

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: “Celebrating Recycling's Benefits”**

In honor of "Oklahoma Celebrates America Recycles Day" this year, the Oklahoma Recycling Association (OKRA) wants to remind Oklahomans of recycling's benefits. Recycling provides a range of environmental and economic benefits to our communities that the alternatives, landfilling and incineration, simply do not provide.

Manufacturing with recycled materials saves energy and water and produces less air and water pollution than manufacturing with virgin materials. It takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials. Making recycled steel saves 60%, recycled newspapers 40%, recycled plastics 70%, and recycled glass 40%, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Recycling in the U.S. is a multi-billion dollar industry, with \$14 billion in the sale of recyclables alone. If it didn't make economic sense, why would thousands of U.S. companies process recyclables and manufacture new products with recycled content? Michael Patton, Director of the Metropolitan Environmental Trust in Tulsa, recently announced that "recycling businesses provide 5,000 jobs in our state, as well as an annual payroll of over 200 million dollars."

While it's true that some recycling programs are less efficient than they could be, many local governments and corporations have demonstrated time and again that recycling can actually lower the overall cost of solid waste management. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says waste prevention and recycling are also some of the best strategies to combat global warming.

Disposal options like landfilling extend the responsibility for and the costs of our waste to future generations. Recycling relieves pressure on dwindling natural resources and places the responsibility on this generation, where it belongs, to be wise stewards of our resources for our children.

Recycling is a true economic and environmental solution, both locally and globally. Recycling is one of the few environmental actions that every single American can participate in and feel good about. The American public knows a good thing when it sees it and will continue to recycle as much as possible, because they know it really does make a difference.

For recycling to be truly successful, recyclable materials must be processed into new products, and those products must be purchased and used. Many bottles, cans, paper wrappings, bags, cereal boxes, and other cartons and packages are made from recycled materials. Look for items in packages and containers made from post-consumer recycled content for maximum effectiveness.

Oklahoma has along way to go to catch up with the majority of the nation. For information on what's happening with recycling in Oklahoma, sign up for the Oklahoma Recycling Association's electronic distribution list on the website: [www.recycleok.org](http://www.recycleok.org). While you're there, be sure to complete a pledge form for this year's America Recycles Day prize drawing.