

Corrugated Recycles

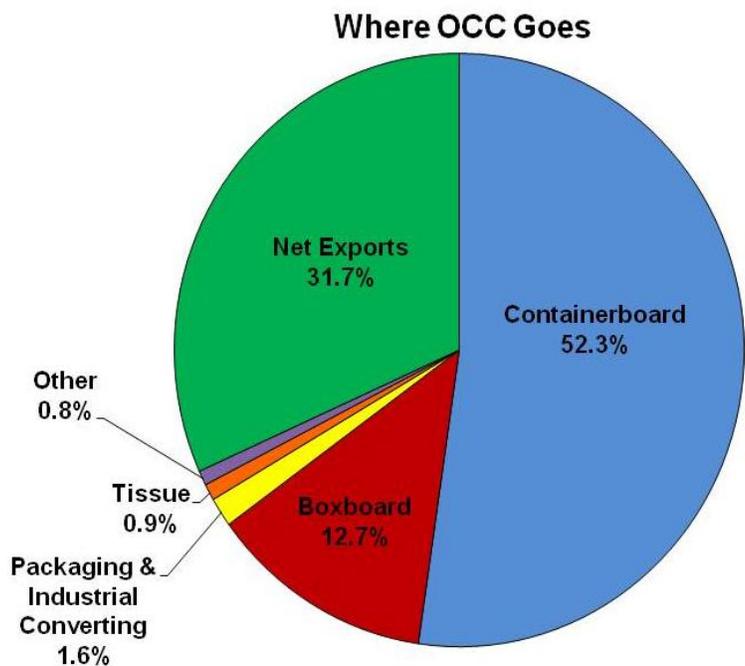
Recycling corrugated packaging is tremendously successful. Today, more corrugated packaging is recovered for recycling than any other packaging material.

In 2013, the recovery rate for old corrugated containers (OCC) was 88.5 percent, up from 54.5 percent in 1993. Additionally, more OCC was used by U.S. mills -- rising 3.9 percent in 2013 to 19.8 million tons. This is a direct result of the corrugated industry's prolonged and focused effort.

Where OCC Goes

Most OCC is used to make new paper products. More than 50 percent of OCC recovered in 2013 was used to make new containerboard. An additional 13 percent was used to make boxboard, and more than 31 percent was exported.

Global demand for OCC generated in the U.S. grew steadily over the last decade, ensuring a viable market for U.S. recovered fiber.



Increasing the amount of OCC recovered for recycling helps the industry continue to reduce its environmental footprint and meet global demand.

Investment in Customer and Consumer Education

The corrugated box industry has made significant investments to educate retailers and consumers on the benefits of recycling corrugated materials. In 1994, the "Corrugated Recycles" symbol was introduced in the U.S.; the International Corrugated Case Association (ICCA) adopted it three years later. Today, the symbol is present on a majority of corrugated packaging.





One of these symbols is present on the majority of all corrugated packaging produced.
Each symbol signifies that the box can be recycled.

The industry also developed a number of resources to help encourage and promote recycling in the workplace, schools and communities, including guides to starting a recycling program and lesson plans for classroom use. AF&PA's annual Recycling Awards honor outstanding business, community and school recycling programs and promotes their best practices. For award-winning case studies, recycling information, statistics and a variety of other resources, visit paperrecycles.org.

Recycling Progress: Waxed Corrugated

Some corrugated containers are treated with wax coatings to provide moisture and vapor protection for products such as produce, poultry and seafood. The industry worked diligently to develop and commercialize alternative coatings that mill systems can recycle.

These recyclable alternatives can be certified repulpable and recyclable and can be included in the normal corrugated recovery stream by passing an industry-standard testing protocol.



Each symbol indicates that the container bearing it can be successfully recycled.

More Information

For the most up-to-date corrugated industry statistics and information, visit corrugated.org.