



For Immediate Release:

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ADEM Celebrates America Recycles Day

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is encouraging all Alabamians to celebrate America Recycles Day by pledging to participate in a local recycling program. November 15 has been officially designated as America Recycles Day and ADEM is reminding everybody that recycling is a simple way in which every Alabamian can protect the environment and preserve Alabama's natural resources.

Recycling protects the environment in many ways and reduces our dependence on natural resources. For example, it takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials. Likewise, recycling steel saves 60%, recycling newspaper saves 40%, recycling plastics saves 70%, and recycling glass saves 40%. Saving energy and conserving natural resources is the key to the long-term sustainability of Alabama's natural resources and have also become issues of economic importance.

ADEM supports recycling not only for its environmental benefits, but also for its contribution to our economy. According to the National Recycling Coalition, recycling creates four jobs for every one job created in the waste management and disposal industries. Recycling supports 1.1 million U.S. jobs, \$236 billion in gross annual sales, and \$37 billion in annual payrolls. Closer to home, a study by the Southeast Recycling Development Council determined that Alabama is home to 26 major manufacturers that rely on recycled feedstock for their businesses. Recycling in the state is a \$6.6 billion industry that employs more than 10,000 Alabamians. In fact, if Alabama recycled just 10% more than current levels, the economic impact would be the creation of 1,400 new jobs, a \$66 million increase in personal income, and an increase of over \$3 million in additional state tax revenue.

When government agencies invest in local recycling programs, it pays great dividends by creating private sector jobs. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management has provided over \$5 million in the past 3 years for the startup, or expansion, of local recycling programs. In many instances this has resulted in recycling being made available to residents who previously did not have access to recycling opportunities.

Another ADEM program supporting the beneficial end use of scrap tires has removed over 100,000 scrap tires from the waste stream for beneficial use in areas such as playgrounds, walking trails, and sidewalks. Efforts under this program will continue to grow in future years.

ADEM encourages all Alabamians to do their part to ensure that we all reap the many benefits of recycling. For more information about recycling in your area please contact the ADEM Recycling Program at 334-271-7988 or via e-mail at recycling@adem.state.al.us.

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