

ALUMINIUM CANS

Aluminium cans are completely recyclable. Aluminium does not degrade during the recycling process. This means aluminium cans can be remelted and turned into new cans over and over again. Approximately 70% of all aluminium cans produced in Australia are collected for recycling (Aluminium Can Group, George Unger and Associates & Kaal Australia).

Producing aluminium requires the mining of bauxite, a metal found about 3 metres beneath the earth's surface. To mine the bauxite, vegetation and topsoil are removed, potentially leading to loss of habitat and biodiversity. Waste products from this mining includes 'red mud' which is cleaned with water and left in tailing dams. It takes two tonnes of bauxite to produce one tonne of alumina, and two tonnes of alumina to produce one tonne of aluminium metal. By recycling your aluminium cans, you are reducing the need to mine bauxite saving natural resources. (www.comalco.com)

By recycling aluminium cans we can make some very big environmental savings:

- The energy needed to make one new aluminium can is the same as the energy needed to recycle twenty aluminium cans (www.sustainability.vic.gov.au)
- By recycling one aluminium can you are saving enough energy to run your television for three hours (www.visy.com.au)
- Making aluminium cans from recycled material requires less than 5% of the energy used to make aluminium cans from bauxite (www.visy.com.au)
- Recycling aluminium cans saves millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases (www.visy.com.au)

Aluminium Cans are 100% recyclable. Here's what happens to them.

- Aluminium cans are collected from households or recycling drop off centres.
- The cans are sorted magnetically or by hand and are compacted for ease of transport.
- They are taken to the nearest processing plant.
- The aluminium is melted and poured into ingots, which are sent to rolling mills.
- They are then made into new cans or other aluminium products (car parts, food trays, saucepans and homewares).

WHAT CAN I DO?

Recycle your aluminium cans by: first checking with your local council for details about recycling aluminium cans in your area; rinse free of liquid; squash if

possible; place in your recycling bin or take to your drop off centre; don't add any other objects

MORE INFORMATION

- www.olierecycles.com/planet/aus/info/alpha/alpha03.htm - click on the aluminium section
- [Click here to visit the Clean Up Australia website for an aluminum fact sheet:](#)
- www.visy.com.au - Click on the Visy recycling section and then the information library tab for fact sheets on aluminum can recycling.