

Trash Talk!



A Newsletter of
**Southeastern Indiana
Recycling District**

Fall 2025

Recycling in the Classroom and at Home



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Recycling is not just something we think about for one day out of the year. It is a habit that can become part of our everyday life, both at school and at home. When we recycle regularly, we give used materials a second life and help protect the environment.

At school, recycling can be as simple as knowing which bin to use for paper, cardboard, bottles, and cans. Students and teachers can work together to make sure items are placed in the right containers so they are ready for collection. Having clearly marked bins in classrooms, hallways, and cafeterias makes it easier for everyone to recycle the

right way. If your school needs more recycling bins to keep up with the volume, you can contact SEIRD to request them. The more convenient it is for students and staff to recycle, the more likely they are to make it part of their daily routine.

At home, recycling is just as important. Everyday items like paper, plastic bottles, glass jars, metal cans, and cardboard boxes can be turned into something new instead of ending up in the landfill. The simple act of placing these items in the correct bin helps conserve resources, save energy, and reduce the amount of waste in our communities. One way to make recycling easier is to keep bins in places where recyclable items are most often used, like the kitchen or garage. This

way, when a drink bottle or empty cereal box is finished, the recycling bin is right where it is needed.

Recycling is not complicated, but it does take a little attention. For example, make sure containers are empty and clean before putting them in the bin. Flattening cardboard boxes saves space and makes it easier to transport them. Checking your local recycling guidelines helps ensure that only accepted materials are placed in the bin. The better we sort our recyclables, the more efficiently they can be turned into new products.

Whether you are in the classroom or at home, every can, bottle, or box you recycle is part of a bigger effort to care for the Earth.

Dare to Compare

Instructions: Use the clues to find the correct answers.
Show your work.

The letter B stands for the number of plastic bottles that Carrie recycled last week.

Clues:

- A. $B + B < 40$
- B. $B > 10$
- C. B is an odd number.
- D. 5 is a factor of B.



Credit: FatCamera | E+ | Getty Images

1. Based on the first two clues, make a list of all possible answers. _____
2. Using the last two clues, cross out the numbers that cannot be the answer.

3. What is B? _____

The letter C stands for the number of cans that Javier recycled last week.

Clues:

- A. $C < 10 + 8$
- B. C is not an odd number.
- C. $C > 9$
- D. 6 is a factor of C.

1. To find C, which clue would you use first? _____
2. Which clue would you use second? _____
3. What is C? _____
4. How did you figure out the answer? _____

America Recycles Day Art Contest for kids in grades 3-5

America Recycles Day is coming up on November 15th, and SEIRD is hosting an art contest to celebrate! We invite our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students to design a flyer promoting recycling. Our winner's design will be printed on a t-shirt, and each student in their classroom will be given a shirt as well. The winner's artwork may be used in the future for SEIRD promotions. Our top three winners will also have their artwork featured on our website and Social Media, and in the Spring 2026 Trash Talk Publication. Entries are due by November 10th, and can be mailed to us at: 6556 N Shun Pike Road, JPG #534, Madison, IN 47250. Be sure to write the student's name, grade, teacher, and school, along with the best way to contact their parents on the back of the artwork. Please email emily@seird.org if you have any questions!



Scan to go to our website

School Recycling Program for the New Year!

As the new school year kicks off, the South-eastern Indiana Recycling District (SEIRD) is excited to announce that over 60 schools are participating in a weekly recycling program! SEIRD is collecting recyclables from these schools every week, making it easier for students and staff to contribute to a cleaner, greener environment.

To help schools prepare for this program, SEIRD has created a handy School Recycling Guide. This guide is available for download at seird.org and provides clear, step-by-step instructions on how to sort and package recyclables for collection. Each school has also received a copy of the guide via email. If you have any questions about how recycling works at your school, don't hesitate to reach out to SEIRD at 812-574-4080.



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Giving Halloween Costumes a Second Life



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Halloween brings out the creativity in all of us, from costumes and decorations to parties and candy. But once the fun is over, a lot of these items can end up in the trash. With a little planning, many Halloween leftovers can be reused, donated, or recycled, keeping them out of the landfill and helping our community reduce waste.

Costumes are a great place to start. Instead of packing them away in a closet or throwing them out, consider donating them to your county's SEIRD Reuse Store. You can also donate them to a local thrift store, school drama department, or community center. Some neighborhoods even host costume swaps where families can trade outfits for next year. If a costume is too worn out to be reused, look for ways to repurpose the fabric. Pieces of capes, dresses, or masks can become part of a future craft project, or even be turned into dress-up clothes for younger

children. Decorations are another big part of Halloween. Durable items like reusable lights and plastic pumpkins can be stored for next year.

