



# Recycling Works in Alabama



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"Uniting and Promoting the Recycling Industry in Alabama"

[www.alrecyclingcoalition.org](http://www.alrecyclingcoalition.org)

Founded 1992

Managed by board of directors and voting member body

Over 150 members statewide (municipal, private industry, education, non-profit, members of the public)

NOT a lobby organization



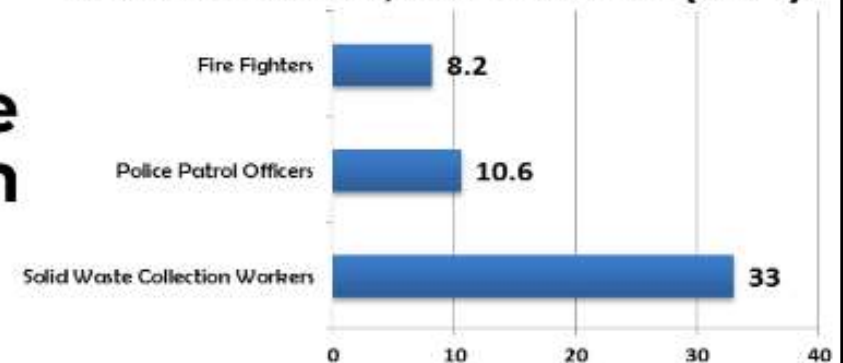
# The Real Dangers of **SOLID WASTE COLLECTION**



**Solid waste collection is  
consistently listed within the  
top 5 most dangerous jobs in  
America.**

*Solid waste collection workers are 4 times more likely to be fatally injured on the job than fire fighters, and 3 times more likely than police officers.*

**Deaths Per 100,000 Workers (2017)**



Source: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics



# **Common Divisions**

- Garbage
- Trash
- Recycling
- Litter
- Cart & Bin Repair/Delivery



## **WORKING IN AND AROUND TRAFFIC**



## **WORKING AROUND HEAVY EQUIPMENT**



## **HEAVY LIFTING TRIPS & FALLS LACERATIONS**



Have you thanked your

**EXPOSURE TO  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**



# **In Alabama, there are 3 distinct groups...**

## Residents

*Citizens, Cities,  
Counties,  
Businesses,  
Visitors, Patrons,  
Anyone with  
access to a  
recycling bin or  
drop off container*

## Haulers and MRFs

**Examples include:**  
*City collection  
crews, Waste Pro,  
Waste  
Management,  
Republic Services,  
etc.*

## Markets

**Examples include:**  
*Paper Mills, KW  
Plastics, Custom  
Polymers, Georgia  
Pacific, Nucor Steel,  
Indorama,  
Constellium,  
Strategic, etc.*

# What is Recycling?



**Recycle (verb) – to make something new from something that has been used before.**





# What Recycling Is NOT

Not using a sustainable cup

Not reuse

Not a craft project



# Recycling is a Business

Collecting

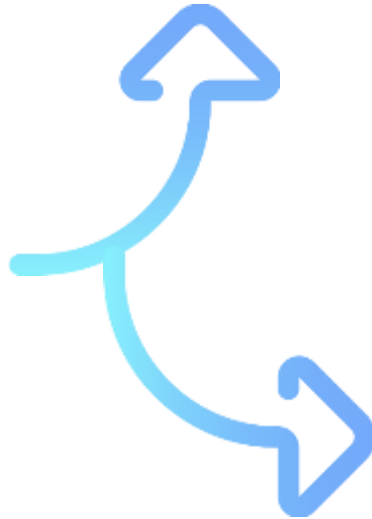
Sorting

Processing

Manufacturing









# **Re-Thinking What Recycling Really Is...**

- **If the 1960s never happened...**
- **If Earth Day was never celebrated...**
- **If the 3Rs were never taught in school...**

