

# Ethics of recycling



The Ethics of Recycling In recent decades, there has been an increasing interest in environmental awareness in the United States, as well as in many other countries. People are becoming aware of our current global warming issue, the decreasing numbers of one-use resources, and the great rise in air and water pollution. We have been seeking ways to treat and prevent these problems in our current society. One of the major ways Americans have been trying to combat the issue of decreasing numbers of one-use resources is to use more renewable resources that we are able to recycle.

If recycling is available to all of us to use, should it be mandatory that we use renewable resources and recycle them after use? Is it worth the extra time and effort to put our cans in a separate bin for trash collection? Some of the benefits of recycling include: well-run recycling programs cost less to operate than waste collection, land-fills, and incineration; recycling creates 1.1 million jobs; and thousands of U. S. companies have saved millions of dollars through their voluntary recycling programs. Some of the downfalls to recycling include inconvenience and a sense of false security on the current status of our planet. I believe that the benefits of recycling greatly outweigh the downfalls, but what does this mean on a moral or ethical level? Just because an activity is obviously good to the majority of society doesn't necessarily mean we should all have to participate.

One major benefit of recycling is that well-run recycling programs cost less to operate than waste collection, land filling, and incineration. The more that people recycle, the cheaper it is to run these programs. Often, communities can get reimbursement for the items that they recycle. Recycling also produces 1.1 million jobs in the U. S.

alone. The more jobs that we have available to offer people, the better off our economy will be as a whole. In the end, recycling is a good money-saving device and it saves our planet's valuable natural resources. If we are willing to pass laws against littering and collect taxes from our society, wouldn't it be a fair act to pass some sort of law to support recycling programs? If each and every person was forced to recycle, the future benefits of doing so would be endless. Since it is morally "good" to recycle, then it would be the correct action to take on an ethical basis. Therefore, some sort of regulatory action supporting recycling should be taking place in our society.

The downfalls to recycling really do not surmount the benefits. One downfall is the increased inconvenience placed upon people. I believe that the inconvenience is quite minor, in that it really isn't too difficult to put certain bottles into a different bin. Also, corporations and companies would need to provide these trash receptacles for their employees to use. The special bins would need to be available everywhere in public as well.

What's the cost of an extra trash can? Certainly not equal to the cost of all of our planet's natural resources. One other downfall to recycling is the fact that it may provide a false security to our society on the current environmental issues that we are facing. Instead of using refillable drink bottles, they may just buy tons of cases of water because they think its fine because they are recycling them after use. Whereas recycling really is just one piece of the huge environmental puzzle that we must construct in order to save our planet. Therefore, the downfalls clearly lie in the stubbornness of our society.

In order for everyone to do the ethically responsible act of recycling, people would need to be more flexible in their current lifestyles in order to adopt new habits. I believe that recycling is an ethically correct behavior which should be required of every person in our American society. I think that the ethically good side of recycling is so great that a law or regulation should be passed in order to force Americans to recycle on a day -to-day basis. Not recycling creates a social problem that is equal to the severity of some of the other social problems that we have already taken action against. Choosing to recycle is just as important as choosing not to do drugs. If we continue to use and abuse all of our natural resources at our current rate, then we will eventually run out of resources, or our global warming issue will get so bad that some regions could be wiped out completely.

That is why not recycling creates a major social problem that we must combat before it is too late. If our society feels so strongly that using certain drugs is wrong, that they pass laws against it then, we should feel strongly enough that not recycling is wrong to the point where we can pass laws and regulations in order to get each and every person to participate. When looking at our environment on an ethical basis, it's our responsibility to do our best to preserve what is left of our natural ecosystems. In conclusion, I believe that recycling is an ethically correct and good decision for our United States society. I think that the benefits of recycling far outweigh the negative impacts on our society and that by making just a few slight changes, we could make a huge difference for our planet. If we can base certain laws on the ethical correctness of behavior, than I believe that since recycling is an

ethically correct decision, it deserves enough attention from our government to have laws and regulations set for it.

It is not only our personal responsibility to recycle, but it is a responsibility that we must take on to help support the growth of our future generations. Our planet is something that we share with everyone; to choose not to recycle would be selfish of our American society. Works Cited: “ Recycling Facts and Benefits”. Environment-Green. 7/15/08

environment-green. com/>. “ Economic Recycling Benefits and Facts”. National Recycling Coalition. 7/15/08

recycling-revolution. com/recycling-benefits. html>.