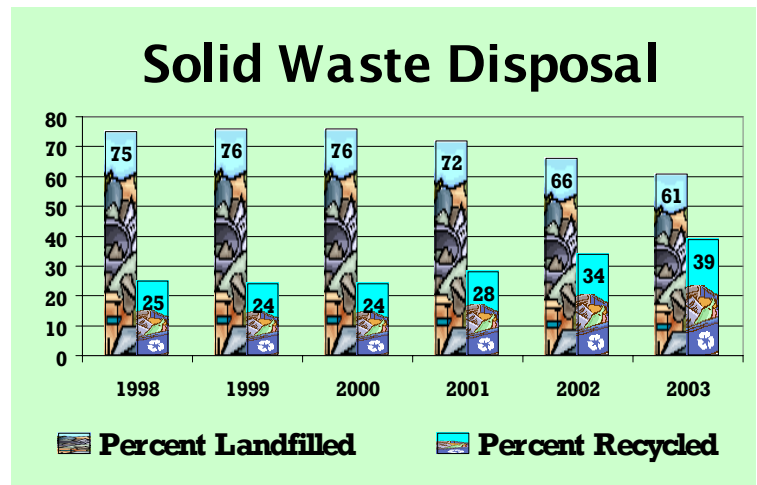


# State of Recycling In Arkansas – 2003

Arkansas is well on the way to reaching its goal of recycling 40 percent of the municipal solid waste stream by 2005. Nearly 39 percent of the 2003 solid waste stream was collected, marketed and returned back to consumers as usable products through business and community recycling programs. This puts us above the most recently reported national average. However, while recycling is gaining ground, landfilling remained the disposal method of choice.

More good news is that the amount of waste being created is declining. In 2003, Arkansans generated nearly 3.5 million tons of solid waste, about 7 pounds per day for every Arkansan. Last year's figure was 8.4 pounds per person per day.



## The Arkansas Recyclers Association (ARA)

In reviewing data received from facilities about the items they recycle, the Recycling Market Development staff noticed something interesting. Thirty-eight percent of the tonnage recorded was provided by the Arkansas Recyclers Association on behalf of its members. That's reason enough to take a closer look at the ARA.

The ARA is a state trade association that has, for more than 15 years, represented Arkansas businesses that process, broker and consume scrap materials. Its members participate in all stages of recycling – from collections through processing and melting into final end use and a new product. Most ARA member companies are family-owned businesses that have engaged in recycling and responsible resource conservation activities in Arkansas for several generations. Its members represent a large segment of economic development in



Arkansas and have created thousands of solid manufacturing jobs for our state.

ARA member facilities range from fairly simple collection and processing centers to large recyclable-consuming end users such as steel mills or secondary aluminum manufacturers. The ARA is especially proud that its membership includes all four of the Arkansas steel mills and that it represents a broad range of recyclable commodities – including metal, paper, glass, plastic and textiles. The ARA is also proud of its role in promoting responsible recycling in Arkansas as a viable alternative to landfilling solid waste.

The ARA has traditionally viewed one of its key roles as providing constructive input into any state legislative or regulatory issue that would impact private sector recycling. This has included proactive efforts in the Arkansas Legislature regarding a variety of recycling and solid waste initiatives. In fact, the ARA helped develop several of the recycling legislative provisions found in current state statutes. The ARA has expressed the desire to remain vigilant in ensuring that legislative or regulatory proposals do not inadvertently harm or discourage private sector recycling.

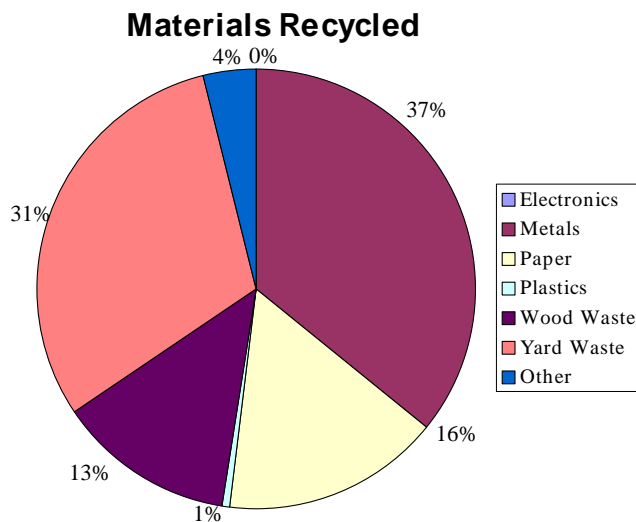
# ADEQ Recycling Activities

The ADEQ Solid Waste Management Division's Recycling Section offers general information, technical assistance and educational programs targeted at reducing the amount of waste going into landfills. Although the name focuses on recycling, the section's actual emphasis is on waste prevention including reduction, reuse and composting as well as recycling. In addition, the section administers a multi-million dollar Recycling Grants program discussed in a separate section.

and offering information/assistance. They also gave more than 200 educational presentations reaching more than 5000 Arkansans, including seven full- or half-day environmental education workshops for teachers. These workshops are generally held in cooperation with one or more of the 16 Regional Solid Waste Management Districts.

