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National Recycling Month, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans have become increasingly aware of health and environmental problems associated with the careless or improper management of municipal solid waste. In many densely populated regions, increasing waste volumes, shrinking landfill capacity, and rising costs of disposal have added to our concerns about the need for proper waste management.

Recycling is becoming increasingly important in municipal solid waste management. Many communities have recognized the value of recycling in waste management for some time. Volunteer programs exist in many towns and counties, and some States have recently enacted mandatory recycling laws. In addition, the recycling of scrap metals, paper, and glass has become a well-developed industry. Despite these efforts, however, only 10 percent of our Nation's municipal solid waste is recycled; nearly 80 percent of municipal solid waste is disposed of in landfills and the remaining 10 percent is incinerated.

The benefits of recycling waste materials are substantial. Recycling saves energy and thus preserves important fuel resources. It also avoids the pollution created in extracting resources from their natural environment. Through recycling, wastes are diverted from landfills and our limited landfill space is preserved. Communities can use recycling to generate revenues from the materials recovered from the waste stream. Finally, recycling can save us money by avoiding the high costs of landfills or incineration.

These benefits can only be realized through more recycling. The Environmental Protection Agency considers feasible a recycling level of 25 percent nationally by the early 1990's through the efforts of States and municipalities and the cooperation of individual households and businesses in separating recyclable materials from their waste and in not generating unnecessary waste.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 469, has designated June 1988 as "National Recycling Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 1988 as National Recycling Month. I urge the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

Ronald Reagan