



The Can's Sustainability Success Story Continues



The U.S. recycling rate for aluminum beverage cans has reached its highest level in over decade, with 65.1 percent of all cans recycled last year—a rate that is more than double that of any other beverage container and is an increase of over 7% compared to the previous year.

Nearly 61 billion aluminum cans were recycled in the U.S. in 2011, leading to a used beverage container (UBC) recycling rate of 65.1 percent—the highest in 14 years. Because it takes 95 percent less energy to produce a can from recycled material, the high recycling rate also resulted in significant energy savings. The amount of energy saved just from recycling cans in 2011 is equal to the energy equivalent of 17 million barrels of crude oil, or nearly two days of all U.S. oil imports.

“Consumers are looking for the best environmental and sustainability packaging option, and the growing demand for the can in the U.S. and around the world is further proof that the advantages of the can are important to consumers,” said Jim Peterson, vice president, marketing and corporate affairs at Ball Corporation. Ball is the largest beverage can maker in the world.

Aluminum beverage cans are unique in that they can be infinitely recycled back into new cans, keeping waste out of landfills and providing a significant amount of the material to make new cans. In fact, aluminum cans not only have the highest recycling rate of all beverage packages, they also have the greatest average amount of recycled content—by far—at 68 percent. The aluminum beverage can is the most valuable package in the recycling stream and more than covers the cost of its own collection and re-processing.

*Data provided by The Aluminum Association, Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) and Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI).