PLASTICS RECYCLING

Plastics manufacturing continues to grow rapidly, reaching about 360 million metric tons worldwide in 2018. In the U.S., the plastics recycling industry plays an important role in improving the environment and supporting the economy. Recycled plastic products provide enormous environmental benefits, including reducing the reliance on virgin materials, diverting material from landfills, and cutting energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. – For example, composite lumber made from recycled plastic bags conserves trees and reduces the need for hazardous wood-treatment chemicals.

**BIG ECONOMIC IMPACT**
The plastic recycling industry’s total annual economic impact in the U.S. is $6 billion.

**RECYCLING PLASTIC CREATES JOBS**
The plastics recycling industry directly and indirectly supports nearly 30,000 jobs in the United States.

**BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**
Recycling 1 ton of plastic bottles reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 3,380 lbs., which is the equivalent of 173 gallons of gasoline.

**BAGGING PLASTIC BAGS**
At least 1 billion pounds of U.S. plastic bags and film were collected for recycling in 2017, up 54 percent since 2005.

The Plastic Recycling Process

How recycled plastic bottles become new plastic products.

**MASSIVE ENERGY SAVINGS**
Using recycled plastics in manufacturing saves up to 88 percent of the energy needed to produce plastics from virgin materials.

**RESIDENTIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SOURCES**
Containers from food, beverages and household products are a large part of the residential recycling plastics stream. But engineered and industrial plastics are other important sources of recycled plastics, including auto parts, appliances and construction materials.

Sources: EPA, John Dunham & Associates