

# Importance of recycling



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The recycling of materials is an extremely crucial process towards the improvement of the condition of our planet. However, not everyone is motivated to recycle; why is this? I believe if everyone was more educated on the immense benefits recycling has to offer, more people would be inclined to actively recycle. The advantages of recycling will be significantly larger if a higher percentage of people take the time to recycle their goods. Those who understand these benefits should advocate for the expansion of recycling means in order to help sustain our planet and improve our environment.

Mankind should attempt to attain the goal of “ zero waste”. There are many steps one can take in order to reduce our negative impact on our Earth. Our planet and environment are in dire need of protection from pollution and other harmful entities. Contrary to what many think, our planet does not have an endless amount of resources for human use, and if we continue to abuse these resources we will soon have to do without them. Many invaluable and non-renewable resources are being threatened and it’s our behavior and conduct that is posing this serious threat.

Some of the most serious issues faced by mankind today include climate change, overuse of non-renewable resources, pollution, and water shortages. Different aspects of recycling help address each of these issues and would work towards improving the condition of our planet. Climate change is a serious and present threat faced by Earth’s people. Some of the most prevalent types of climate change include heat waves, drought, heavy precipitation, increase in ocean heat, a rise in sea level, and an increase in ocean acidity.

The frequency of heat waves has steadily increased since the 1970's.

According to the American Red Cross, heat waves cause more deaths than any other weather related danger, including floods. If we don't take measures to prevent more heat waves from occurring, more human deaths will inevitably occur. A drought is defined as an abnormally low level of precipitation, which results in water shortages. Drought levels have increased substantially even in the past year.

A map of the United States drought levels shows that in the southern states, there has been a significant amount of level 5 deterioration from the dates of September 28, 2010 through March 29, 2011. The South is also labeled as an agricultural area on this map, which means that the crops in this area are threatened by a lack of water. Water shortages in any area of the country are a hardship to everyone because it puts the agriculture of that area at a risk. Heavier rainfall is also a result of climate change. As the planet warms up, the air's ability to retain water rises. When the air retains this water, the precipitation level rises.

Although more rain may not seem like a bad thing, especially when certain areas have droughts, it can lead to flooding and soil erosion in other areas. The ocean's temperature increase is 50% higher than originally estimated according to Science Daily. Even slight rises in the temperature of the ocean can have an effect on atmospheric circulation, which in turn affects the globe's weather patterns. Warmer oceans may also increase the amount of carbon dioxide gas in the air because the ocean stores carbon dioxide and this gas does not dissolve as well in warm water as it does in cooler water.

High levels of carbon dioxide in the air have health consequences for humans and can lead to symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, difficulty breathing, fatigue, high blood pressure, and increased heart rate. Sea levels have risen 5 or 6 inches more than global average in the last century. This rise is due to warmer temperatures, which melt ice and in turn increase the amount of water in the seas. Rising sea levels can potentially flood wetlands and other landmasses close to the sea, erode beaches, intensify flooding, and amplify the levels of salinity in other bodies of water.

The ocean's pH has dropped from 8.2 to 8.1 since 1800 according to U. S. Daily. This acidification is due to a higher level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the ocean, which is a result of the burning of fossil fuels by humans. Higher acidity in the ocean may interfere with the ability of crustaceans and other sea animals that inhabit shells to form these shells in the first place. Calcium cannot form in acidic environments and their shells are composed of calcium. Our planet is clearly deteriorating due to these various forms of climate change and action needs to be taken immediately to slow the progressive worsening of the Earth.