

# Protecting Our Environment

## Hints To Help You Recycle Smarter

(NAPSA)—Good news: An increasing number of Americans are recycling their trash to give it another life. In fact, more than 35 percent of America's waste is recycled into new products.

One reason may be that with the convenience of curbside pickup and the efficiency of single-stream sorting, recycling is easier today than ever before. As recycling has become more common, more and more items can be accepted at the local recycling center.

### Recycling Facts

Still, there are a few important recycling "Dos and Don'ts" you should keep in mind:

- The cleaner an item is when it's tossed in the recycling bin, the more value it will have as a recycled material. You don't have to waste a whole lot of water getting things squeaky clean. Just give a quick rinse to your soda bottles, yogurt cups and other food and beverage containers.

- Cardboard and paper products should be free of grease and smudges. When it comes to that takeout pizza box, toss the greasy bottom in the trash—or compost it and recycle the clean top.

- The numbers found on plastic items are identification codes for the type of plastic used to make them—but they don't tell you whether they can be recycled.

- When you recycle used plastic bottles, you can leave the caps on. They can be recycled and repurposed into materials used to make



**The vast majority of Americans—over 82 percent—are proud of themselves when they recycle.**

carpets, jackets and other useful items. Just be sure to clean the bottle as thoroughly as possible before recycling.

- Plastic shopping bags can be recycled—but don't throw them in a curbside bin. They can jam up the sensitive sorting machinery at the recycling facility. See if the grocery store you got them from will take them back for recycling.

- Nonrigid plastics such as garden hoses and plastic sheets are usually not recyclable and can also damage sorting equipment.

"People who don't have curbside recycling pickup should ask for it," urges Sharon H. Kneiss, president and CEO of the National Waste & Recycling Association. "Everyone should do his or her part," she says, "to reduce, reuse and recycle."

### Learn More

For further facts and consumer tips for recycling smarter, visit [www.beginwiththebin.org](http://www.beginwiththebin.org).