How Does Recycling Metal Help the Environment?

Scrap metal recycling, along with other types of recycling, helps the environment by reducing the use of energy, the consumption of raw materials, preventing useful materials from being wasted and reducing water and air pollution (from landfills and incineration) and lessening our need for our conventional disposal of waste, which will also reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

Scrap metal recycling helps to preserve our natural resources and save energy as well as reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Over 145 million tons of scrap materials are removed from landfills by scrap metal recycling. In areas where there is a large amount of scrap, it’s often taken to junkyards or scrap yards until it can be put into a melter to be processed into a new product. By keeping them out of the landfills, we’re helping to keep our water and air cleaner by eliminating any possibly hazardous materials from the atmosphere. (Source: Recycling Facts Guide)

Generating $54 billion in sales in 2009, the scrap recycling industry is larger than the GDP of over 100 countries around the globe.

According to the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc. (ISRI), scrap recycling employs over 100,000 employees in the U.S. and has been creating “green jobs” for decades. At a time when the U.S. economy is struggling, scrap recycling is creating secure, meaningful work for our nation’s workforce. The scrap recycling industry is a positive solution in the U.S. manufacturing landscape, providing new jobs based on environmentally sensitive and sustainable business practices.

The desert and urban landscapes of Nevada are littered with scrap metal that can be recycled in exchange for monetary compensation. This provides a great opportunity for your local business, civic organization, club or church to raise money.

For a company that has a large amount of metal, steel and other recyclables, you can get excellent prices for your items from a scrap metal recycling business as well as having it done at your convenience. Many of them will bring scrap metal bins to your place of business or provide you with pallets, hoppers, stackable bins or whatever is most convenient for you. When you need them picked up, the scrap metal recycling business will be there, also at your convenience, to take the items away, providing you with fast payment for your recyclables.

Here is a simple guide to help you determine what can and cannot be recycled.

Ferrous and Non-Ferrous Metals, What’s the Difference?

According to ISRI, the scrap metal recycling industry encompasses a wide range of metals. Some of the most commonly recycled metals (by volume) are iron and scrap steel (ISS), copper, aluminum, lead, zinc, and stainless steel.

Scrap metals, in general, are divided into two basic categories: ferrous and nonferrous.

Ferrous scrap is metal that contains iron. Iron and steel (which contains iron) can be processed and remelted repeatedly to form new objects.

Common nonferrous metals are copper, brass, aluminum, zinc, magnesium, tin, nickel, and lead. Nonferrous metals also include precious and exotic metals. Precious metals are metals with a high market value in any form, such as gold, silver, and platinum. Exotic metals contain rare elements such as cobalt, mercury, titanium, tungsten, arsenic, beryllium, bismuth, cerium, cadmium, niobium, indium, gallium, germanium, lithium, selenium, tantalum, tellurium, vanadium, and zirconium.
Where Do We Go?
Permitted disposal facilities in Clark County will accept recyclable material from individuals and/or businesses. The type of recyclable material accepted is determined by the facility’s permit.
Not all facilities can accept recycling from individuals. For a complete list of recyclers in Clark County, visit [http://www.nevadarecycles.gov/doc/clark_county_guide_2_10.pdf](http://www.nevadarecycles.gov/doc/clark_county_guide_2_10.pdf)

About A&A Midwest Recycling
A&A Midwest Recycling is one of the largest full-service recyclers on the West Coast. A&A Midwest Recycling has been family owned and operated since 1949 and continues to be known for its outstanding customer service and high degree of integrity. A&A Midwest Recycling specializes in recycling automotive scrap and cores, copper, steel, aluminum, brass, stainless steel, cast iron, whole A/C units, condenser coils, electric motors and sealed units. In addition to scrap metal, A&A Midwest Recycling recycles many items including plastics and electronics. For more information, visit [www.aamidwestrecycling.com](http://www.aamidwestrecycling.com)

Common Sources of Recycled Metals

**Ferrous**
According to ISRI, ferrous scrap comes from sources such as:
- Mill scrap (from primary processing)
- Used construction beams, plates, pipes, tubes, wiring, and shot
- Old automobiles and other automotive scraps
- Boat scrap, railroad scrap, and railcar scrap
- Miscellaneous scrap metal

Ferrous metals are magnetic and are often collected in scrap yards by a large electromagnet attached to a crane, sweeping across piles of scrap to grab magnetic objects.

**Nonferrous**
Aluminum is the most widely-recycled nonferrous metal. The major sources of nonferrous scrap are industrial or new scrap, and obsolete scrap. Industrial or new scrap may include:
- Aluminum left over when can lids are punched out of sheets
- Brass from lock manufacturing
- Copper from tubing manufacturing

Obsolete scrap, the other major source, may include:
- Copper cables
- Copper household products
- Copper and zinc pipes and radiators
- Zinc from die-cast alloys in cars
- Aluminum from used beverage cans
- Aluminum from building siding
- Platinum from automobile catalytic converters
- Gold from electronic applications
- Silver from used photographic film
- Nickel from stainless steel
- Lead from battery plates

Nonferrous metals can also be recycled from captured particle emissions from metal primary or secondary production facilities.

Can Automobiles be Recycled?
According to the EPA, nearly all of the 27 million cars around the world that reach the end of their useful life are recovered for recycling each year compared to 60 percent for paper and seven percent for plastics. Vehicles can be completely dismantled. As a result, many complete engine, drive train systems and body components are exported to developing countries. In addition, export markets will utilize transmissions, steering gears and sheet metal, including doors, hoods and clips.

Vehicles that are brought to a scrap metal recycling operation are disassembled in accordance with local, state and federal regulations that apply to the proper recycling or disposal of all automotive related fluids and components. This includes gasoline, oil, Freon, antifreeze, brake fluid, batteries and transmission fluid.

By bringing vehicles into a vehicle salvage operation, a scrap recycler will purchase the vehicle for top market value. This helps take non-roadworthy vehicles off the streets.