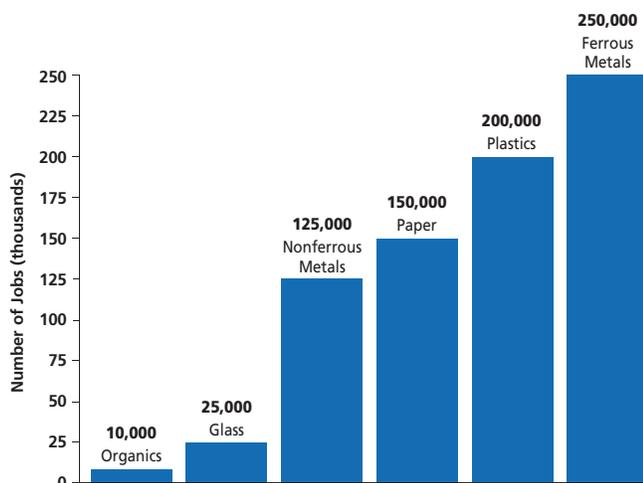


# EcoFacts: Economy

The U.S. recycling and reuse industry's 56,000 establishments employ more than 1.1 million people, generate an annual payroll of \$37 billion and gross more than \$236 billion in annual revenues. This represents a significant force in the country's economy and makes a vital contribution to job creation and economic development.

Number of people employed by the recycling manufacturing industry



Source: U.S. Recycling Economic Information Study by R.W. Beck for the Environmental Protection Agency and NRC, July 2001.

## How many jobs does recycling create?

As a driver of economic activity, the recycling industry compares favorably to other key industries, such as automobile manufacturing and mining. Producing recycled paper creates five times the number of jobs than making paper from raw materials. Recycling also provides a large number of jobs that generally pay above the national average wage.



In general, recycling creates six times as many jobs as landfilling waste.

## What is recycling worth?

One ton of recyclables generated in the Pacific Northwest has an average end-market value of \$74. In 2002, almost 900,000 tons of paper, glass, metals and plastics recycled in the Metro region had an average economic value of almost \$64 million.

1 ton of recyclables = \$74

CLOSE THE LOOP



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### Economic activity generated by recycling:

More than half of the economic activity generated by recycling and reuse occurs in four “core” industries

- paper mills
- steel mills
- plastic product manufacturers
- iron and steel product manufacturers

The recycling and reuse industry also includes such diverse companies as tire retreaders and composters.

**Paper:** There are six paper mills in Oregon with the combined capacity to produce 10.5 million pounds of recycled-content newsprint, corrugated cardboard and toilet and facial tissue a day. An additional 4.9 million pounds of recycled paper pulp is produced each day to make other products.

**Steel:** Collecting, crushing and melting scrap metal back into new products makes steel the second-most recycled

material in the United States. Schnitzer Steel Industries employs 1,000 people at 12 West Coast locations and recycles millions of tons of steel annually.

**Plastic:** The plastics recycling infrastructure includes 2,015 companies, with 1,677 processing plastics that have been used and discarded by consumers, 207 processing plastics that have been generated by manufacturers and processors, and 131 brokers and exporters.



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### For more information

For additional resources, information or free assistance, please visit [www.RecycleAtWork.com](http://www.RecycleAtWork.com) or call Metro Recycling Information at (503) 234-3000.

These fact sheets were created by Metro and your local governments to help reduce waste in the business sector. *Printed on recycled paper. 05307jg*