



# Paper Recycling: A Success Story

January 2018

The U.S. paper recovery rate rose to a record 67.2 percent in 2016, up from 66.8 percent in 2015.

That's great news for the environment and for the paper industry. In fact, the annual paper recovery rate in the U.S. has doubled since 1990.

## Paper Recycling...

Extends the useful life of fiber: Approximately 80 percent of all U.S. paper mills use some recovered fiber to make everything from paper-based packaging to tissue products to office paper and newspaper.

### Keeps paper out of landfills:

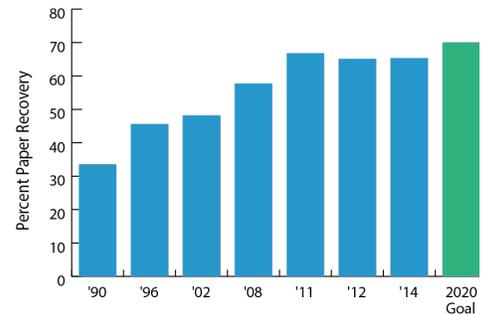
- More than twice as much paper is recycled than is sent to landfills.
- Every ton of paper recovered for recycling saves 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space.
- By weight, more paper is recovered for recycling from municipal solid waste streams than glass, plastic, steel and aluminum combined, according to EPA.

Is widely accessible: In 2014, 96 percent of Americans had access to community curbside and/or drop-off paper recycling programs.

Reduces GHG emissions: AF&PA member companies' use of recovered fiber resulted in avoided greenhouse gas emissions of more than 18 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents in 2016.

*For interactive features, statistics, free classroom materials, and resources to help start or improve paper recycling efforts at home, in the community and at work, visit [paperrecycles.org](http://paperrecycles.org).*

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**2020 Goal: Exceed  
70 percent rate of  
paper recovery for  
recycling**

*Paper recovery for recycling reached a record 67.2 percent in 2016 — meeting or exceeding 63 percent for the past eight years*