Recycling Works in Alabama

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Manager, Environmental Services at UA SafeState
"Uniting and Promoting the Recycling Industry in Alabama"

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 firefighters, and 3 times more likely than police officers.

Deaths Per 100,000 Workers (2017)

- Fire Fighters: 8.2
- Police Patrol Officers: 10.6
- Solid Waste Collection Workers: 33

Source: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics
Common Divisions

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

WORKING AROUND HEAVY EQUIPMENT

WORKING IN AND AROUND TRAFFIC

HEAVY LIFTING TRIPS & FALLS LACERATIONS

EXPOSURE TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Have you thanked your...
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
Our City recycles everything. We recycle 97% of all garbage. We will be zero landfill by 2020. 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
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)
National and Regional Impacts

- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Manufacturers</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
<th>Total Annual Sales</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17,350</td>
<td>$7,838,028,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5,420</td>
<td>$1,710,190,000</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4,884</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>Kentucky</td>
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<td>$5,171,108,970</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
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<td>10,442</td>
<td>$5,562,649,580</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7,730</td>
<td>$4,412,814,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6,759</td>
<td>$2,782,619,720</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>362</strong></td>
<td><strong>97,968</strong></td>
<td><strong>$43,156,614,820</strong></td>
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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 3rd floor (Smith and Smith) might NOT be recyclable on the 2nd floor (Jones and Jones)
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)
What About These Items?
We will send you a custom video for your community to use.
EACH YEAR, Alabamians spend over $25 MILLION
Complete the free survey on alarecyclingcoalition.org
“Recycling Where You Live”
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