



RECYCLING STEEL APPLIANCES

Washing Machines, Water Heaters, Air Conditioners, Refrigerators, Dryers...

Appliances are made from steel

Appliances are, in fact, systems of mechanical and electrical components encased in steel shells or bodies. Various operating parts are made of steel or iron. An inherent part of our lives, appliances provide convenience and fulfill essential roles from the kitchen to the laundry room and elsewhere.



Recycled content of appliances

By weight, the typical appliance consists of about 75 percent steel. This steel is recyclable, as is all steel, and is being recycled today. The steel used in appliances is made with a minimum of 25 percent recycled steel. In addition, internal steel components may be made using either 25 percent or virtually 100 percent recycled steel. For this reason, all appliances contain recycled steel and are recyclable when they have reached the end of their useful lives.

Nationwide recycling efforts

Appliances with steel content are simply too valuable to landfill, and would take up a considerable amount of our nation's valuable landfill space. As a result, a vast infrastructure has been developed around the recycling of end-of-service steel appliances, as well as other steel materials.

Environmental benefits

Recycling steel saves energy and natural resources. In a year, the steel industry saves the equivalent energy to electrically power about 18 million households for a year. By recycling one ton of steel, 2500 pounds of iron ore, 1400 pounds of coal and 120 pounds of limestone are conserved. The Clean Air Act of 1990 mandated that prior to recycling or disposal, chloro-fluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochloro-fluorocarbons (HCFCs) contained in air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers be removed for recycling. In some areas, scrap dealers have the CFC removal equipment and certified technicians for this procedure. In other areas, specialty businesses provide this service, either independently, or in association with appliance dealers or the local government.

Landfill bans

All 50 states contribute to recycling appliances, with some working more aggressively than others to avoid landfilling these recyclable items. The purpose of these bans is to extend the life of the nation's landfills and to encourage private industry and the public sector to implement recycling of these goods.

About the Steel Recycling Institute

The Steel Recycling Institute (SRI), a unit of the American Iron & Steel Institute, educates the solid waste management industry, government, business and ultimately the consumer about the economic and environmental benefits of recycling steel. SRI works to ensure the continuing development of the steel recycling infrastructure.