Vol 1, No. 4, 2025

PROSPECT RECYCLES!

THE SCIENCE & ECONOMICS OF RECYCLING

Did You Know?

- Rainforests are being cut down at a rate of about **100 acres** a minute.
- Recycled paper pollutes our air approximately **70% less** than new paper.
- Recycling 1 pound of steel can power a 60 W lightbulb for **more than a day**.

Visit Rumpke's Recycling Facility: August 28.

Our NEXT excursion is limited to 20 residents. The tour will include the Recycling Facility and the landfill. Call 502-228-1121 or call Norman Hicks @ 502-396-0997 or email dfarnsley@prospectky.gov

First "Recycling Round-Up" Interactive Event.

AUG 18 - Prospect City Hall, Rumpke and the Rotary. Derek Carpenter of Rumpke was the featured speaker, explaining their approach to PUBLIC recycling of plastics; by SHAPE rather by NUMBER. The basic plastics that Rumpke wants come in the shapes of: ***"Tubs, Cups, Bottles and Jugs".***

This was followed by hands-on sorting and gathering of cleaned plastic waste, as an educational exercise. Future workshops will focus on Metal/ Aluminum, Paper/Cardboard and Glass/Ceramics.

Where Do *Reduce, Reuse & Recycle* Meet The New "Circular" Economy?

The transition toward a greener economy is reshaping job markets, investment priorities, and community planning across the globe. Central to this transformation are the "three Rs" of sustainability: **Recycling, Reusing, and Reducing**. These practices are not only vital for mitigating environmental harm but are also becoming significant drivers of economic growth and job creation.

The traditional waste management sector, historically focused on landfill operations and incineration, remains a large employer—supporting over 100,000 jobs in the U.S. alone. However, the growth rate of these jobs is relatively flat, constrained by environmental regulations, rising land scarcity, and public opposition to new disposal sites.

Continue…

This Issue: Electronics Recycling

Estimates suggest that 40% of the heavy metals found in landfills come from electronic components.

Discarded electronics in landfills make up 2% of the total trash.

100 million tons of selected consumer electronics were recycled in 2017.

*Electronic Waste, or **e-Waste**, refers to discarded electronic devices and their components. Recycling involves the process of transforming these old devices into reusable materials. It can encompass various methods, including refurbishing, reusing, and proper disposal. These terms are crucial in addressing the growing problem of e-waste. This waste contains hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury, and other toxic substances that can pose serious threats to the environment if not properly managed.*

Hazardous material present in these devices can contaminate soil, water, and air, causing pollution, and endangering ecosystems.

When recycling old electronics removal of personal data and disconnecting batteries are crucial steps to protect privacy and prevent accidents.

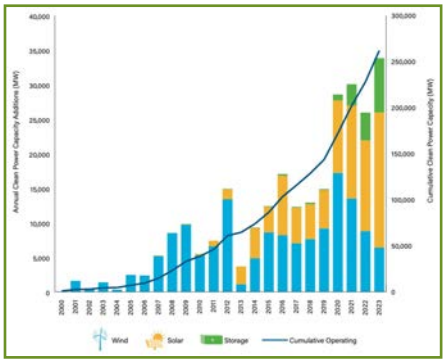
Look for news of an e-Waste Drop-Off coming in the Fall

In contrast, green jobs—particularly those tied to the circular economy—are growing rapidly. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), transitioning to a green economy could create over 24 million new jobs worldwide by 2030.

In the U.S., the recycling industry already supports more than 681,000 jobs, and generating over $37 billion in annual wages. Jobs in recycling and materials recovery are more labor-intensive than landfill operations.

Growth areas include materials sorting and processing, advanced recycling technologies, and design for reuse. Emerging sectors like **electronic waste** (e-waste) recovery and bio-based composting are offering high-skilled job opportunities that combine engineering, logistics, and environmental science. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects strong growth in related roles, such as environmental engineers, urban planners, and sustainability analysts-careers that didn't exist a generation ago.

From an economic standpoint, investment in green infrastructure—such as smart recycling hubs, zero-waste manufacturing, and community compost systems—circulates capital within local economies rather than exporting waste problems. Environmentally, the benefits are profound: reduced greenhouse gas emissions, less land use for dumping grounds, and lower resource extraction.



Green energy intersects with these trends. Solar panel recycling, battery reuse in electric vehicles, and decarbonized logistics are all converging points between the clean energy and recycling economies. These synergies foster integrated job ecosystems where environmental responsibility aligns with long-term economic resilience.

Ultimately, the green industry's emphasis on sustainability is proving to be not just ethically sound but economically strategic.

As consumer awareness and regulatory pressure mount, communities investing in the circular economy position themselves at the forefront of innovation, competitiveness, and environmental stewardship.

WE GET BETTER WITH PRACTICE AND KNOWLEDGE

This Spring a team of environmental experts at W.K.U. conducted an on-line survey of ~ 1,000 Prospect residents, to determine attitudes, beliefs and behaviors relating to recycling trash IN PROSPECT.

We'll post the the survey results next month.

This project is a collaborative involving the City of Prospect, Western Kentucky University, and Rumpke, with a grant from Prospect/Goshen Rotary Club 2024.

PROSPECT CARES