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25 YEARS AND A BILLION TONS OF STEEL RECYCLED

Steel Recycling Institute Marks Major Milestones with Release of Recycling Rates

PITTSBURGH, September 23, 2013 – More than one billion tons of steel have been recycled by the North American steel industry since 1988, according to the Steel Recycling Institute (SRI), a business unit of the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI). SRI marks its 25th anniversary this year with this milestone achievement and the release of the 2012 steel recycling rates.

Established in 1988 as the Steel Can Recycling Institute, SRI was commissioned by the North American Steel Industry to develop an infrastructure for the recycling of steel cans and serve as a primary information and technical resource. By 1993, SRI’s focus had expanded beyond just steel cans to promoting and sustaining the recycling of all steel products. Today, these efforts continue along with credibly documenting the superior environmental performance of steel through rigorous life cycle studies.

“Since its inception in 1988, SRI has served as a driving force behind growing the availability of a key resource for steelmaking processes—steel scrap,” said Gregory L. Crawford, executive director of SRI. “For a quarter century, SRI has been the local face of the steel industry, providing advocacy, information and assistance in facilitating increases in the recycling of major steel products, including cans, cars, appliances and construction materials.”

To track the success of these recycling efforts, each year, the SRI calculates the recycling rates for steel and major steel products. Recycling rates for steel are generally released up to 18 months following the end of the calendar year as they are based on data released from: AISI Annual Statistical Reports, US Geological Survey, EPA Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste, National Automobile Dealers Association, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers and the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries.

For 2012, the overall recycling rate for steel was 88 percent with nearly 84 million tons of steel recycled. This included the more than 1.3 million tons of tin plate steel—the equivalent of 21 billion steel cans, which were recycled at a rate of 72 percent, the highest among packaging materials. More than 16.3 million tons of automotive scrap were recycled at a rate of 92.5 percent in 2012—the equivalent of 11.5 million automobiles. The year-to-year recycling rates for these products are included separately within this packet.

Other rates, including appliance and construction products are based on industry estimates of retail and scrap collections, including the more than 2.7 million tons of appliance steel recycled in 2012 at an estimated 90 percent. Also, each year, based on construction and demolition industry estimates, about 98 percent of out-of-service construction plates and beams are recycled and 70 percent of rebar and other structural steel are captured for recycling through demolition and disassembly.
The steel industry’s impressive recycling accomplishments are also at the core of other environmental advances by the North American steel industry. Since 1990, the steel industry has improved its energy efficiency per ton by 27 percent and has decreased its CO₂ emissions per ton by 33 percent—making North American steel an environmentally-preferred material which aids its customers in improving the environmental performance of their products.

“The steel industry’s internationally-recognized energy efficiency, coupled with the recycling rate that is the highest of any material, proves our commitment to sustainability and resource conservation,” said Thomas J. Gibson, president and CEO of AISI. “For 25 years, steel’s recycling successes have been spearheaded by the SRI and we look forward to another quarter century, where steel leads social, economic and environmental advances.”

The commitment to collect and recycle steel has been inherent to steelmaking for nearly as long as steel has been made in North America. This is reflected through external scrap collection for recycling and by extensive recycling of byproducts of the steelmaking process.

“Our company, along with the entire steel industry, has a long history in recycling steel. We recycle many of our byproducts such as slag and blast furnace gas and are committed to continue to look for additional recycling opportunities,” said Ronald Kostyo, Vice President and General Manager, Severstal Dearborn.

About AISI
AISI serves as the voice of the North American steel industry in the public policy arena and advances the case for steel in the marketplace as the preferred material of choice. AISI also plays a lead role in the development and application of new steels and steelmaking technology. AISI is comprised of 24 member companies, including integrated and electric furnace steelmakers, and 127 associate members who are suppliers to or customers of the steel industry. AISI’s member companies represent over three quarters of both U.S. and North American steel capacity.

About SRI
SRI is an industry association dedicated to communicating the sustainable efforts of the North American steel industry. The SRI educates the solid waste industry, government, business and ultimately the consumer about the benefits of steel’s recycling accomplishments and advancements in sustainability. For more information on the steel industry’s sustainable efforts visit: www.recycle-steel.org or www.sustainable-steel.org. Or follow the SRI on Twitter @EnviroMetal

(Editor’s Note: A timeline of major milestones and programs from the past quarter century of SRI activities is included as an addendum to this release.)

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2012 Steel Recycling Rates
North America’s Most Recycled Material

Overall Steel Recycling Rate

Steel Can Recycling Rate

Automotive Recycling Rate

North America's Most Recycled Material

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Quick Facts

- Each year, more steel is recycled than aluminum, paper, plastic and glass—combined.
- Steel is continuously recyclable—meaning it can be recycled over and over without loss of quality.
- Every ton of steel recycled conserves 2,500 pounds of iron ore, 1,400 pounds of coal and 120 pounds of limestone.
- The nearly 20 billion cans recycled last year would line the path to the moon and back seven times.
- Through recycling, the steel industry saves the energy equivalent to power 20 million homes for one year.
- The steel industry has reduced its energy intensity by 27 percent and CO2 emissions by 33 percent per ton of steel shipped since 1990.

Steel Recycling at a Glance

Steel is North America’s #1 recycled material. Each year, more steel is recycled than paper, plastic, aluminum and glass—combined. Steel is the engine that drives the recycling of many consumer goods, including cans, cars, appliances and construction materials. Recycling, along with process innovation, has made steel a leader in reducing energy intensity from the steelmaking process and correspondingly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Get More Information on Steel: The EnviroMetal™

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25 YEARS OF PROMOTING AND SUSTAINING STEEL RECYCLING

Making Steel North America’s Most Recycled Material

1988  The Steel Can Recycling Institute was formed by the North American steel industry and scrap processors to develop an infrastructure for the recycling of steel cans and serve as a primary information and technical resource. Steel can recycling rate is 15 percent.

1991  SRI develops the Steel Recycling Database, a national database of recycling programs and detailed statistics on all materials accepted at recycling locations. SRI also commissions scholarships to high school students to promote solid waste management education in schools, heighten awareness of the importance of recycling and encourage community involvement through volunteer activities.

1992  SRI creates our industry’s ‘Steel Spokescan’ ROSCOE (Recycle Our Steel; Conserve Our Environment). ROSCOE has been a staple of SRI educational programming and is still an active part of SRI outreach through ROSCOE’s Recycle Room (recycleroom.org).

1993  SRI expands focus to promote and sustain the recycling of all steel products, including cans, cars, appliances and construction materials. SRI also launches the Steel Recycling Partnership which consisted of public service announcements, a “kit-in-a-can” for local promotions and traditional advertising on transit, TV and radio. Steel can recycling rate is 48 percent.

1994  “Steel Recycling CANpaign” wins two Mercury Awards from the International Academy of Communication Arts and Science for Best of Show and the Grand Award in the campaign category.

- MORE -
1997  SRI launches Dialogue with America, a year-long campaign designed to promote a higher understanding of the importance of recycling to both the environment and the economy. 1st Annual America Recycles Day … SRI joined more than 100 public and private entities to launch the event. More than 3,000 educational events were conducted in 48 states and two U.S. territories to help consumers learn about buying recycled.

1998  SRI launches Rock, Roll and Recycle, a radio-driven program in nine cities, encouraging consumers to buy steel products, recycle steel products and enter to win a trip to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, OH. SRI’s Show Room Bonus program featured a partnership between SRI and the Tri-State Quality Ford Dealers to communicate the strength, safety and recyclability of steel in automobiles. Steel can recycling rate is 56 percent.

SRI becomes a business unit of the American Iron and Steel Institute, continuing to promote and sustain steel recycling in collaboration with steel producing members of the industry.

1999  Steel Recycling All-Stars partnered with radio stations in 10 markets, encouraging consumers to recycle steel products, and offered a chance to win a trip to the MLB All-Star game.

2000  SRI launches the Nerves of Steel campaign in markets across America, citing dangerous driving habits, including distracted driving and quantifying some of the worst cities for driving nationwide. The program tied these dangers directly to the fact that steel owned the attribute “safety” in the automobile and made others safer from those that engaged in these bad habits.

2001  SRI extends the Nerves of Steel campaign into Canada in conjunction with Victoria Day, reaching across the country with a radio tour to identify risky driving behaviors and ways to increase safety against aggressive and distracted driving.

2003  SRI makes the Steel Recycling Database searchable online, for consumers to find steel recycling options in their area from the thousands of recycling programs, scrap processors and collection centers logged in the database. Steel can recycling rate is 60 percent.

2004  As steel recycling approaches critical mass in recycling programs, SRI focuses on promoting benefits of steel’s extensive recycling accomplishments, including resource conservation, energy reduction, steelmaking efficiencies, waste reduction and product stewardship.

2006  SRI joins WalMart to begin developing the retail giant’s sustainability score card, which drove the store’s environmental decisions in purchasing and packaging—giving steel a voice as a sustainable package. SRI also joins forces with metals manufacturers and scrap processors to develop the Declaration of the Metal Industry on Principles of Recycling.

2008  SRI partners with Habitat for Humanity to encourage the donation of cars to Habitat to benefit their Cars for Homes program. Steel can recycling rate is 65 percent.

2010  SRI launches the EnviroMetal™ Minute a series of 60-second podcasts that provided the latest steel recycling information and responses to current issues. SRI also re-launches the SteelCycles education curricula for grades 5-12 with updated modules focused on meeting national standards for increasing environmental literacy for use in classrooms.

2011  SRI joins with other recycled materials through the Recycling Roundtable to support U.S. Senate Resolution 251, concerning the improvement of collection, processing and consumption of recyclable materials throughout the US.

2012  Steel can recycling rate is 71 percent.

2013  SRI, in cooperation with worldsteel, creates a North American steel life cycle inventory data set that will be used to credibly promote and document steel’s superior environmental performance for key stakeholders through life cycle assessment.

SRI marks one billion tons of steel recycled by the North American steel industry in the past 25 years.

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The Steel Recycling Institute (SRI) was established in late 1988 as the Steel Can Recycling Institute, a not-for-profit trade association with the mission of promoting and sustaining steel can recycling. With headquarters in Pittsburgh, PA, it was formed by eight North American steel companies and the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI). The Institute’s focus was a grassroots effort to implement steel can recycling in communities across North America. To facilitate this activity, regional offices were established. Regional managers worked directly with public recycling offices, private recyclers, haulers, ferrous scrap dealers, end markets and others who were involved in steel recycling. The headquarters office coordinated the development of recycling operations, government affairs, marketing and public relations. In 1992, an office was established in Washington, DC to monitor federal legislation.

By spring of 1993, the organization expanded its focus to encompass the recycling of all steel products—taking on its current name.

SRI continues its grassroots efforts to work directly with the public and private sectors to expand and grow steel recycling and is an active business unit of the AISI, building environmental preference for steel through credibly communicating steel’s sustainable advancements.

While recycling rates for steel products continue to increase, the most impressive figure is the overall steel recycling rate of 88 percent; this rate has exceeded 50 percent for more than a half century.

SRI continues to support the vision of making steel the material that augments the well being of people and the planet.

During the 25 years SRI has promoted steel recycling in North America, ONE BILLION TONS OF STEEL HAVE BEEN RECYCLED.
Quick Facts

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