

## **RECYCLING IN JACKSON COUNTY**

Humans depend on the environment for their survival and can affect the environment negatively or positively. Humans consume products and affect how many resources are available for their use. The result of those products is waste. Those waste products can be handled in one of only a few ways; it can be sent to a landfill, burned in an incinerator, or recycled. While each one of these solutions has its own advantages and disadvantages, we will focus on recycling in this project.

The easiest way to reduce the amount of trash sent to landfills is not to create it in the first place. Attention to what we buy and how much trash we generate is the easiest way to save natural resources and preserve landfill space. The next step is to recycle any items that are accepted in local recycling programs.

What can be recycled varies from community to community because of facilities or lack of facilities nearby that can process various types of recyclable materials.

Most people think of plastics, metal, and paper when they recycle, however there are other items that can be recycled through special programs. Eye glasses, cell phones, batteries, hazardous household wastes, oil, mercury-containing items, ink jet cartridges, toner, pharmaceuticals, tires, appliances and even clothes can be recycled through special programs.

Some communities have curbside recycling programs sponsored by their local town and cities. These programs provide recycling pick up at the front of their homes on specific days. Other residents can deliver their recycling to collection centers.

Contact the Jackson County Solid Waste Management District (358-4277) to find the recycling opportunities in your neighborhood.

## Preparing recyclable items:

- **Cardboard** and paperboard (light cardboard like cereal boxes) should be folded flat. Pizza boxes or other containers that contain food residue should not be included in recycling. Wax covered boxes such as juice cartons can not be recycled.
- **Office paper**, newspaper, magazines, file folders, unsolicited (junk) mail and construction paper can be recycled. Laminated or plastic coated paper can not be recycled.
- **Plastic** bottles should be rinsed. Lids are not recyclable and should be discarded. Labels do not have to be removed. Containers that held motor oil, meat packaging, food wrap, and most product packaging can not be recycled.
- **Metal food cans** should be rinsed. Labels do not have to be removed. Lids from food cans are recyclable.
- **Aluminum** cans and bottles should be rinsed.
- **Glass** jars should be rinsed and lids removed. Labels do not have to be removed. Window glass and ceramic glass are not recyclable. Not all programs in Jackson County accept glass. Check the requirements for your program.

Please do not add trash or any container with food residue to your recycling. These types of containers contaminate the recycling stream and ruin everyone's effort to recycle.

## WHAT WE CAN DO

Recycling is not the answer to all our environmental problems, but it is a start. Recycling can become a part of everyday life, at work, school, and home. As time goes by, we will be able to recycle more and throw away less. Each individual contribution will make a difference to saving our natural resources and preserving landfill space.