

"Waste-to-Resources" Through the Years

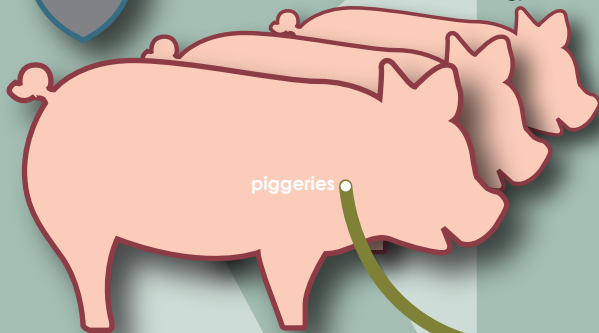


1700's: Virginia colonists bury their trash, including oyster shells, bones, building debris, broken glass and even hundreds of suits of armor.

Human waste was recycled in Japan for fertilizer. It was so popular that even with the threat of prison, it was sometimes stolen due to its high cost.

1700

1700's: Colonists collect rags to be used in making paper for, among other things, the printing of money for a rebellious new nation.



1800's: Pigs were used in many cities to eat garbage in the streets.

A law is put in place to protect vultures from hunters in Charleston, West Virginia because the birds help eat the garbage.

The first waste incinerator was built in Gibraltar, MI.

1870's: New York City stops the dumping of trash into the East River from a platform.

1880's: New York City begins incinerating garbage on Governors Island in New York Harbor.

1800

1800's: Cotton is scarce, and scrap wool is collected for use in stuffing mattresses and making saddles and military uniforms and blankets. Recycled wool was also known as "shoddy."

1880's: Immigrant and poor families comb the streets for rags and bones and goods to repair and sell. They lived on streets with names such as "Bottle Alley" and "Ragpicker's Row."

1900's: Piggeries become common. It is thought 75 pigs could eat a ton of garbage daily.

New York City uses a garbage incinerator to provide electricity to light the Williamsburg Bridge.

1920's: Landfills become the disposal method of choice for garbage. Wetlands are filled with garbage and dirt as a method of reclaiming the land.

1940's: Wartime salvage efforts reduce waste as most materials are recycled.

1900

1908: Waldorf Paper Mill opens in the Midway area between Minneapolis and St. Paul. With no forests nearby, the recycling mill uses scrap paper from the Twin Cities.

World War I: People eat meatless and wheatless" and collect scrap.

1920's: "The Roaring '20s." Americans begin to embrace a consume-and-waste lifestyle. Recycling and re-using, once done by all, is now considered low-class behavior.

1930's: The Depression forces many people hang onto what they have, fixing and making do or doing without. They save the odd shoe or piece of string, "just in case it's needed later."

World War II: The price of a movie ticket was a donation of a tin pot.

1960's: Sam Yorty wins the mayoral race of Los Angeles, California on a platform to end the inconvenience of separating recyclables from garbage.

1970's: Federal Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency created. First Earth Day. Oregon passes the first bottle bill for recycling. The EPA issues criteria for landfills to prohibit the open dumping of garbage.

1980's: The University of Arizona-Tucson starts excavating a landfill like an ancient archeological site to study how much is biodegradable.

1990's: 140 recycling laws are passed in 38 U.S. states.

1950

1960's and '70's: Hippies and other counterculture types embrace recycling and re-use. Groups operate voluntary recycling centers, often in conjunction with food co-ops.

1980's: Landfills and recycling become hot issues. Curbside recycling becomes law in Minnesota. Block captains set out signs weekly, reminding their neighbors that "Tomorrow Is Recycling Day!"



2000: California cities are required to recycle 50% of their waste.

2000

2000: In Minnesota, 46% of all garbage generated is recycled, the highest recycling rate in the nation.

2005: Recycling contributes millions to the state's economy. Meanwhile, recycling goes global. Minnesota scrap travels to markets across the country and even to China.

