

OUR WASTE ADDS UP!

Do the math and see how our waste and pollution adds up over time and how doing just a little bit can go a long way.



1. The average American uses over 156 plastic bottles every year. That adds up to over 50 billion in the US alone. If a family of four stopped buying plastic bottles and used reusable bottles instead, how many plastic bottles would that save in 5 years?

ANSWER: _____

2. Water flows from a sink faucet at 2gal/min. You should brush your teeth two minutes, twice a day. By turning the water off while you brush your teeth, how much water can one person save in a year?

ANSWER: _____

3. In the US, we use 500 million straws/day (enough to fill 125 school buses). If there are 330 million people in the US, how many straws can be saved every 10 years if just one person refused them?

ANSWER: _____

4. An average American generates 4.4lbs of waste each day. Composting food scraps and yard debris can reduce our waste by up to 50% and create nutrient-rich soil to feed your plants. If you started composting right now, how much waste would you divert from the landfill in 5 years?

ANSWER: _____

5. Around the world, 160,000 plastic bags are used every second, of which only 1% gets recycled. In the US, each person uses 1,500 bags/year. With the amount of petroleum used to make 14 plastic bags, you could drive a car for 1mile. If one American started bringing reusable bags when they went shopping and stopped using plastic bags for 10 years, how many miles could they drive with the amount of petroleum they saved?

ANSWER: _____

6. A car that drives at 22mpg and 11,500mi/yr emits 4.6 metric tons of CO₂/year. A metric ton is equal to 2,204 lbs. If you were to ride your bike, walk, or carpool more and cut down on the amount of miles you drove from 11,500mi/yr to 8,000mi/yr, how much in CO₂ emissions would you save each year?

ANSWER: _____

7. Recycling decreases our carbon footprint by using less energy and materials than manufacturing products from scratch. One ton (2,000lbs) of recycled plastic saves 5,773kWh of electricity, 685 gallons of oil, 98 million BTUs of energy, and 810 cubic feet of landfill space. If an American consumes approximately 275lbs of plastic waste each year, in 80 years, how many cubic yards of landfill space could be saved if one person recycled all of their plastic waste?

ANSWER: _____

ANSWER KEY:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 4. 1,071 miles | 7. 8,910 cubic ft |
| 3. 5,530 straws | 6. 4,015 lbs |
| 2. 2,920 gals/yr | 1.4 metric tons |
| 1. 3,120 bottles | 5. 3,085.6 lbs or |

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IT'S OUR
COUNTY.