2025 United States Paper Recycling Rates: American Forest & Paper Association Releases Data



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The American Forest & Paper Association ("AFPA") announced its annual paper recycling rates in the United States for 2025.

Two key rates released included:

- Paper recycling rate was 61-65%.
- Cardboard recycling rate was 70-75%.

Paper and paper packaging are noted to be collected for recycling from multiple sources that include:

- Residential.
- Industrial.
- Commercial.
- Institutional.

The AFPA report notes that recycled paper is used by:

- 20 million tons became containerboard (i.e., the material used to make cardboard boxes).
- 29% was exported and utilized by paper mills in other countries.

Additional figures provided in the report include:

- Approximately 45 million tons of paper recycled in the United States.
- Approximately 80% of the United States paper mills use recycled paper to make products.

AFPA describes its organization as serving to:

… advance public policies that foster economic growth, job creation, and global competitiveness for a vital sector that makes the essential paper and packaging products Americans use every day.

A copy of the AFPA report can be found here.