

Recycling

Increased consumption **generates** more garbage and, in turn, causes disposal problems. In most countries, waste is buried or **incinerated**, whereas half of what ends up in dustbins could still be useful. Recycling, with its enormous **benefits**, is the answer. Bearing in mind that **deposits** of natural resources are not **renewable**, recyclable materials like metals, paper, rags, melted-down plastic and hardwood **cutoffs**, should be put to good use. The biggest savings would be in energy consumption, but it is also important to conserve natural resources and be environment-friendly by producing less waste. By investing in materials which are considered **rubbish**, whole industries could be built around recycling in this throwaway culture of ours.

Waste Watch, a group which promotes the idea of recycling, has published data on energy saving when new goods are made from waste. To produce a can from recycled material, it seems we require only one-twentieth of the energy needed to make a can from raw materials. Used drink cans, thrown by the millions into **litter receptacles**, are a valuable **resource**. They can provide tin, steel and aluminium. From **reclamation** plants, the recycled aluminium can re-enter the economy in a wide variety of attractive products.

Waste Watch has started the campaign by targeting **households**, offering advice on local recycling schemes. It presses for making access to collection points widely available, not only at rubbish **depots or tips**. For many people, carrying recyclables to tips and bottle banks is a problem and many do not bother. Schools should play their part: children don't need to be encouraged to participate in collection schemes – they love it. Each resident supporting the idea can help them by separating coloured glass from clear glass, and putting aside newspapers, steel and aluminium cans. Consumers should encourage manufacturers to switch to recyclable or less packaging. For example, where possible they should sell refill packs. By buying recyclables, the public will show their awareness of environmental issues.