Candy wrappers present more of a challenge because they are often made from mixed materials that cannot be placed in regular recycling bins. While these wrappers should not go in your curbside or SEIRD recycling bins, you can look for special collection programs, such as seasonal drop-off boxes offered by certain stores or community events.

When Halloween is over, taking a few extra steps to reuse or recycle what you can helps keep our community cleaner and greener. Remember to check the SEIRD website if you are unsure how to dispose of any Halloween items.

Where in the World?

Instructions: Using the clues below, find out which country ranks #3 for recycling the most per person. This country's rigorous recycling laws and economic investments have helped it reach a 95% food recycling rate.

- 1. I am south of Russia and Southeast of Mongolia.
- 2. China is bigger than me.
- 3. I am at the south end of a peninsula.
- 4. I am just west of Japan.

Answer: _____



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Charge Ahead with Better Battery Habits

From the smallest hearing aid to the biggest power tool, batteries keep many of our favorite devices running. They store energy in a compact, portable way, but that same power means they need to be handled with care. Knowing how to store them safely, get the most use from them, and recycle them when they are spent helps protect both the environment and our homes.

For devices that use regular household batteries, you can choose between single-use alkaline batteries and rechargeable ones. Alkaline batteries are widely available and convenient, but they are designed for one-time use, which means they need to be replaced and disposed of after their energy is gone. Rechargeable batteries cost more at first but can be used again and again, in many cases up to 1,000 times before needing replacement. By keeping two sets on hand, one for use and one for charging, you can reduce waste and avoid last-minute trips to the store.



Credit: OlegMalyshev | iStock | Getty Images Plus

Proper storage is important for both types of batteries. Store unused batteries in a cool, dry place, away from heat sources and direct sunlight. Keep them in their original packaging or in a container where the ends will not touch, as contact between terminals can cause them to discharge or even spark. For rechargeable batteries, follow the manufacturer's charging instructions, and avoid overcharging, which can shorten their lifespan.

When batteries can no longer hold a charge, it

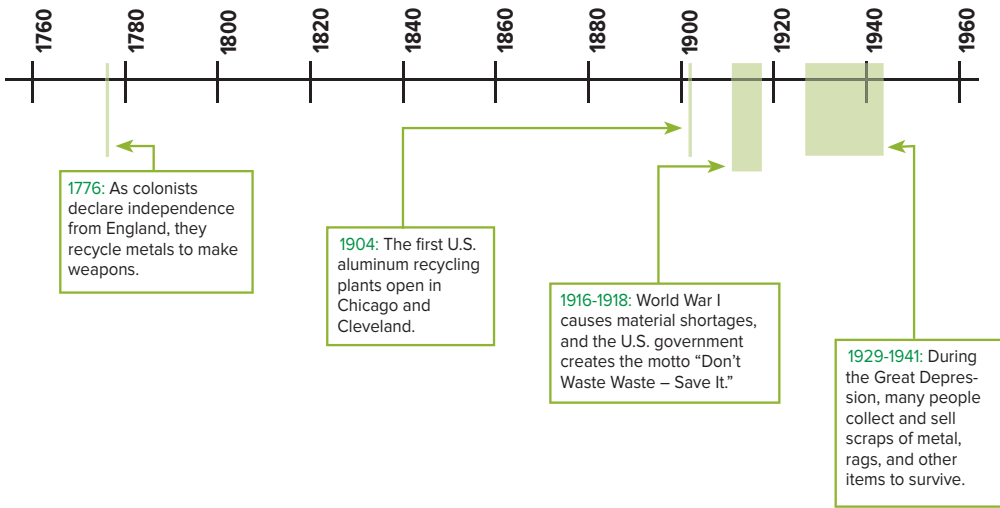
is important to dispose of them properly. Do not place any batteries in your curbside recycling bin, as they require special handling. Alkaline batteries can sometimes be placed in household trash, but rechargeable batteries and other types, like lithium-ion or button cell batteries, should always be taken to an appropriate recycling drop-off location. The SEIRD website lists battery recycling options in our area, and national resources like call2recycle.org can help locate the nearest drop-off point.

Just in Time

A timeline is a graph that is used to show the passage of time in a straight line. Timelines are especially useful for showing historical events in relation to each other.

Instructions: Below is a timeline showing a small part of the history of recycling in the United States. Use the timeline to answer these questions.

History of Recycling in the United States From 1776-1941



1. In what year did the first aluminum recycling factories open in the U.S.? _____
In which cities? _____
2. During the period shown on the timeline, what were the major reasons that caused Americans to recycle and waste less? _____
3. Why is there a big, empty part in the middle of the timeline? _____
4. What was a U.S. government motto in World War I? _____
5. How much time passed between the end of World War I and the beginning of the Great Depression? _____

Join the Recycling Participant Rewards Program



To celebrate America Recycles Day, SEIRD is kicking off a special Recycling Participant Rewards Program. From November 10-15, you can bring your recyclables to any SEIRD Recycle Center and get a chance to win a prize bundle of your choice. Here's how you can join in:

1. Ask a parent to take you to a SEIRD Recycle Center during the week of November 10-15.
2. Drop off your recyclables at the center. (Be sure to bring items like paper, plastic bottles, and cans!)
3. Fill out a ticket with your name and contact information.

