

Importance of recycling



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Don't Throw Your Future Away

In the UK, on average, a person throws away almost his own bodyweight equivalent of waste material every 7 weeks. That is equivalent to filling up the Rutland Lake in just six months or pervading the London Palladium every hour. Up to 60% of this waste is recyclable.

What is meant by the word recycle? A simple way to describe it is; recycle means to convert and remanufacture waste products into new materials. This means, rather than throwing these objects away, they can be used to manufacture new products. The materials that are widely recycled include, grocery bags, cloth, newspaper, cardboard, brochures and flyers, cardboard boxes, paper, aluminium cans, glass, tin, chipboard and scrap metal. Though every waste disposal place varies, these are the items which are widely accepted as recyclable items. Failing to use them to manufacture further items results in these products being thrown away in significant quantities into landfills.

Some goods which are not usually recycled because of being not as cost-effective include light bulbs, petroleum products, chemicals and aerosols.

A landfill is not the most ethical way of managing waste as it poses substantial threats to humans and animals, as well as plants. It is immensely important to recycle our waste in order to lower the amount of waste material in landfills, to save and create energy and to conserve raw materials. For instance to produce new paper from a plant source, it requires seventeen full grown trees to make one tonne of pure non-recycled paper. This leads to deforestation as it requires cutting down trees, leading to

deforestation which is a tremendous environmental hazard. Instead of this, used and old paper can be used to manufacture new paper which can help protect both trees and 65 % of electricity. Likewise, thermoplastics can also be recycled as they can be softened and melted to reshape again and again thus decreasing the environmental hazards triggered by plastics.

Furthermore, up to seventy per cent of energy can be saved by avoiding extraction, refining, transportation and processing of raw materials required for the industry. As labour is needed for collection, sorting, processing and logistics, job opportunities can also be generated through recycling.

Recycling also plays a sizeable role in decreasing air, noise and water pollution by reducing incineration of waste thus protecting the atmosphere.

How? By lowering the emission of greenhouse gases like methane, sulphur dioxide carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxide, recycling can also help in reducing the effect of climate change which is a long-standing and prominent issue influencing the atmosphere and living species alike.

All of this malefic matter contaminates many habitats and ecosystems. This in turn ruins the natural living conditions of different organisms including both plants and animals. Deforestation that occurs due to the use of wood as a raw material for several products also plays an integral role in the destruction of many habitats. Biodiversity is being lost. The loss of a few plants and animals is not the concern here. Rather, by thrashing all forms of nature on such a grand scale we are risking our lives, threatening wildlife, gambling with the stability of nature and weather and throwing our own future away.

Not only is the destruction of nature a colossal problem, Global Warming, another disastrous outcome of all that contamination, is also a topic which needs discussion as it is the most detrimental. Evidence proves that the past decade was the hottest in the past 1300 years. The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has multiplied from 280 parts per million to 400 parts per million. Moreover, it is expected that an estimated increase of 8 degrees Fahrenheit in global temperature and 1 to 4 feet of upsurge in sea levels can be expected by the year 2100. This could be a monumental problem for many low lying areas and cities of the world. Not only this, numerous other climate changes such as change in precipitation patterns, increment in acidity of oceans, reduction in ice cover, permafrost, unexpected droughts and floods, intense tsunamis and hurricanes and much more can be expected. Ultimately, the havoc caused from all of this can be very well assumed.

How to make world a bit better?

The above mentioned can be slowed and minimised if not entirely terminated. Recycling of metals can help cut down the need for extraction of ores, reducing environmental hazards caused by mining, refining, processing and packing. Recycling of plastic can help in minimizing the deposit of landfills. As it is a polymer, it can be melted and reused several times over. Recycling paper reduces the need of chopping down of trees and ultimately could help conserve forests. It also helps to reduce the use of incineration, process involved in destruction of paper.

Amongst some notable benefits of recycling, one of them is the conservation of energy. By reducing the need of new products, we can dexterously reduce the use of energy and the burning of fossil fuels used to harness energy. This could lower the emission of harmful gases drastically.

Recycling plays an integral role in forefending this planet from further devastation. It is crucial for us to implement the idea of recycling into our everyday lives and play our own part in order to protect the Earth and make it a better place.