**Recycling would still exist –  
because it's good business!**

**But we can (and should) do better**





**We recycle  
97%  
of all garbage**

**Our City  
recycles  
everything**

**We will be zero landfill  
by 2020**

# **Fake News**

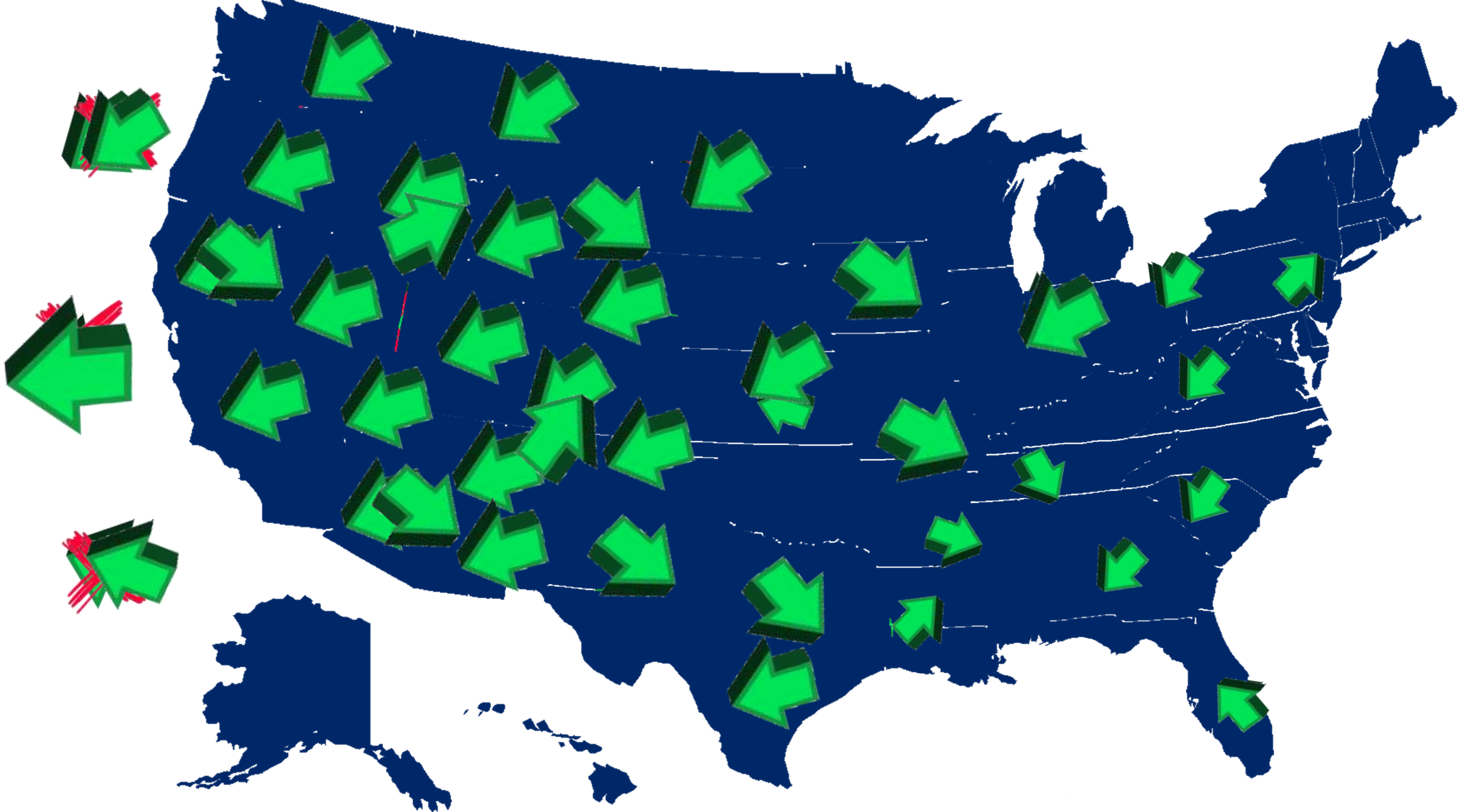
**Many large cities were exporting poorly sorted  
recyclable materials (garbage) to China and  
selling them as high quality recyclables.**

**This created environmental hazards for China**

# Chinese Green Fence

- “Foreign garbage smuggling”
- China bans import of foreign waste to combat pollution
- Started in 2013, but the import ban went into full effect 2017-2018





The background of the slide is a collage of various recycling materials. In the top left, there are clear plastic bottles. In the top right, there are colorful plastic bottle caps in shades of blue, red, and green. In the bottom left, there is a close-up of brown corrugated cardboard. In the bottom right, there are several silver aluminum beverage cans.