Other activities enhancing recycling in Arkansas were undertaken by the ADEQ Recycling Market Development Section, also part of the Solid Waste Management Division. Each year, this section targets a different waste for special attention. Agricultural plastic pipe was the focus for 2003, and section staff was successful in expanding the market for this commodity. The amount recycled increased 10 percent, moving from 5,225 tons in 2002 to 5,760 tons in 2003. Due to increased processing capacity just coming online, Agricultural plastic pipe is targeted again for 2004.

In addition, Recycling Market Development administers the Recycling Equipment Tax Credit program, which helps Arkansas businesses, both large and small, invest in recycling. More than 122 companies have invested nearly \$368 million, creating at least 1750 jobs since the recycling tax credit program began 12 years ago. In 2003, the section certified 59 tax credit applications totaling more than \$10 million.



Recycling Section staff members visited more than 80 recycling centers and businesses during the year, keeping updated on activities

## Recycling Grants to Communities

Nine hundred and seventy-three recycling grants have been awarded to communities over the past 10 years. The grant program awarded more than \$2.6 million in 2003, resulting in a total 10-year investment of more than \$25 million. Citizens, businesses, schools and industries in all 75 counties have the opportunity to reduce waste by making the choice to recycle at nearly 200 public recycling centers. During these 10 years, recycling has diverted more than 1 million tons of waste from Arkansas landfills – more than 833 pounds for every Arkansan. In 2003,

these programs recycled 110,155 tons, saving nearly \$8 million in landfill disposal costs and averaging more than 81 pounds per person recycled.

In 2003, the direct economic benefits from the recycling grants program continued to increase. Of the \$25.4 million granted since 1994, more than \$22.6 million has been expended with a direct economic benefit of nearly \$40 million to the citizens of Arkansas. For each dollar expended by the program, citizens have realized a direct return of \$1.76 and more than 100 pounds of waste recycled.

# Long-Running Programs Still Going Strong

Today, Arkansans have the opportunity to recycle at least some items in every county. It wasn't always that way. Many of the programs in Northwest Arkansas were developed during the early stages of recycling in the state. Not only have some of the earliest recycling programs continued to operate, they also have continued to grow. This year, we'd like to focus on three of the longest running – Bella Vista, Eureka Springs, and Rogers Community Recycling.

## Bella Vista

Bella Vista's program, begun in 1974, is run by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Chapter 109. The chapter members knew little about recycling when they began, planning their processes to fit their needs. This sometimes made marketing the materials difficult. However, chapter members learned quickly and were soon making a success of the center.

The original facility was a small, out-of-the-way place, but people in the community still found and used it. The amount of materials brought to the center made for cramped quarters, but center volunteers made do. Still they dreamed of a bigger, more modern facility. The dream came true in 2002 when they opened a new, larger, more convenient recycling center.

Getting the new facility open took a true community effort. The buildings and land were donated by Cooper Communities, Inc. The Bella Vista Property Owners Association, Public Works Department, provided free labor. Part of the funding for the project was provided by



ADEQ Recycling Grants.

The center accepts corrugated cardboard, glass, #1 and #2 plastic bottles, computer and office paper, aluminum cans and newspapers. The items collected are processed and marketed by about 55 volunteers. The new facility makes



their work a little easier.

Much of the proceeds from the recycling center are returned to the community. For instance, 50 percent of the funds from recycled aluminum cans goes to the Bella Vista ambulance service and 50 percent of the money generated from recycled office paper goes to the Friends of the Bella Vista Public Library.

## Eureka Springs

A grassroots effort in Eureka Springs led to the city's first recycling effort, a drop-off program, around 1988. While there is still a drop-off facility in the city, the recycling program has advanced to residential curbside collection within the city. It has also brought recycling to other areas of the county.

Recycling is important to Eureka Springs residents because the city operates under a "pay-as-you-throw" concept, meaning residents pay for trash collection service based on how much solid waste they generate. The recycling program, which is free, provides an opportunity to reduce the amount of solid waste a household throws away.

Since 1993, the Eureka Springs processing facility has been operated by the Carroll County Solid Waste Authority, a special unit of local government formed as a partnership of Carroll County, Berryville, Eureka Springs and Green Forest. This provides for more efficient



processing and marketing of recyclables.

Collection facilities throughout the county accept aluminum cans and foil, glass containers, plastic bottles, newsprint and steel cans. Additionally, residents have one or more opportunities to recycle mixed paper, corrugated cardboard, old appliances (white goods), motor oil, cooking oil, electronics and household hazardous waste. In addition, the city collects yard waste for a thriving compost operation.

The public schools in Eureka Springs have also gotten into the act. Students who have qualified for an independent study can receive school credit by sponsoring and implementing a recycling program.

