

Aluminium Recycling

Aluminium is the second most widely used metal in the world today. It is used extensively in aircraft, in building construction, and in consumer durables such as fridges, cooking utensils and air conditioners as well as in food processing equipment and cans.

Aluminium is not found in its metallic form in nature. It occurs as bauxite, a mixture of aluminium oxides, iron oxides and clay. Manufacturing aluminium metal from bauxite is a complex process.

Reducing aluminium waste

Before buying a product, consider its usefulness and how long it will last. Making informed choices when we buy and replace products and choosing long-lasting options, helps to minimise waste.

There are many alternatives to using aluminium foil such as non-disposable kitchen-ware to cook with (eg. trays) and re-usable containers to carry food or sandwiches. Choosing products without foil trays and re-using foil when possible, can also reduce excess aluminium use.

Why recycle aluminium?

Recycling reduces waste in landfill. Australia has a high rate of aluminium can recycling - almost two out of every three. However there is still room for improvement with around one billion cans ending up in landfill each year rather than being recycled.

Aluminium does not 'degrade' during the recycling process, which means it can be recycled over and over again. Recycling aluminium reduces the need for raw materials and reduces the use of valuable energy resources. For every tonne of aluminium recycled, five tonnes of bauxite are conserved.



**NATIONAL
RECYCLING WEEK**
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Factsheet



How do you recycle computers, corks, cartridges and cans?

For information on council services and drop-off locations in your area... visit



**RecyclingNearYou
.com.au**

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or call



**RECYCLING HOTLINE
1300 733 712**

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Aluminium is a valuable material to recycle due to the large amount of energy and resources used in the initial manufacture. Making a can from recycled materials rather than from bauxite saves 95% of the energy. Each single can recycled, saves enough electricity to run a TV for 3 hours. This means that recycling one kilogram of aluminium saves 20kg of greenhouse gas from the atmosphere.

How to recycle aluminium

Depending upon your local council's collection guidelines, drink cans, aluminium foil and foil food trays can be recycled.

The cans should be empty and the foil should be free from food scraps before putting them in collection bins. They don't need to be spotless so be careful not to waste water when preparing them.

If you are out, remember to bring home your cans, foil or trays to recycle at home.

Many schools and community organizations such as Scouts groups collect cans as a fundraiser. In 2005, \$30.6 million was paid to the community for aluminium cans.

Scrap aluminium can also be recycled. Scrap metal dealers offer payments for larger amounts of aluminium.

Check out RecyclingNearYou.com.au or call the Recycling Hotline 1300 733 712 to find out more about the various aluminium recycling services in your local area.

What happens to the aluminium?

Aluminium can be infinitely recycled. Recycled aluminium is made into aircraft, automobiles, bicycles, boats, computers, cookware, gutters, siding, wire and cans.

Recycling aluminium cans is a closed-loop process since used drink cans that are recycled in Australia are primarily recycled back into drink cans.

More information

Aluminium Can Group (Aluminium-Cans.com.au)
Recycle at Work WA (Recycleatwork.com.au)



is kindly supported by



the aluminium can
the complete environmental package

**Planet Ark
Environmental
Foundation**

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