



Introduction to Recycling Vocabulary List

Natural Resources - materials that are found in nature and can be used by people in many ways. Fresh water, soil, sand, oil, and trees are all examples of natural resources

Landfill - an area of land designed to handle the disposal of solid waste. The garbage is usually spread out, compacted, and covered with dirt or other material in order to protect the environment in and around the landfill. The landfill is the final destination and the permanent home for anything we put in the garbage bin

Paper - a thin material made from wood, rags, or grasses. Paper is used for writing, wrapping, and covering walls

Plastic - an artificial substance made from oil and chemicals that can be easily shaped when soft. Plastic is formed into many materials and products

Glass - a hard, clear material made from the silica found in sand that breaks easily. Glass is used to make windows, bottles, and mirrors

Aluminum - a type of metal, used to make soda cans and foil that is extracted from a mineral ore known as bauxite

Food Waste - bits of leftover food that can be turned into compost instead of being thrown away and sent to the landfill. Fruits and vegetable scraps, egg shells, and coffee grounds can be put in a compost bin or worm bin, and any type of food can be placed in the green bin for curbside composting

Trees - a woody plant that has a long main trunk and many branches. Trees are often times made into paper

Oil - a substance occurring deep in the Earth that is formed from the decomposition of prehistoric organisms and is used to make gasoline, plastic, and other products

Sand - tiny, loose grains of ground rock, found on beaches and in deserts, the silica found in sand is used to make glass

Bauxite - the mineral that is mined and used to produce aluminum, primarily found in Australia

Plants - one of a large group of living things that use sunlight to make their own food. Most plants have leaves, stems, roots and either flowers or cones

Compost - the product of decomposed organic material; a nutrient-rich fertilizer that creates a healthy growing environment for plants

Decompose - to break down through chemical change, rot

Rethink – to think about again, reconsider

Reduce - to make less waste by using less stuff

Reuse – to extend the life of an item by using it over again as it is or thinking of a new way to use it

Recycle - to make new products from used materials

Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) - a facility designed to recover and sort materials that can be recycled, using machines and manual labor