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Although recycling has been an environmental and health concern for numerous centuries, many people do not recycle. Recycling can be a way to save and protect the environment. Teaching our children about the value of recycling can only benefit generations to come.

Recycling became a concern and practice in history dating back to about 400 BC. According to Wikipedia.com, in the past, dust and ash from wood and coal fires had been used as a base material used in brick making, rags were turn into a special type of wool, by combing recycled fibers with virgin wool. During World War II, the US government, encouraged individuals to donate metals and conserve fiber.

During the 1970s, the modern waste management approach of collecting trash and recyclable materials at the same time emerged. Currently, recycling has been made easier for citizens by placing recycling bins at each home or housing complex. The usage of these bins depends on the people occupying the homes.

Recycling has many benefits.

- Water Benefits: In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated, "If all US households installed water-efficiency appliances, the country would save more than 3 trillion gallons of water and more than $18 billion dollars per year. They also said that letting your faucet run for five minutes uses about as much energy as running a 60-watt light bulb run for 14 hours. One more fact about water conservation is a full tub requires 70 gallons of water, but a five minute shower uses only 10 to 25 gallons of water.

- Energy Benefits: In 2007, the World Watch Institute cites the following information: Electricity production is the leading cause of industrial air pollution in the United States, and is responsible for 40% of the nation's carbon emissions that contribute to global climate change. Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are an energy-saving alternative to incandescent bulbs. [Although they cost a little more] . . .they produce the same amount of light, use one-third of the electricity, and last up to ten times as long.

- Paper Benefits: In 2008 the EPA also reported that recycling paper instead of making it from new material generates 74 percent less air pollution and uses 50 percent less water. Also recycling 1 ton of paper saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 2 barrels of oil and 4,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity- which is enough to power the average American home for five months.

The Paper Industry Association Council reported in 2007, that more than 56 percent of the paper consumed in the U.S during 2007 made from recycled material. This statistic was an all-time high. This is equal to approximately 360 pounds of paper from each person in the U.S.

Here are a few other facts about recycling:

- The 36 billion aluminum landfill last year had a value of $600 million. But more than 50% of a new aluminum can is made from recycled aluminum. (Oberlin College Recycling Program)

- Glass can be recycled forever. By recycling glass we can save 1,330 pounds of sand, 433 pounds of soda ash, 433 pounds of limestone, and 151 pounds of feldspar. (Oberlin College Recycling Program)

- States with bottle deposit laws have 35-40% less litter by volume. (Oberlin College Recycling Program)

There are many other benefits of recycling. It is important for us all to become aware of how we treat our environment, because we all know the universal law of karma.

If we pollute the earth, I think it is highly likely the earth, will pollute us right back.

I would like to encourage everyone reading this article to seriously think about the benefits of recycling, thus prolonging our lives and the lives of future generations. Please contact your local waste management organization for more information regarding recycling in your community.

Brandi Phillips is a health and wellness writer, practitioner, professional and enthusiast. She hopes to encourage good health and wellness in her community.