

Profiles in Garbage

BY CHAZ MILLER

Newspapers

The most substantial component of curbside recycling is fast disappearing.

Newspapers are printed on newsprint, an uncoated groundwood paper made by mechanically grinding wood pulp without first removing lignin and other wood pulp components. Traditionally, newspapers are the largest component by weight and volume of a curbside recycling program.

"Groundwood inserts," the preprinted advertising inserts placed inside newspapers, supply 29 percent of the overall newspaper tonnage.

In 2008, approximately 48.6 million copies were sold every weekday by the 1,408 daily U.S. newspapers. On Sunday, 902 newspapers sold 49.1 million copies, averaging 2.5 readers per copy. Newspaper readership has declined since 1990, with page counts plunging in the last eight years.

With \$45 billion in advertising (\$42 billion in print, \$3 billion on the Web), newspapers had less than 18 percent market share of advertising in 2007. Total advertising continues to decline.

In 2008, newspaper generation was 1.7 million tons higher than in 1960, but newspaper's solid waste market share decreased by 56 percent. Newspaper recycling increased by 5.92 million tons and the recycling rate increased by 243 percent during this same period. However, the amount of newspapers generated and recycled has plummeted in the last decade, due to declining readership. ■

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SOURCES:

American Forest and Paper Association, www.afandpa.org
 "Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: 2008 Facts and Figures," U.S. EPA, Office of Solid Waste, 2009, www.epa.gov/msw/msw99.htm
 "Measurement Standards and Reporting Guidelines," National Recycling Coalition, 1990, www.nrc-recycle.org
 Newspaper Association of America, www.naa.org
 "Scrap Specifications Circular 2009: Guidelines for Paper Stock," Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, www.isri.org

Data is from 2008 EPA estimates, except where noted.

NEWSPAPERS MSW FACTS

Generated:

- 8.8 million tons, or 3.5% by weight.
- 57.88 pounds per person per year.

Recycled:

- 7.74 million tons, an 88.0% recovery rate.
- 9.6 million tons, a 72.4% recovery rate in 2006 (industry data).

Recycled Content:

- 32% for American newspapers.
- 27 states have voluntary or mandatory recycled fiber requirements for newspapers.

Composting:

- Highly compostable with only trace amounts of ink in the compost.

Burned or Landfilled:

- 1.06 million tons, or 0.6% of discarded MSW by weight.
- Per pound Btu value of 7,500 is 50% higher than a pound of garbage.

Landfill Volume:

- 15.3 million cubic yards, or 3.6% of landfilled MSW by volume in 1997.

Density:

- 12" stack weighs 35 pounds.

- Loose, unbaled newspapers weigh 360 - 500 pounds per cubic yard.

- Baled newspapers weigh 720 - 1,000 pounds per cubic yard.

- Landfilled newspapers weigh 800 pounds per cubic yard.

Source Reduction:

- Newspapers use a lighter paper weight and smaller paper size to use less paper.
- On-line newspapers an electronic alternative.

Markets:

- Exports are the

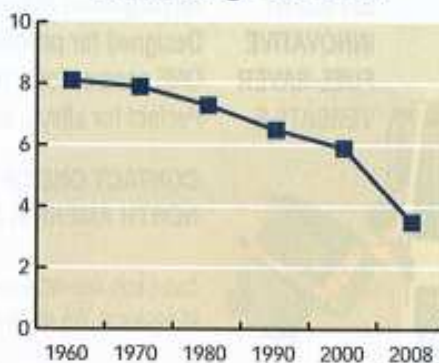
largest market for recycled newspapers. Making old newspapers into newsprint that can then be used to print newspapers is next. Other markets include paperboard and other paper products, cellulose insulation, and animal bedding.

End Market Specifications:

- ISRI guidelines for curbside collected newspaper include grades: 6 (news), 7 (news, de-ink quality), and 8 (news, special de-ink quality) which allow for decreasingly lower levels of contamination.
- Generally, ONP should be kept dry and clean.

Newspapers MSW and Recovered

Percentage of MSW



Percentage Recovered

