

# Recycling – Level 1

## RECYCLING

The Bible tells us that God created the Earth in six days and that on the sixth day He created man. In Genesis 1:28 we read, "...Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." With these words and following verses, God puts man in charge of the earth and living things in it.

By putting man in charge, God also gives him the responsibility to take care of the earth. Just as a supervisor is expected to take care of those under him, man is to take care of the things under him. They are there for his use.

Because of all God has done for us, from creating us and sending His Son to die for us, we will want to serve Him as good stewards of the things he has given us. That is the reason Lutheran Pioneers get involved in recycling programs at home and in their community.

## GOVERNMENT RULES

Once sin entered into the world, problems started. Man, because of his sinful nature, was no longer worried about taking good care of what God had given him. To man it became more important to get what he could for himself. There also weren't as many people and life was simpler so not as much was needed.

As we moved into the last half of this century, it became more obvious that we were not taking good care of God's gifts. Even, non-believers began to see the problems that were being created.

Governments began to set up rules for making better use of the materials God created. Today, most states and communities have mandatory recycling programs that involve taking items to a central place or having them picked up at your home.

## TYPES OF RECYCLABLES

In this section we will look at some of the more common items that are recycled. The first is Aluminum. This was one of the first items that were recycled. As long as most of us can remember, people have saved soda cans and turned them in for money. There is a limited amount of the mineral from which aluminum is made and it is very expensive to get so when methods were found to recycle aluminum cans, it became something everyone could get involved in.

In some states there is a deposit on the cans when you purchase soda. That is a strong incentive to return them to get your money back.

A second item that is often recycled is newspaper. Some states require that all newspapers use paper that contains a certain percentage of recycled paper. Many groups collect newspaper as a fund-raising project, however prices are not as good as they once were.

Cardboard is also recycled in many places. All types of boxes from heavy weight ones to shoe boxes to cereal boxes can be recycled and made into new cardboard.

Another item that is recycled is plastic. This is especially true now that much of our soda comes in plastic bottles and almost all milk comes in plastic jugs.

Glass is also recycled. All types of jars can be used in recycling.

Car owners can recycle their motor oil. There are often collection points where you can take the oil and garages recycle the oil they collect.

Finally, tin and steel are recycled in most states and communities.

## **DISPOSAL OF RECYCLABLES**

In general, there are two ways that a community handles recycling. The first is the recycling center. In this case, everyone has to bring their materials to central point and drop them off. From there they are sold to companies who use the materials to make new items.

The second method of recycling is to have the materials picked up at your home. This may be on a weekly basis or possibly every other week. This method is often used in cities or areas with more people.

## **A HOME RECYCLING CENTER**

Having to recycle has caused people to begin to set up home recycling centers. Often you are required to separate your recyclable items into their categories. This is best done when you are done using the items rather than throwing them all together and then separating them at the last minute. If possible, set up your center in the garage because it often will attract bugs or other animals. It helps to clean or rinse the items before putting them in the center. If possible you may want to keep the items covered.

You can use garbage cans, plastic bags, cardboard boxes or many other items to set up your center. You can even buy bins made just for recycling. Whatever you choose to use, keep it neat and clean and it won't be a problem.

Whenever possible, crush your aluminum cans and steel or tin cans. Be sure to check the rules on this if you are in a state that has a deposit on the cans. This helps them to take up less space. You can also crush your plastic milk jugs and soda bottles for the same reason. You will also want to bundle your papers in some way to make them easier to handle. Again, check with your local government to see how you should do it.

When choosing the method of storage you plan to use, be sure to check with your local government. They may have rules on the type of bags or containers they want you to use. Make every try to follow the guidelines they set up. It helps them and will cause you less problems.

## **USE OF RECYCLABLES**

Each year we hear of more uses for the recycled materials. Aluminum is reused to make new aluminum. Almost all of the aluminum made today in the USA comes from recycled aluminum.

Tin, steel and glass are also recycled to be used in the making of new materials.

Today, more and more uses are being found for recycled plastics. Fabrics for use in making t-shirts are made from plastic soda bottles. Boards, piping and drain tile are also made from recycled plastics. They are durable; they never rot or rust, and are very heavy. On a smaller scale, bird feeders, birdhouses and a variety of other crafts can be made from the soda bottles we all have.

I would guess that you could come up with many other ideas for using your recycled items. Think about it and be creative.

Our Lord has blessed us in many ways. He has given us the important job of taking care of His creation. Out of love for what he has done for us, we will want to serve Him and be good stewards of what we have.

### **Requirements Level 1:**

- Identify all the recyclables that your family uses.
- Recycle everything that is recyclable
- Manage the recyclables for your family for 6 months
- Keep track of everything you recycle