# National and Regional Impacts

- Trickle down effects to all markets (especially paper and cardboard)
- Domestic markets are flooded with material
- Supply and Demand
- All markets have gotten stricter on % of contaminated materials (non-recyclable items in the bale)

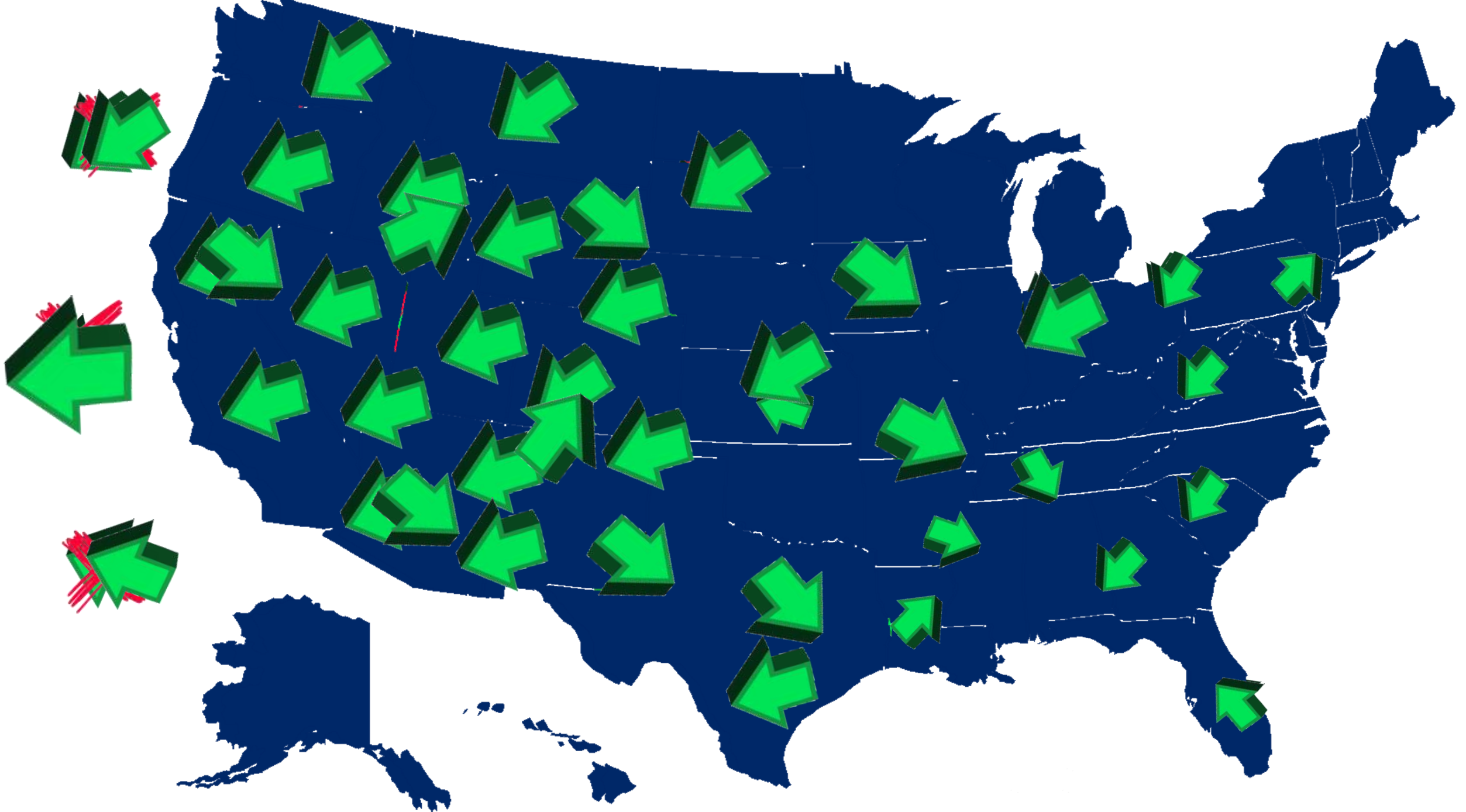


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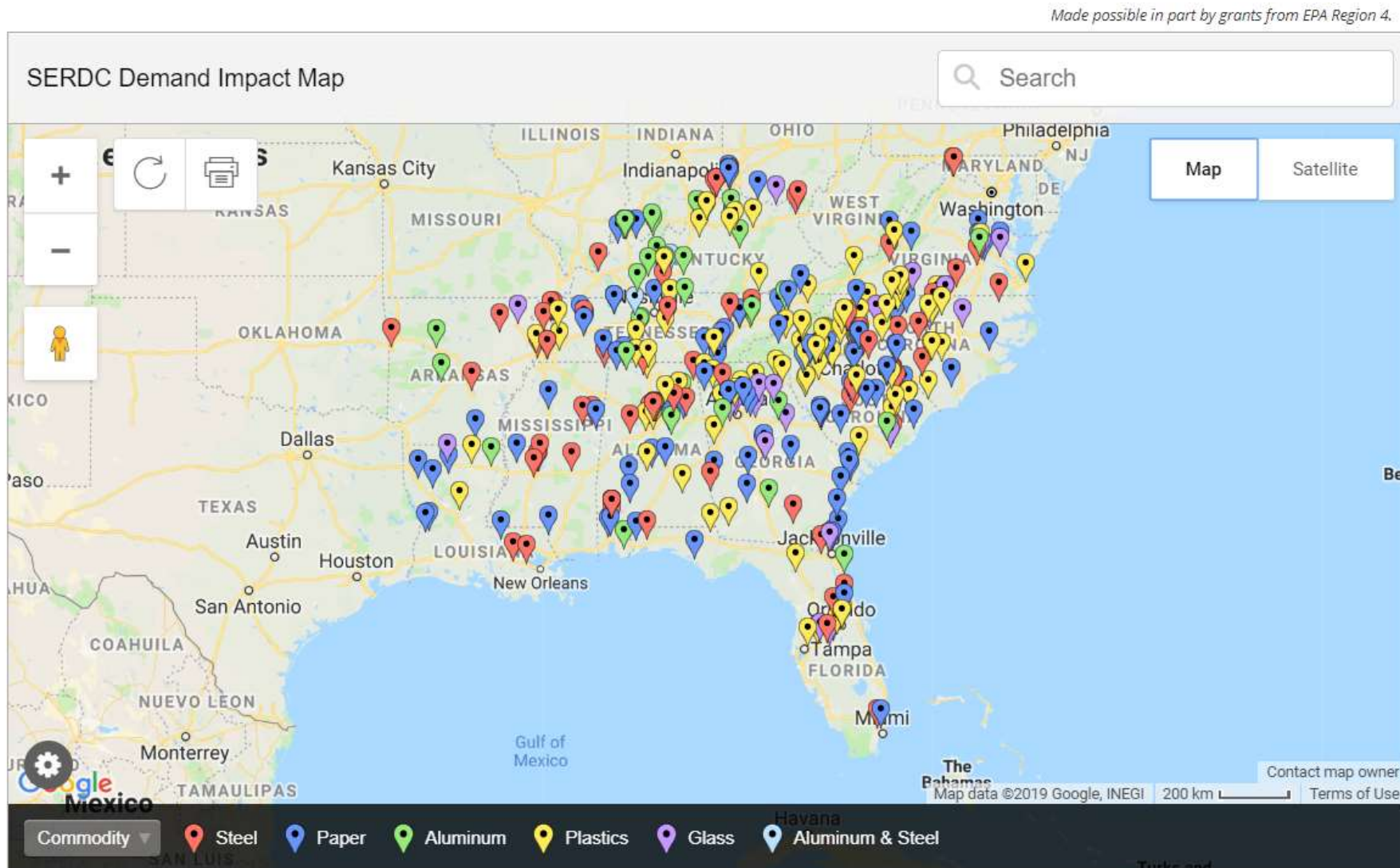
- Many programs are completely shifting collection to match new rules
- Many are eliminating materials to reduce risk of contamination
- Rejected loads = bales sent to the landfill
- Lost revenue + disposal cost

**Loss of Trust**  
**Confusion**





# EPA Facts / SERDC Map



# EPA Facts / SERDC Map

State	Manufacturers	Jobs	Total Annual Sales
Alabama	42	17,350	\$ 7,838,028,050
Arkansas	12	5,420	\$ 1,710,190,000
Florida	28	4,884	\$ 1,328,083,720
Georgia	49	13,151	\$ 7,180,349,710
Kentucky	41	11,232	\$ 5,171,108,970
Louisiana	13	4,887	\$ 1,146,008,370
Mississippi	11	1,971	\$ 1,946,893,210
North Carolina	60	14,142	\$ 4,077,868,590
South Carolina	47	10,442	\$ 5,562,649,580
Tennessee	40	7,730	\$ 4,412,814,900
Virginia	19	6,759	\$ 2,782,619,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>97,968</b>	<b>\$43,156,614,820</b>



# Recycling Industry in Alabama

- Strong
- Viable
- Hiring
- Proving the nation wrong

**BUT – we have to help our local markets by recycling right!!**



# Recycle Right – Where You Live

- Do you know the rules for recycling in your town?

They vary ...

County collection rules

City collection rules

Private hauler collection rules

## Facts:

- *What's recyclable in Florence, AL might NOT be recyclable in Birmingham, AL*
- *What's recyclable on one side of Birmingham might NOT be accepted on another side*
- *What's recyclable on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (Smith and Smith) might NOT be recyclable on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (Jones and Jones)*



A collage of various recyclable materials including clear plastic bottles, colorful plastic bottle caps, a piece of brown corrugated cardboard, and several aluminum beverage cans.

# Back to Basics

- Know the Rules where you live and work
- Stop “Wish-cycling” (hoping something is recyclable without really knowing) – you’re hurting the system
- When in doubt, read the labels, or ASK the local hauler
- Check local websites for updates

**When in doubt, toss it out**

# - The Basics in Alabama -



Soup Cans “Steel” or “Tin”

Aluminum Cans

Water bottles #1

Soda bottles #1

Milk Jugs #2

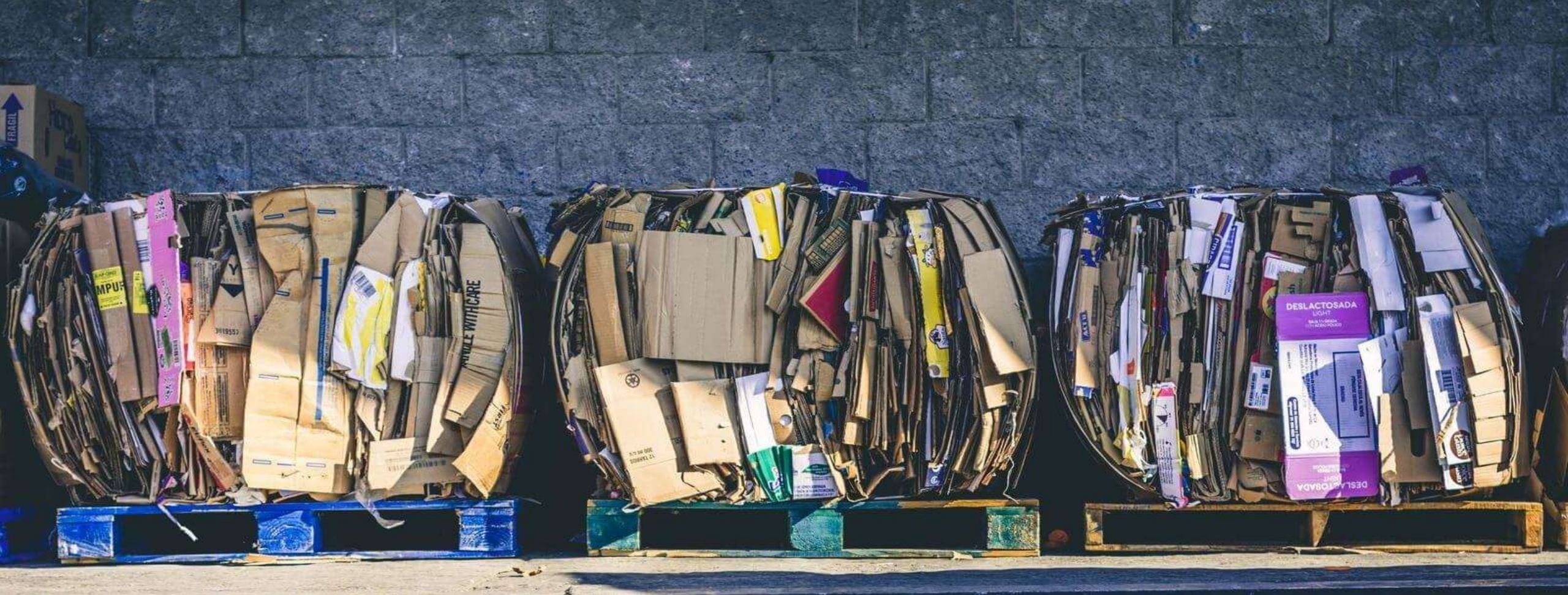
Detergent bottles #2

Newspaper / Magazines

Junk Mail / Office Paper

Cardboard





**In 2019, for Recycling to be successful, you must have...**

- **Volume (40 tons = 80,000 lbs)**
- **Well – Sorted**
- **Buyer (close by)**















**EACH YEAR,**  
**Alabamians spend**  
**over \$25 MILLION**





Complete the free survey on [alrecyclingcoalition.org](http://alrecyclingcoalition.org)  
“Recycling Where You Live”





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