

Make Recycling a Priority in 2014

America Recycles Day is celebrated nationally on November 15 every year. The message that is shared on that day is actually *everyday* should be America Recycles Day! The national recycling rate has increased every year since 1984, but the current rate is still only 34.7%. As a country, as a state, as a city and county, as a business and household – we have a lot of work to do. The 2013 America Recycles Day pledge encouraged people to:

Learn. I will find out what materials are collected for recycling in my community.

(Go to recyclegallup.org)

Act. Reduce my personal waste by recycling. Within the next month, I will recycle more.

Share. I will encourage one family member or one friend to take the pledge.

At Americarecyclesday.org/pledge, as of today (20 January) 49,168 people have signed the pledge. You can be the 49,169th! *Give Your Garbage Another Life --- Take the Pledge!*

Fellow citizens it is time we ALL take recycling seriously. The word from an international group of scientists is that the levels of CO, CO₂, and methane (created in landfills) in our atmosphere are dangerously high. Recycling is one way to reduce the production of these gases that cause a warming effect. For example, an aluminum can made from recycled aluminum uses far less energy than mining the raw materials to make a new can.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Do your part to reduce waste by choosing reusable products instead of disposables. Buying products with minimal packaging (choosing the economy size when possible) will help to reduce waste. Gallup currently is not able to recycle glass, grayboard (i.e., cereal boxes), or plastics (#3-#7) but a lot of energy and your taxpayer dollars can be saved by recycling the following: Corrugated Cardboard; Mixed Paper (junk mail, newspaper, catalogs); Plastics #1 bottles (preferably without lids); Steel Cans; Aluminum Cans, Foil, Pie Plates; Old vehicles and other scrap metal; Electronics; large and small Appliances. If there isn't a recycling program at your workplace or school, ask about starting one. Contact MCRC for advice. By recycling half of your household waste, you can save 2,400 pounds of carbon dioxide annually.

2013 Accomplishments

The local recycling volunteer group, McKinley Citizens' Recycling Council was very busy this year. The Recyclegallup.org website & [Recycling Circle](#) newsletter was launched; Coordinated with the NWNM Regional Solid Waste Authority to place collection bins at two additional sites in Gallup; Volunteers recruited and trained to staff the recreation center site on Saturdays and met with council members about the feasibility of curbside recycling pick up in town. Outreach through articles (such as this), presence at community events and meetings, an Earth Day exhibit at the main library, the America Recycles Day Recycling Jamboree, an update of the "Where to Recycle" guide, Compost Certification for one member, outreach workshop and webinars attended by others, visits to regional recycling facilities, and two grant proposal submissions, are among the major efforts of 2013. Last month a partnership with the Gallup USPS allowed for recycling bins to be placed in the main post office for unwanted mail.

2014 Initiatives

You will be hearing more from the recycling council on initiatives for 2014. At the next meeting on **Saturday, February 1** the challenge will be to decide where MCRC should put their energy in the year ahead. What programs and projects will make the cut? MCRC's efforts are limited by the number of individuals who volunteer and financial resources, just like any number of non-profit organizations.

Input from the citizens of Gallup-McKinley County is important as the council moves forward on a number of concerns. A standing invitation to attend one of our monthly meetings, the first Saturday of the month, 2 pm, Red Mesa Center, 105 W. Hill is thus extended.

Volunteer to help monitor the recycling bins at Larry Brian Mitchell Recreation Center on Saturdays. Choose from two shifts 10 am – Noon or Noon to 2 pm. Contact Barbara Brandt 905-5233 for more information or send an e-mail through the MCRC web site recyclegallup.org.

For more information about MCRC or if you have questions about recycling in our area, contact a council member by calling 722-5142, send an e-mail to betsywindisch@yahoo.com, or visit the website (recyclegallup.org).