

Changing lives for more than 100 years

Material Specific Recycling Facts



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



COTTON RECYCLING



Rubbish

The average household in Northern Ireland throws out more than a tonne of waste every year, that's the same weight as an elephant or a small car!

Every fortnight we throw away enough to fill the Waterfront Hall.

A high percentage of this waste could be recycled or composted, but the rest needs to be disposed of, currently in a landfill site.

Lifestyle changes in recent years have seen the volume of waste produced increase year on year. To live in a more sustainable way, we need to think about reducing the amount of rubbish we produce and what we could reuse as well as recycling.

For information on exactly what you can recycle from home and what other facilities are in your area contact your Local Authority.

Paper

- Paper and cardboard make up around 12% of the commercial and industrial waste generated in Northern Ireland
- Newsprint, magazines and other paper make up about 10.6% of the average households waste
- If each person in Northern Ireland recycled one newspaper or magazine a day we could cut paper by 119 000 tonnes per year
- Recycling paper rather than making it from wood uses 70% less energy, causes 74% less air pollution and 35% less water pollution
- Every year on average each household in Northern Ireland needs more than 3 trees to provide the paper we need
- Every tonne of paper recycled saves 17 trees
- One tonne of recycled paper saves 7000 gallons of water, and enough energy to heat the average home for 6 months
- It takes a forest the size of Wales to provide the UK with paper every year

Plastic

- Recycling one plastic bottle saves enough energy to power a 60-watt light bulb for 6 hours

- In Northern Ireland the average person uses 95 plastic bottles every year
- In Northern Ireland we use 230 million plastic carrier bags each year, most of which end up in landfill
- There are over 12 000 tonnes of plastic bottles in Northern Ireland's rubbish every year – when squashed these would fill nearly 200 Ulsterbuses
- Once recycled, plastic bottles are made into a range of new products, including garden furniture, fleece clothing, carpets, bedding products and new bottles
- It takes 25 2 litre plastic bottles to make one large adult fleece jacket
- Around 15 million plastic bottles are used in the UK every day

Glass

- The average person in Northern Ireland uses about 140 glass bottles per year
- Glass bottles and jars are typically recycled back into glass bottles, but can also be used to make fibreglass insulation, glass beads for reflective paint for road signs, and as construction material
- 52 000 tonnes of glass are landfilled each year in Northern Ireland
- We could cut this waste by a third if each person in Northern Ireland recycled just 20 bottles
- Every tonne of glass recycled saves 1.2 tonnes of raw material
- In the UK 200 glass bottles and jars are thrown away every minute
- Recycling just four glass bottles saves one litre of oil

Aluminium

- Every year in Northern Ireland we use 600 million aluminium cans
- 70% of drink cans are made from aluminium
- If they were placed end to end would stretch around the coast of Ireland 7 times
- These cans are worth around £1 million

- Recycling aluminium cans saves 95% of energy used to make a can from raw material
- Recycling an aluminium can will save enough energy to run a television for 3 hours
- You can make 20 recycled cans for every one you could make from raw materials, aluminium ore (bauxite)
- It takes approx 10 weeks for a can to be recycled, filled with drink and be back in the shops

Steel

- 3 out of 4 cans are made of steel
- Average person uses of 240 steel cans per year
- In a year we use enough steel cans to stretch to the moon three times
- Every steel can is already at least 25% recycled steel
- Enough steel cans are recycled in the UK every year to circle the earth 5 times
- Steel from food cans is mixed with steel from other sources when recycled and made into a variety of products including new food cans, building materials and used in industry
- Steel is one of the most recycled materials in the world
- Recycling steel saves energy, raw materials, water and produces much less carbon dioxide

Textiles

- In Northern Ireland about 12000 tonnes of textiles are discarded every year
- More than 1.5 billion gallons of oil are used each year in the manufacture of clothing for the UK
- Northern Ireland households throw away a small suitcase worth of clothes every year