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Two thirds of Europe's steel packaging gets recycled

A significant contribution to reducing energy consumption and carbon footprint

Recycling is second nature for steel. The latest figures from APEAL (the Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging) show that 66% of steel packaging is recycled in Europe with strong growth recorded across the continent. That amounts to over 2.5 million tonnes of food and drinks cans and other steel containers being recycled in the last year. This prevented 4.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from being released into the environment - the equivalent to taking 2 million cars off the road.

Last year, recycling continued to grow throughout Europe rising by 5% from the 2005 total. In 2006 the top performers were Belgium and Germany with 93% and 89% of steel packaging recycled respectively. Switzerland, Austria and the Netherlands follow closely behind, recycling over 80% of their steel containers.

The trend towards increased recycling for steel packaging is confirmed in Central and Eastern Europe: Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic have all boosted their recycling performance by between 34% and 50%.

The UK and Denmark improved upon their recycled tonnage of the previous year by between 10% and 15%. Meanwhile, Spain and Portugal recorded encouraging growth of 5% and 10% respectively.



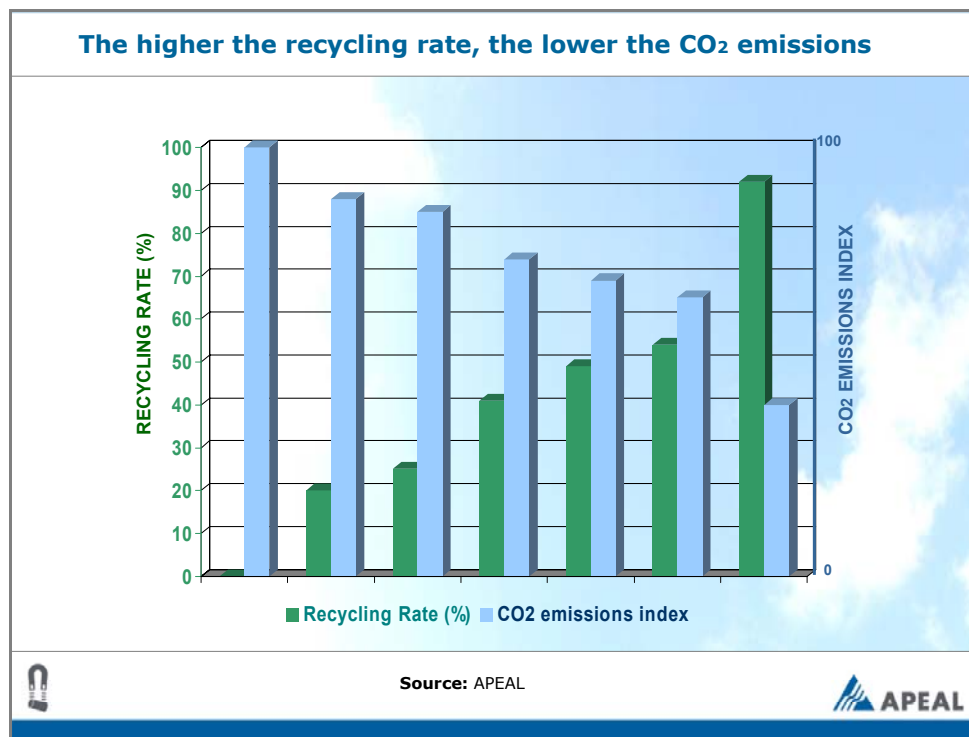
Steel – made to be recycled

There are a number of reasons for steel’s excellent recycling performance. Firstly, steel can be easily collected through a variety of systems. Secondly, its magnetic properties make steel packaging the easiest type of packaging to sort and recover for recycling. In addition, there has been a rising demand for steel scrap with abundant recycling outlets to cope with this demand. *“Steel offers what a number of other materials cannot in terms of reusability. The overall increase in growth rates of steel packaging recycling across Europe is excellent news for all. As resources become increasingly stretched the need to recycle will become ever more important in the future”*, commented Mr. John Peters, President of APEAL, the Association of European Producers of Steel for Packaging.

Increasing steel packaging recycling – lowering carbon footprints

Steel is unique as it loses none of its strength and inherent properties, no matter how many times it is recycled. Hence, reusing steel packaging and recycling it into new steel is a never ending process.

This unlimited lifespan and the potential for unlimited recyclability gives steel a huge advantage in terms of sustainability. It means that natural resources are saved for future generations and that energy use and CO₂ emissions are significantly reduced.



In 2006 alone, recycling of steel packaging in Europe prevented as much as 4.7 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions from being released into the environment - approximately the equivalent to 2 million cars, driving 15,000 km per year.

“Given the concern about climate change, the smarter use of resources should be at the forefront of all our minds. Indeed, using scrap as part of the steelmaking process reduces the amount of raw materials needed and requires much less energy. This will further drive growth in recycling rates across Europe”, added Mr. John Peters.

Besides steel packaging’s excellent recycling performance, its unmatched attributes of safety, protection and conservation, make it a top performer in terms of sustainability.

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Steel packaging offers value to society thanks to its exceptionally high recycling rates in Europe. Steel is recycled time and time again without its quality ever deteriorating. In this sense, steel is a truly renewable material. Thanks to its magnetic properties, steel is the easiest type of packaging to recover for recycling.

APEAL, the association of European producers of steel for packaging, represents 92 % of the total production of steel for packaging in Europe. Its members are ArcelorMittal Packaging, Corus Packaging Plus, Rasselstein and US Steel Kosice.