

The Scrap Recycling Industry: Glass

Glass is made from readily available domestic materials, such as sand, soda ash, limestone, and **“cullet,” the industry term for furnace-ready scrap glass.** Glass can be recycled again and again with **no loss in quality or purity.** In 2014 (the latest data available), 32.5 percent of all glass containers were recycled.

For every ton of glass recycled, more than a ton of raw materials is saved, including 1,300 lbs. of sand, 410 lbs. of soda ash, 380 lbs. of limestone, and 160 lbs. of feldspar.

Recycled glass is substituted for up to **95 percent of raw materials used in making new glass.** An estimated 80 percent of recovered glass containers are made into new glass bottles. In 2014, the latest figures available, 39.5 percent of beer and soft drink bottles were recovered for recycling. Another 31.8 percent of wine and liquor bottles and nearly 14.7 percent of food jars also were recycled.

Manufacturers benefit from recycling in several ways: **it reduces emissions and consumption** of raw materials, **extends the life of plant equipment**, such as furnaces, and **saves energy.** Glass recycling creates no additional waste or byproducts.

Glass manufacturers are requiring more and more high-quality recycled container glass to meet market demands for new glass containers. **Color-sorted, contaminant-free recycled glass** helps ensure that these materials are recycled into new glass containers.

While curbside collection of glass recyclables **can generate high participation and large amounts of recyclables**, drop-off and commercial collections programs are also effective at yielding high-quality container glass.



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Institute of
Scrap Recycling
Industries, Inc.

Voice of the Recycling Industry

THE RECYCLED GLASS INDUSTRY

Recycling glass requires 34 percent less energy than producing glass from natural materials.

Glass bottles and jars are 100 percent recyclable and can be recycled endlessly without any loss in purity or quality.

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours, power a computer for 30 minutes, or a television for 20 minutes.

For container glass, a relative 10 percent increase in cullet reduces particulates by eight percent, nitrogen oxide by four percent, and sulfur oxides by 10 percent.

For every six tons of recycled container glass used, one ton of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide is reduced.

Today's glass containers are more than 40 percent lighter than they were 20 years ago.

An estimated 90 percent of all glass containers recovered for recycling are used in the manufacture of new glass bottles.

