

The Gainesville Zero Waste News

How Does Recycling Reduce Greenhouse Gases?

At first glance, recycling might not seem closely tied to global warming or climate change. However, recycling is one of the easiest, hands-on actions you and your family can take to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into our atmosphere.



Recycling, in large part, is about making the most out of the materials already available to us instead of constantly extracting new resources. The excavation and transportation of virgin materials from forests, oil reserves, and mines is a hugely energy-intensive activity. However, processing recycled materials requires dramatically less energy, burns fewer fossil fuels, and produces significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Recycling also has the benefit of sending less trash to landfills, which reduces the opportunity for decomposition and the release of methane. Methane gas is 25 times more efficient at trapping heat than carbon dioxide and is a major factor impacting climate change. Additionally, recycling, especially paper materials, reduces the clear-cutting of forests to make new paper products. Trees capture and store large amounts of carbon dioxide (the most prevalent greenhouse gas) and convert carbon dioxide into oxygen.

Take a few moments to review [what can be recycled](#) in your orange and blue bins to maximize your recycling efforts and reduce your carbon footprint.

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