

PRESS RELEASE

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INDEPENDENT REVIEWERS CONFIRM 2010 RECYCLING RATE FOR STEEL PACKAGING

APEAL (the Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging) releases the latest recycling figures for post-consumer steel packaging scrap and reveals that 71% of steel packaging in Europe was recycled in 2010. The methodology and data sources used for the calculation of these figures have been reviewed independently by the energy and waste specialist consultancy, Eunomia¹, confirming the results credibility.

These are among the first 2010 figures² to be released within the packaging materials industry. By compiling and releasing figures in advance of other materials, the steel for packaging industry is demonstrating a solid conviction of the importance of recycling, amid confidence that steel is still the most recycled packaging material in Europe, where plastic, beverage cartons and glass demonstrate rates of 30%, 34% and 68% respectively (according to latest available data).

However, the steel packaging industry is committed to increasing recycling rates even further, focusing on metal packaging 's long term objective of achieving in Europe a 80% recycling rate and zero metal can in landfill by 2020 - far higher than current EU or national targets. Germany for example, who achieved a rate of 93.8% this year, has not dropped below 90% recycling rate since 1997 - far exceeding the post-consumer packaging scrap national target of 70%.

2010 reinforces the long term trend for steel as the most recyclable and the most recycled packaging material in Europe. Indeed the last 20 years have seen a threefold increase in packaging steel recycling thanks to a combination of steel's natural properties, well-established collection and recovery routes across Europe and recognition for the resource gains of recycling.

Steel recycling is sustainable:

The nature of steel as a material means it can be used again and again to form new packaging and other product applications, losing none of its strength or qualities no matter how many times it is recycled.

Steel recycling is easy:

Steel is magnetic and is easily and economically separated from other household waste. Ferrous scrap is an integral part of the steel manufacturing process so recycled steel is easily re-integrated, reducing energy use and emissions.

Steel recycling saves resources:

Each item of recycled steel packaging saves one and a half times its weight in CO₂. So the more steel is recycled, the more CO₂ emissions are reduced. Around 2.5 million tonnes of steel beverage and food packaging is recycled in Europe, saving almost 4 million tonnes of CO₂ per year.

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¹ Eunomia is a UK-based consultancy, working in the UK, other EU Member States and beyond. Eunomia is recognised as a leader in understanding the direction and trajectory of environmental policy in areas such as waste management and resource efficiency. Eunomia's complete statement is available for download from www.apeal.org

² Due to Section 6 of EC Regulation 2150/2002 of the EU Parliament and of the Council on waste statistics, the Member States have only to transmit the results of waste recycling within 18 months of the end of the reference year to Eurostat.

Figure 1: Recycling rates for 27 European countries + Norway and Switzerland (image file available for download from www.apeal.org)

