

What Are Some Measureable Economical and Environmental Benefits Of Recycling?



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Abstract: The handling of waste is a major global environmental issue. When we talk about recycling ,we need to be aware of what specifically can be recycled. According to New York State law, these currently include plastics (including bottles), metals, glass, old electronics, batteries, cardboard and wood from both household, industrial and commercial sources. Also included is organic trash (food waste) in some parts of New York City that are part of a pilot program. Since recycling has been adopted in New York City, the amount of refuse in landfills has diminished significantly, resulting in lower transport costs for the local government and a lower volume of recyclables disposed of in landfills. The program has also contributed to an improved environmental quality of life, while increasing public awareness of the importance of environmental conservation.

The recycling program in New York City has led to several secondary economic benefits as well. These include the creation of new businesses that haul, process and broker recovered materials, promoting economic development and well-paying jobs in the recycling and (manufacturing) industries, generating more tax revenue. Further, because of the way in which most recycled materials are transported for processing, the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change has been reduced.

Introduction

For a couple of decades, the issue of environmental health and the proper disposal of waste has been looming over the global environment. The consumer market and industrial globalization has increased a number of environmental issues such as: Global warming ,detrimental effects on marine life ,and environmental hazards. The growing population of the world is negatively impacting the environment in addition to the number of current problems such as poor recycling infrastructure . In order to save the environment, for future, past, and current generations, recycling is the most basic but significant issue that is important to be addressed. Recycling can help to protect and save the environment and can also economically benefit the industrial success by reducing excessive financial expenses, creating more job opportunities and green house emissions.

