



WASTING OUR WORLD AWAY

Amazing Facts

for Home and School



World Wide Waste...it's just astounding

An average person throws away 74kg of organic waste each year, which is the same as 1,077 banana skins.

Every day 80 million food and drinks cans end up in landfill - that's one and a half cans per person. In a year, each person could fill a bath with the contents of these cans!

We use over six billion glass bottles and jars each year. It would take you over three and a half thousand years to sing 'Six Billion Green Bottles'!

In the 1950s the world made less than 5 million tonnes of plastic products. This has increased to about 80 million tonnes today. We produce and use 20 times more plastic today than we did 50 years ago!

Recycling waste materials supports about six times as many waste-related jobs as there would be if the same materials were treated as trash.

The oil equivalent of 35 Exxon Valdez tankers is dumped into our nation's rivers, lakes, and streams every year! And used motor oil is far more deadly than crude oil ...

The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle will keep a light bulb burning for 4 hours.

Aluminium Facts

If you throw away an aluminium can, it wastes as much energy as if you filled that can half full of petrol and poured it on the ground.

Recycling one aluminium can saves enough electricity to power a TV or a 100-watt light bulb for three hours.

Aluminium cans take 500 years to decompose.

Making a can from recycled aluminium uses 90% less energy than making a can from scratch and cuts related air pollution by 95%.

One mature tree absorbs about 50 lb of CO₂ each year.

In Australia

- Australians throw out about 14 million tonnes of rubbish each year – that's about 800kg each! This is the same as the weight of a small car, or 10 adult people.
- About a third of all the waste going to landfill in Australia comes from household rubbish. The rest comes from building sites, councils, businesses and industry.

Plastic Facts

In the USA 2 million plastic bottles are thrown away every hour.

20 million Australians are currently using an estimated 6.4 billion plastic check-out bags every year. That's nearly 1 plastic bag per person per day, or 345 bags per person every year.

100,000 marine mammals die each year from eating or becoming entangled in plastic debris.

Paper Facts

Americans throw away enough office and writing paper annually to build a wall 4 metres high stretching from Los Angeles to New York City.

100 million trees are cut down every year to make the paper for "junk mail". One-half of junk mail is thrown away unopened and unread.

Recycling half the world's paper would free 20 million acres of forestland.

Every Sunday 500,000 trees could be saved if everyone recycled their newspapers.

You would make only 700 paper bags out of a 15-year old tree.

Every day business generates enough paper to circle the earth 20 times.

Recycling a 1 metre stack of newspaper saves a 10 metre pine tree.

The production of a ton of paper requires 17 trees,



Facts on WASTE

Australia is the second most wasteful nation in the world, producing more than 18 million tonnes of waste per year (that's enough waste to cover the state of Victoria to a depth of 10cm).

Each **Australian** disposes on average about six kilograms of steel cans each year

Australians use more than six billion plastic bags per year – if these were tied together they would stretch around the world 37 times.

Plastic bags can take up to 1000 years to break down in the environment.

Australians use around 24 million tonnes of paper or 150 kilograms per person per year

Each Australian consumes 1 million litres of fresh water each year. Of the total volume of water consumed, 70% of that is for agriculture.

Meat

Thousands of animal drugs are used in farming, including antibiotics, hormonal drugs, and other pharmaceuticals designed to create bigger, fatter, and faster-growing livestock. Residues of some of these drugs end up in milk, eggs, and meat.

There are currently 1.28 billion cattle on earth, taking up 24% of the land mass of the planet and consuming enough grain to feed hundreds of millions of people.

Since 1960, more than 25 % of the forests of Central America have been cleared to create pasture land for grazing cattle. Each imported hamburger requires the clearing of five square meters of jungle for pasture.

Cattle emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas that is responsible for 18 % of the current global warming trend.

Nearly half the water consumed in the U.S. goes to grow feed for cattle and other livestock.

but 1 kilo of feedlot beef takes about 50 times the water to produce as a kilo of soya beans or rice.

In Australia there are 25 million cattle and over 100 million sheep.

Cattle produce nearly 1 billion tons of organic waste each year. The nitrogen from the cattle waste is converted into ammonia and nitrates and leaks into ground and surface water, where it pollutes wells, rivers, and streams, contaminating drinking water and killing marine life.

Pollution is Wasting Away our World

Rainforest are destroyed at the rate of about 100 acres per minute, enough to fill 50 football fields.

In the last 50 years, more than 75,000 chemicals have been developed and introduced into the environment.

Air pollution

90% of the cancer-causing chemicals are air pollution.

More people are likely to die this year from breathing our air than from traffic accidents.

Running in our polluted air for half an hour is equivalent to inhaling the carbon monoxide in a pack of cigarettes.

Mowing the lawn for half an hour can produce as much smog as driving a new car 300 kms.

The average car pumps its own weight in CO₂ into the atmosphere every year.

Pesticides

Use of pesticides has doubled in the last 30 years.

Millions of birds are killed annually by legal pesticide use.

There's growing evidence that pesticides used to maintain golf courses are creating health problems for both people and animals.

The amount of pesticides sprayed on a typical acre of a golf course in a year is seven or eight times the amount applied to a typical acre of agricultural land.

Farmers who apply little or no chemicals to crops are usually as productive as those who use pesticides and synthetic fertilisers.