### **Rogers Community Recycling**

Since the late 1970s, volunteers have been collecting and marketing materials at the Rogers Community Recycling Center. The goal of this facility is to keep recyclable waste out of the landfill and to offer financial support to community programs for youth and senior citizens.

The center's goal has remained the same



through the years, but the facility hasn't. The building has grown to 10,800 square feet, a variety of equipment has been purchased and, best of all, the number of recyclable items collected has grown from one (newspaper) to eleven.

This drop-off facility currently accepts aluminum, both cans and scrap; corrugated cardboard; chipboard; glass, both colored and clear; newspapers; office paper; and plastic bottles - #1, #2 and #2 colored.

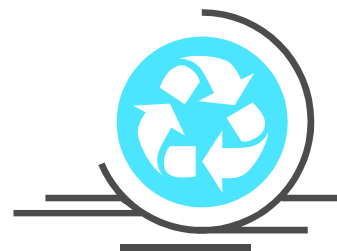
The Roger Community Recycling Center is now staffed by four employees paid by the city, but they couldn't run it alone. Approximately 12 senior citizens, median age 72, volunteer at the center. These volunteers work hard sorting and processing materials, maintaining equipment and building collection bins.

As with the Bella Vista program, much of the proceeds from the Rogers Community Recycling Center are returned to the community. The recycling center has funded the new activities center, scholarships for youth programs, land or equipment for a variety of programs, and participation in community service projects.



While these are some of the longest running programs in the state, they are by no means old or out-of-date. They continue to grow, expanding the opportunities they offer to their communities. And they are not alone. There are nearly 200 programs offering recycling to residents throughout the state. The ADEQ Recycling Branch appreciates the benefits each and every one of them provides.

# ***Thank You For Recycling***





# Recycling's Environmental Benefits

Recycling provides a variety of environmental benefits that are rarely reported except in general statements such as “saves energy” and “reduces greenhouse gases.” The National Recycling Coalition has provided an Environmental Benefits Calculator which allows users to quantify these environmental benefits. Using information specific to Arkansas provides the following results of recycling in 2002:

▶ **Energy Savings** due to recycling and remanufacture versus disposal and manufacturing from virgin materials amounted to 14,396,958 million Btus. That's nearly 12 million Btus for every Arkansas household, approximately 11.5 percent of an average annual energy bill. Put another way, it's equivalent to saving 3,488 kilowatt hours, or approximately \$280, per household during the year.

▶ **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** were reduced by 563,410 metric tons of carbon equivalent, a metric measure used to compare the emissions of different greenhouse gases based on their global warming potential. The increased temperature and changes in precipitation associated with global warming could have adverse effects on human health and the economy as well as many ecological systems.

▶ **Other Air Emissions and Waterborne Wastes** were also reduced. Air emissions were reduced by 1,022,192 tons. This includes gases such as sulfur oxides, which contribute to acid rain, and particulates, which contribute to ozone. Waterborne wastes, including ammonia and cyanide, were reduced by 3,806 tons.

▶ **Natural Resources** are conserved when recycled materials are used instead of virgin materials in the manufacturing process. For instance, the steel recycled in Arkansas saved 578,963 tons of iron ore; 324,219 tons of coal; and 27,790 tons of limestone. Arkansans also saved more than 3.2 million trees by recycling paper products.

## **Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality**

Marcus C. Devine, Director

Solid Waste Management Division

Recycling Section

Robert Hunter, Manager

Phone: 501-682-0812

[www.adeq.state.ar.us](http://www.adeq.state.ar.us)

---

*Information presented in this document is from several sources. Arkansas specific data on waste generated and recycled, the Recycling Tax Credit program and the Recycling Grants program is collected as required by Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission Regulations 11, 14, 16, 22 and 28. National figures and generic information were provided by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency.*

# Materials Recycled 2003

<b>Material</b>	<b>Weight in tons</b>
Batteries	519
Computers	289
Cooking Oil	2,253
Glass	974
Metals	480,024
Aluminum Cans/Non-ferrous	41,824
Oil Filters	216
Steel Cans	461
White Goods/Ferrous	437,523
Motor Oil	3,818
Pallets and Other Wood Waste	173,045
Paper	215,511
Cardboard	147,790
Computer Printout	74
Mixed	18,973
Newsprint	15,355
White Ledger	3,262
Other (hard white shavings, plastic coated, etc.)	30,057
Plastic	9,878
HDPE (High Density Polyethylene)	1,104
LDPE (Low Density Polyethylene)	907
PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate)	792
Poly Pipe	5,760
Other	1,315
Textiles and Leather	425
Tires	1,931
Yard Waste	412,866
Other (Other oil, etc.)	41,698
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,343,231</b>

2,115,306 tons landfilled in 2003

$2,115,305.53 + 1,343,231 = 3,458,537$  total municipal solid waste stream in 2003

$1,347,049 / 3,458,537 = 38.8$  percent recycling rate