Don't miss out and start collecting your recyclables today! Stay tuned to our Facebook page and our website for updates and details.

Interactive Recycling Lessons for All

The Southeastern Indiana Recycling District (SEIRD) can help your class or group learn more about recycling and caring for the environment. We offer fun and educational presentations that teachers and group leaders can use. Presentations can be shared online with your class, and in some cases, a SEIRD representative may visit in person to deliver the session.

You can also explore our full virtual presentation menu, which is downloadable at seird.org/downloadables.

DOWNLOADABLE PRESENTATIONS

The Southeastern Indiana Recycling District offers recycling and environmental presentations for classrooms, civic clubs, organizations, government agencies and more in effort to promote good environmental stewardship to the public. The presentations below are available electronically for use by teachers, classroom instructors and group leaders. Upon request and if available, a SEIRD staff member may be scheduled to share one of the following presentations with your group or class.

HOW TO RECYCLE RIGHT**DOWNLOAD**
An interactive presentation for younger children. Students will, through participation, learn how to conserve our natural resources by properly recycling. This presentation is best for kindergarten through grade 6 students.

PROJECT EARTH (EVERYONE AGREEING TO RECYCLE TRASH AT HOME)**DOWNLOAD**
An interactive presentation for younger students. This exercise demonstrates the difference between items going to a landfill and items being recycled. This presentation is best for kindergarten through grade 6 students.

ALUMINUM: ALL STAR RECYCLABLE**DOWNLOAD**
A presentation suitable for middle schoolers up to adults. Shows why aluminum is the best of the best as a recyclable item. Can be adapted as needed for both teenagers and adults.

PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES**DOWNLOAD**
A presentation suitable for middle schoolers up to adults. An in depth look at the negative effect of trash upon our environment. Proper disposal options explored. Can be adapted as needed for both teenagers and adults.

INTRODUCTION TO COMPOSTING**DOWNLOAD**
A presentation designed for adults but suitable for young adults in the right learning situation. All the basics to get started in composting. Primarily for adults but adaptable for youth if needed.

WHAT CAN I RECYCLE?**DOWNLOAD**
A presentation suitable for middle schoolers up to adults. Answers the questions of so many... "Can I recycle this?" An in-depth look at recyclable items. Can be adapted as needed for both teenagers and adults.

THE OLD BECOMES NEW**DOWNLOAD**
This presentation is designed for both adults and young adults. Answers the question of what happens to my recyclables once collected / dropped off. Can be adapted as needed for both teenagers and adults.

Trash-Free Tech Tips

Electronic devices are everywhere in our daily lives, from laptops and tablets to game consoles and smart speakers. These gadgets help us learn, work, and stay entertained, but they also have a hidden cost. Making electronics requires a lot of energy and raw materials, and when devices are discarded, they can contribute to environmental harm. Thinking carefully about how we use, store, and eventually part with our devices is an important step toward reducing waste and protecting the planet. By maintaining devices properly, passing them along to others, and recycling responsibly, we can make technology work for us and for the environment at the same time.

When an electronic device reaches the end of its useful life, it is important to think about what happens next. Extending the life of your electronics is a simple and effective way to reduce waste and conserve resources. Keeping devices dry, using protective covers, and cleaning dust from fans and vents can help prevent damage and overheating. Following manufacturer guidelines for charging batteries and general maintenance also helps devices last longer.



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If a device is no longer needed, it is more valuable to someone else than sitting unused in a drawer or closet. Electronics that are a few years old may still be perfectly functional for another person, so donating or selling devices can give them a second life. Before passing on any device, be sure to remove personal information to protect your privacy, which may require adult guidance for younger users. For devices that can no longer be used or safely shared, recycling at your county Recycle Center is the best option.

Beginnings and Endings

Instructions: Add a prefix or suffix to each word and then put each word into the correct sentence below. (Hint: Change the “y” at the end of a word to an “i” before adding a suffix.)

_____ cycle _____ water
compost _____ _____ uses
rich _____ healthy _____



Credit: Renata Angerami | iE+ | Getty Images

1. In November, we celebrate how much we _____ as a country.
2. Ashley decided to mix compost into her family’s garden to make the soil _____ for the plants.
3. Putting food scraps in a compost bin _____ food waste.
4. Microorganisms in compost help make the soil _____ in nutrients.
5. By _____, Marty’s family threw away less food waste and reused more materials.
6. If you _____ your compost pile, it won’t get enough air.

Southeastern Indiana Recycling District

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