**

Recycling includes the three steps below, which create a continuous loop, represented by the familiar recycling symbol.

There are several methods for collecting recyclables, including curbside collection, drop-off centers, and deposit or refund programs.

After collection, recyclables are sent to a recovery facility to be sorted, cleaned and processed into materials that can be used in manufacturing. Recyclables are bought and sold just like raw materials would be, and prices go up and down depending on supply and demand in the United States and the world.

## **2. Manufacturing.**

More and more of today's products are being manufactured with recycled content. Common household items that contain recycled materials include the following:

- Newspapers and paper towels

- Aluminum, plastic, and glass soft drink containers

- Steel cans

- Plastic laundry detergent bottles

Recycled materials are also used in new ways such as recovered glass in asphalt to pave roads or recovered plastic in carpeting and park benches.

## **3. Purchasing New Products Made from Recycled Material .**

You help close the recycling loop by buying new products made from recycled materials. There are thousands of products that contain recycled content. When you go shopping, look for the following:

- Products that can be easily recycled

- Products that contain recycled content

Below are some of the terms used:

Recycled-content product - The product was manufactured with recycled materials either collected from a recycling program or from waste recovered during the normal manufacturing process. The label will sometimes include how much of the content was from recycled materials.

Post-consumer content - Very similar to recycled content, but the material comes only from recyclables collected from consumers or businesses through a recycling program.

Recyclable product - Products that can be collected, processed and manufactured into new products after they have been used. These products do not necessarily contain recycled materials. Remember not all kinds of recyclables may be collected in your community so be sure to check with your local recycling program before you buy.

Some of the common products you can find that can be made with recycled content include the following:

Aluminum cans

Car bumpers

Carpeting

Cereal boxes

Comic books

Egg cartons

Glass containers

Laundry detergent bottles

Motor oil

Nails

Newspapers

Paper towels

Steel products

Trash bags