

"The History of Recycling"

1690

The recycled paper manufacturing process begins. Mills make paper from fibers derived from cotton and linen rags.

1776

As America declares independence, the Patriots begin recycling and contributing metal scrap, paper and other items to the cause.

1800

Cotton is scarce, so scrap wool called "shoudy" is collected for use in stuffing mattresses, making saddles, uniforms and blankets.

1860

America's newspapers are now printed on paper made from wood pulp fibers rather than rags.

1865

The Salvation Army is founded in London. They employ the unskilled poor to recover discarded materials.

The nation's first aluminum can recycling plants open in Chicago and Cleveland.

1904

1916

The Waste Reclamation Service is created by the Federal Government with the motto "Don't Waste Waste - Save It." They advertise to donate old rags and wastepaper for WWI.

1930

During the Depression, many people held onto what they had. They saved the odd shoe or piece of string "just in case."

1970

The first Earth Day brings national attention to the problem of increasing waste and the importance of recycling.

1976

The Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act is passed.

1985

The Clean Michigan Fund is created to finance recycling, composting and closure of unlicensed garbage dumps.

1991

Michigan bans leaves, grass and other yard trimmings from the landfill.

2000

The EPA confirms a link between global warming and waste, showing that reducing garbage and recycling cut greenhouse gas emissions.