

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMALL CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR PLANET!

WHEN YOU THROW SOMETHING AWAY, WHERE DOES IT GO?

IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2017,

267.8 MILLION TONS OF TRASH

WERE GENERATED

139.6 MILLION TONS

ENDED UP IN LANDFILLS

BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

YOU CAN DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF TRASH THAT IS THROWN AWAY BY TAKING A FEW EASY STEPS:

REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF MATERIALS YOU USE, WHICH



REDUCES THE AMOUNT OF WASTE YOU CREATE.

REUSE MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE



RECYCLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE



YOU USE

AND THOSE

YOU THROW AWAY

RETHINK THE MATERIALS

BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE'RE USING AND HOW TO REDUCE THE WASTE WE PRODUCE, WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLEANER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT IS MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)?

OUR TRASH, OR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE, IS COMPRISED OF VARIOUS MATERIALS CONSUMERS CONTINUOUSLY THROW AWAY AFTER BEING USED.



MSW DOES NOT INCLUDE INDUSTRIAL, HAZARDOUS, OR CONSTRUCTION WASTE.



DID YOU KNOW?

ABOUT 75% OF FOOD

THAT COULD BE COMPOSTED

ENDED UP IN LANDFILLS

THE IMPACT

RECYCLING HELPS TO CREATE CLEANER LAND, AIR, AND WATER, AND BETTER HEALTH.

IN 2017, NATIONALLY, WE RECYCLED

AND COMPOSTED

94 MILLION TONS OF MSW.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING HELPS SAVE NATURAL RESOURCES.

OUR PROGRESS



OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, THE RECYCLING, COMPOSTING, COMBUSTION WITH ENERGY RECOVERY, AND LANDFILLING OF MSW HAS CHANGED.

3.66 LBS IN 1980

4.51 LBS IN 2017

WHILE THE AMOUNT OF MSW PRODUCED WENT UP PER PERSON PER DAY, RECYCLING HAS ALSO INCREASED.

<10% IN 1980

35.2% IN 2017

IN 2017, OVER 24 MILLION TONS OF YARD TRIMMINGS WERE COMPOSTED...

ALMOST FIVE TIMES AS MUCH AS IN 1990.



1990

FROM 145.3 MILLION

TO 139.6 MILLION TONS

2017

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF MSW GOING TO LANDFILLS DROPPED

WHILE THE U.S. POPULATION INCREASED

HOW YOU CAN HELP

IN STORES:

- Shop for products made with recycled materials.
- Buy items with less packaging.
- Buy refillable, reusable containers.
- Bring your own bags to the store.
- Buy only what you need or what you know you will use (applies to food as well).

AT HOME:

- Use bags that you already have in your home and recycle bags that you no longer need if they can be recycled.
- Ask to be removed from paper mailing lists.
- Don't throw anything away that can be reused or repaired.
- For unwanted used electronics, try upgrading the device to continue using it. Otherwise, donate or recycle it.
- Print on both sides of paper (and use recycled paper) or do not print at all.
- Compost your food scraps and yard waste.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

If we all take small steps every day to reduce the amount of waste we produce, we can help protect the planet for generations to come.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/recycle.



This information is based on data from EPA's Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: Facts and Figures 2017. For more information, visit <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling>