

Magazines

The coated paper used in magazines and catalogs can be tricky to recycle.

MOST MAGAZINES are printed on coated groundwood paper, which is the same kind of paper used by newspapers. Clay, the most common coating, smoothes the surface of the paper and creates a surface glossy inks can adhere to. A two-sided, coated paper sheet used for magazines will normally have 30 to 35 percent clay and filler and 65 to 70 percent paper fiber content.

About 17,000 different magazine titles were published in 2005. More than 362 million copies were sold that year according to Audit Bureau data. The total number of magazines printed will be higher. Of that number, 74 percent will go to subscribers, 11 percent are sold as single-issue sales, and 15 percent are returned unsold. About half of the single-issue sales occur in supermarkets.

Catalogs are also primarily printed on coated groundwood paper. Most are distributed through the mail. Fourteen billion catalogs were mailed in 1998. More recent data is not available. EPA data for magazines does not include catalogs, although catalogs are normally collected with magazines in curbside recycling programs. All data in this profile is limited to magazines unless otherwise noted.

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Sources:

"Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2003," Office of Solid Waste, Washington, D.C., www.epa.gov/osw
 Direct Mail Association, New York, NY, www.the-dma.org
 Magazine Publishers of America, New York, NY
www.magazine.org

"Scrap Specifications Circular 2006," Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Washington, D.C., www.isri.org

*2003 EPA estimates.

Magazines Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Facts:

Generated:

- 2.27 million tons or 1.0% by weight.*
- 15.4 pounds per person per year.*

Recycled:

- 750,000 tons or a 33% recycling rate.*
- Almost all unsold copies are recycled.

Recycled Content:

- Magazine publishers were slow to use recycled fiber because coating paper is a very exacting process. Contaminants can reduce smoothness and cause printing problems. Recycled content remains an issue for the industry.

Composted:

- Hard to compost because clay coating resists composting.
- Composted magazines must be shredded properly.

Incinerated or Landfilled:

- 1.52 million tons or 0.9% of discarded MSW by weight.*
- Clay content gives magazines a per pound Btu value of 4500-5000, lower than that of most paper products.
- Burning coated paper creates more ash than burning other forms of paper.

Landfill Volume:

- 4.75 million cubic yards in 1997.

- 1.0% of landfilled MSW in 1997.

Density:

- Landfilled density of 800 pounds per cubic yard.

Source Reduction:

- As with newspapers, most magazines now publish a paperless on-line edition.
- Lighter and smaller paper can be used to offset coated paper price increases.

Recycling Markets:

- Clay was a major barrier in the past to recycling efforts.
- Deinking mills using flotation technologies are the primary market.
- Other markets include mixed waste-paper users such as containerboard and tissue paper.

Magazine Grades / Catalog End-Market Specifications:

- ISRI Paperstock Guide, No. 10, "Magazines."
- May contain a small percentage of uncoated news-type papers.
- Prohibited materials limited to 1%, outthrows to 3%.
- Contaminants include ultra-violet-cured inks, pressure-sensitive adhesives, water-soluble glue bindings, plastic bags, and metallic or plastic inserts.

Scrap Tires MSW Percentage and Recycling Rate