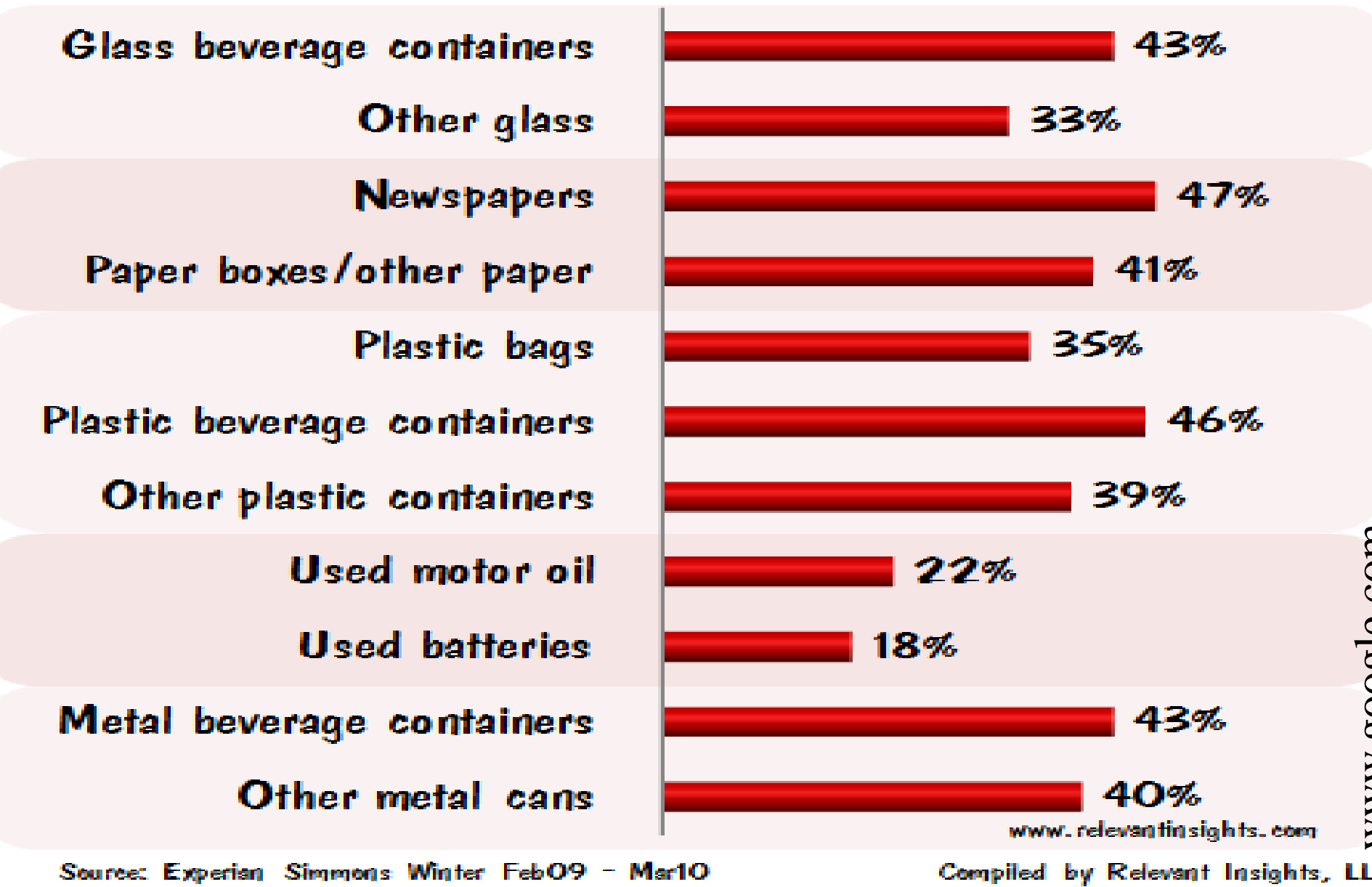
Method

In New York City recycling began as voluntary program in 1986, but in 1989 it became mandatory for the city and its environmental benefits . (*NYC Department of Sanitation: History of recycling*). In order to conduct my research and to analyze this issue of proper disposal of materials and its long term impacts on human and marine life in depth, I visited the SIMS Recycling facility. The SIMS Recycling center is located in Brooklyn Sunset Park, where the buildings are made with partially recycled materials. I also observed how recyclables and non-recyclables were categorized specifically. During the visit to SIMS ,I also conducted an interview with Eadoin Quinn (study /research tour guide). Recycling can help to save; natural resources, energy, landfill space and reduce oil consumption. In order to save cost and resources in order to save the resources and benefit he economy recycling should be encouraged, because making a plastic bottles requires more energy consumption than recycling . NYC has a great awareness program which allows all house hold participants to be actively involved in recycling by separating plastic, glass, paper, card board, plastic bags and regular trash, in order to help the recycling center's and environment.

