

Recycling goes far, far beyond the bin at the edge of the curb. In fact, in 2010 alone, more than 130 million metric tons of scrap metal, paper, plastic, glass, textiles, rubber and electronics, valued at more than \$77 billion, were manufactured into specification grade commodities by the scrap recycling industry in the United States. These commodities were sold as valuable feedstock material to industrial consumers in the United States and in more than 155 countries around the world and contributed nearly \$30 billion in export sales, significantly helping the U.S. trade balance.

The U.S.-based scrap recycling industry is a sophisticated, capital-intensive industry that employs approximately 130,000 workers in the United States. As the first link in the manufacturing supply chain, scrap recycling has been integral to the U.S. economy, global trade and resource sustainability for more than 200 years.

U.S. Economy

	2009	2010
Industry Size	\$54 Billion	\$77 Billion
Employment (Yearly Average)	105,000	107,500
Volume of Scrap Material Annually Processed (Metric Tons)		
Iron and Steel	70,000,000	74,000,000
Paper	45,400,000	46,800,000
Aluminum	4,700,000	4,600,000
Copper	1,700,000	1,900,000
Lead	1,300,000	1,200,000
Zinc	150,000	160,000
Plastic (bottles)	658,390 (2008)	654,220 (2009)
Electronics	1,800,000	3,500,000
Tires (# of tires)	80,000,000	90,000,000

Environment

Scrap recycling reduces greenhouse gas emissions by requiring significantly less energy to manufacture products from recyclables than virgin materials and by avoiding landfilling.

Energy saved using recycled materials is up to:

92% for aluminum	90% for copper	87% for plastic
68% for paper	56% for steel	34% for glass

Scrap recycling conserves natural resources:

Recycling one ton of:

- > Paper saves 3.3 cubic yards of landfill.
- > Steel conserves 2500 lbs. of iron ore, 1400 lbs. of coal and 120 lbs. of limestone.
- > Aluminum conserves more than 5 metric tons of bauxite ore and 14 megawatt hours of electricity.

Cleaner air and water result from safely removing potentially hazardous materials and keeping them out of landfills:

- > Mercury switches removed from older automobiles
- > Lead recovered from computer monitors

Global Trade

	2009	2010
Value of Scrap Commodities Exported Helping U.S. Trade Balances	\$21.9 Billion	\$29.6 Billion
Metric Tons of Scrap Exported Including:	47 Million	45 Million
Iron and Steel	21.3 Million	19.6 Million
Paper	19.1 Million	18.9 Million
Aluminum	1.7 Million	1.9 Million
Nickel, Stainless and Alloy	2.4 Million	1.9 Million
Copper	843,000	1.0 Million
Plastic (bottles)	580,000	518,000
Lead	140,000	44,000
Zinc	47,000	78,000
Rubber	111,000	172,000
Number of Countries Scrap was Exported to and Leading Destinations/Value	155 Countries	158 Countries
China	\$7.1 Billion	\$8.5 Billion
Canada	\$2.7 Billion	\$3.0 Billion
South Korea	\$1.4 Billion	\$1.7 Billion
Turkey	\$0.9 Billion	\$1.5 Billion
Taiwan	\$0.9 Billion	\$1.4 Billion
United Kingdom	\$0.7 Billion	\$1.1 Billion
Mexico	\$0.6 Billion	\$1.0 Billion
India	\$0.6 Billion	\$0.8 Billion
Germany	\$0.4 Billion	\$0.7 Billion
Italy	\$0.3 Billion	\$0.7 Billion
Hong Kong	\$0.6 Billion	\$0.7 Billion
Japan	\$0.3 Billion	\$0.6 Billion






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