

National Recycling Week - steel cans get a second chance

17.5 million steel cans will be given the opportunity to have a whole new life - away from the dumps and landfills across Australia, during National Recycling Week 7th-13th November!

Thanks to a greater awareness amongst consumers and an increased access to kerbside recycling, steel can recycling has hit a new high in Australia. During National Recycling Week the Steel Can Recycling Council expects to see 17.5 million steel cans recycled across the country. This is equivalent to the amount of steel needed to build 900 family sedans.

With a recently announced recycling rate of 56%, Australians should be congratulated on their efforts to divert the steel can from the garbage into the recycling bin. Across Australia, 381 of the 685 councils representing 94% of the whole population offer their residents access to steel can recycling.

Steel cans, aerosols and paint cans are 100% recyclable and can be recycled over and over again, saving precious resources and diverting unnecessary waste from landfill.

Joe Stefano, of the Steel Can Recycling Council, comments that, *'in 1992 there was no steel can recycling in Australia and we have come a long way since then. Steel cans are a great material to recycle, they are easily extracted from the recycling trucks with huge magnets and their integrity is not lost through the process of recycling. During National Recycling Week, we would like to remind consumers that they can also recycle their used aerosol cans which pose no danger to the recycling process.'*

Looking in recycling and garbage bins across the country reveals what people really do with their steel cans. Cans with dry and wet contents, where the contents leave the can with little residue, were high scorers - 65% of wet food cans are recycled - whereas cans with more viscous contents such as oil, meat, dairy and starch based products were more commonly found in garbage - only 32.5% on average are recycled. Aerosols are the easiest of all the steel cans to recycle yet only 35% on average are being recycled.

Other highlights from the Steel Can Recycling Council include:

- Awareness of steel can recyclability has increased 11% from 71% to 82% since 2000. In that time the number of councils collecting steel cans has increased from 353 representing 16.8 million people, to 381 councils representing 18.4 million people.
- 57% of consumers get their recycling information from packaging - the rest from their local council, the internet and friends.
- At 56%, recovery rates for steel, for the first time ever, now exceed the current national post consumer packaging recycling rate of 48%, indicating that steel can recycling has reached new and sustainable levels of recovery.

NOTES TO EDITOR

For more information and high resolution photos, please contact Lisa Kinahan at Cansmart on 1800 073 713 or lisa@cansmart.org or 0416 363 202.



shopper choosing can



doing a bin audit