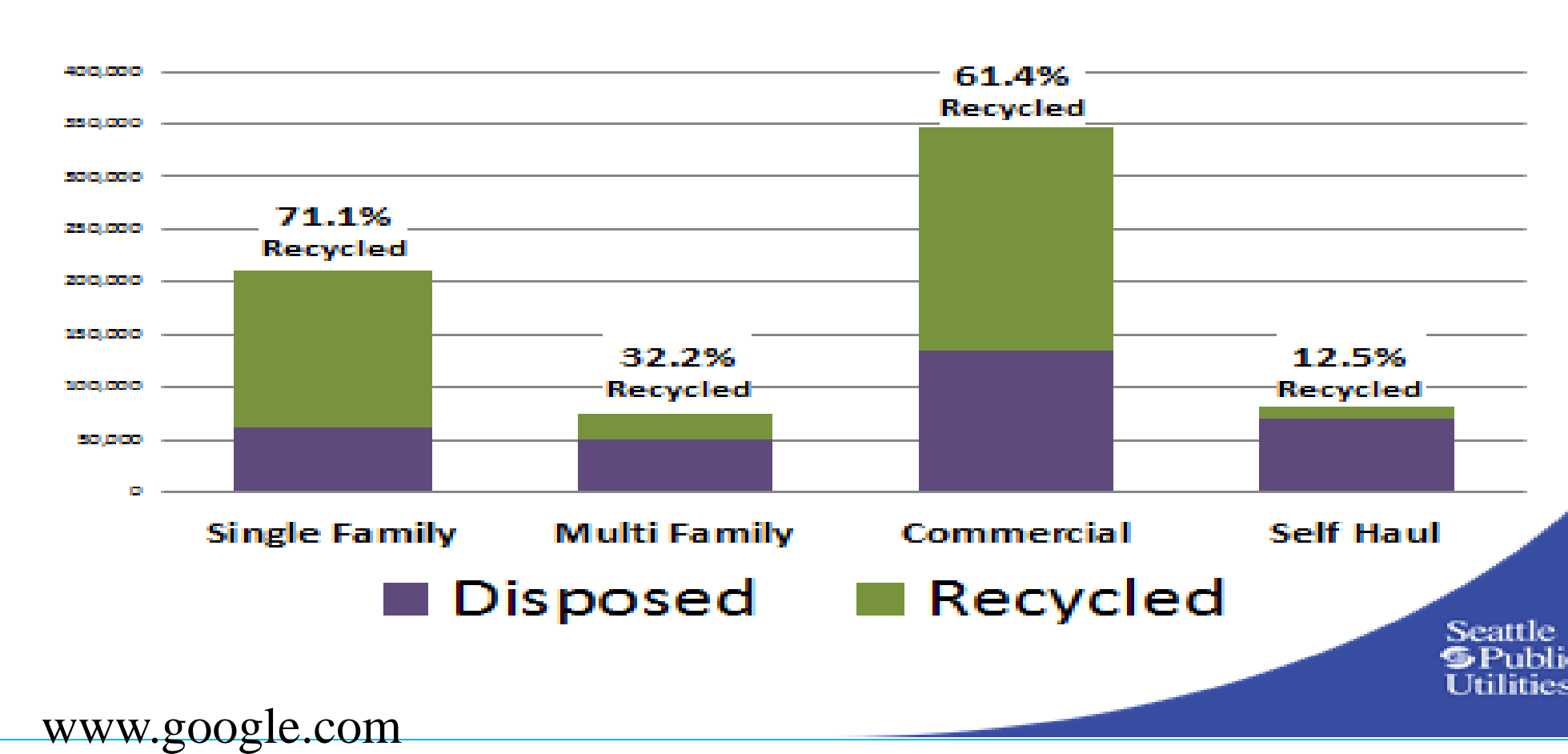
Conclusion

Recycling has become a top priority in promoting environmental health and sustainable economic growth. The data showing the increased commitment among households and businesses of the importance of recycling is an initial step toward the alleviation of environmental pollution.

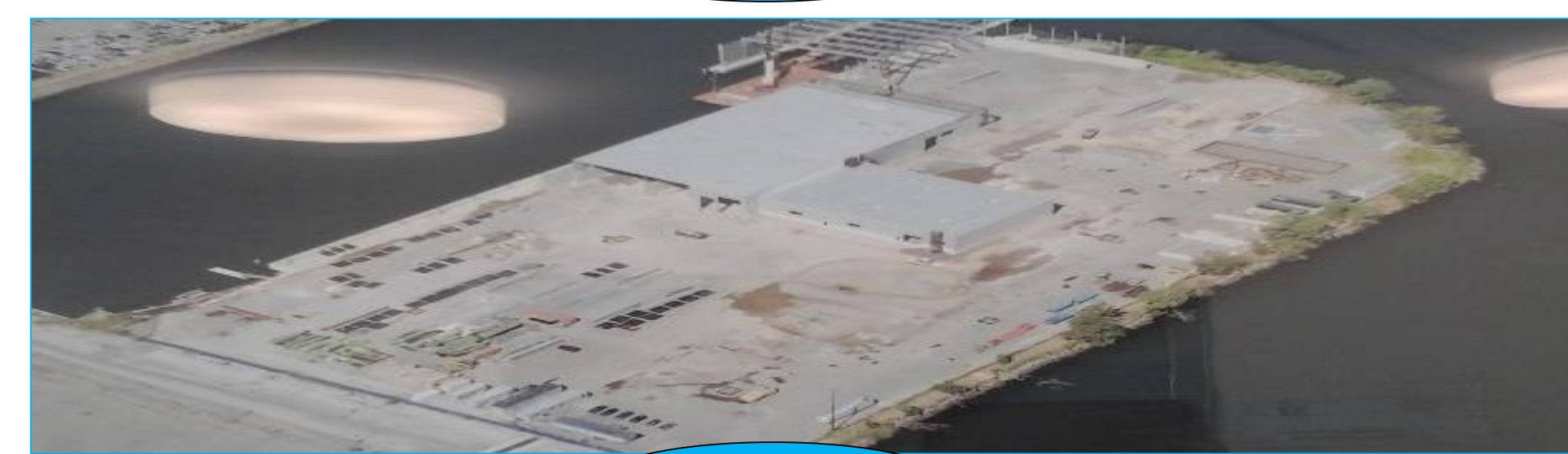
What Are Households Recycling?



Tons Disposed & Recycled by Sector



January 2011



July 2012



November 2013

Literature

Research on the environmental and economical benefits of recycling , had provided me with important information about the critically important role of recycling to environmental and economic sustainability. "New Yorkers generate approximately over 4.5 pounds per person per day in NYS" (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. *Recycling and Composting*).

In July 2103, the NYC mayor's office announced plans to double the recycling rate to 30 percent by 2017 and follow the largest expansion of the recycling program in 25 years, reducing the cost of transport to landfills, and expanding upon the plastics recycling industry. Mayor Bloomberg Launches New "recycle Everything" Ads And Announces Expansion Of The Organic Food Waste Recycling Program, July 19, 2013

Nationally, "The recycling and reuse industry consists of approximately 56,000 establishments that employ over 1.1 million people, generate an annual payroll of nearly \$37 billion, and gross over \$236 billion in annual revenues" (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Communicating the Benefits of Recycling*).

Results

- Recycling:
- Saves resources that can affect oil prices; almost five barrels of oil can be saved by processing plastic bottles.
- Decreases green house gas emissions
- Reduces the amount of pollution from transport of recyclables
- Requires less energy to recycle the plastics
- Recycling departments and services offer a new jobs which also benefits the City's economy.

Acknowledgments

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