

# The Scrap Recycling Industry: Recovered Fiber

Forty-five percent (45%) of the world's total paper production is **produced using recovered paper and board**, also known as recovered fiber or paper. Here in the U.S., roughly 80% of America's paper mills **rely on recovered fiber to make some or all of their products**. One hundred and forty mills use only recovered paper to manufacture new products. The paper recycling segment of the recycling industry collects, sorts, and processes the recovered fiber into a **specification grade product**. That product is sold and transported to paper mills worldwide for reprocessing and production into **new packaging, office paper, tissue, newsprint, and a multitude of other paper products**.

## THE FIBER INDUSTRY

The U.S. recovered 54.3 million tons of paper in 2007:

- 56% of the paper consumed in the United States
- Enough paper to fill more than 100 Empire State Buildings
- Approximately 360 lbs. for every person in America

19.9 million tons (2000 lb.) of recovered paper was exported in 2007 including:

- 2.7 million tons of printed news
- 5.7 million tons of corrugated cardboard
- 7.7 million tons of mixed paper
- 8 million tons of hi-grade paper
- 1.8 million tons of other mechanical
- 1.2 million tons of pulp subs

Recovered paper is exported to 91 countries including: China, Canada, South Korea, India, and Mexico.

More than 70% of the corrugated containers and newspapers consumed are recovered.

Each percentage point of recovery represents roughly 1 million tons of fiber—enough fiber to fill 14,000 railroad cars.

Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees, 79 gallons of oil, 7,000 gallons of water, 4000 KWH of electricity and 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.

Recovered paper accounts for 37% of the raw product used by U.S. paper mills.

In 2007, paper processors were a \$9.1 billion industry in this country.

Using recycled materials vs. virgin requires only 60% of the energy.

Recycling one ton of paper saves more than 4,000 kilowatt hours of electricity, enough to power the average U.S. home for five months.

Using recycled paper and paperboard prevents more than 115 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from entering the atmosphere.

The entire paper recycling process employs nearly 500,000 workers.

The world's first piece of paper was made from recycled paper.



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Voice of the Recycling Industry

Institute of  
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