

EPA: Recycling up and trash down

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says Americans are recycling more, while throwing away less.

EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson says U.S. citizens recycled 32 percent of their waste in 2005. Including composting, Americans recycled 79 million tons or refuse, representing a 2-percent increase from 2004 and a huge jump from 16 percent in 1990.

In all, the EPA annual report shows Americans generated nearly 246 million tons of municipal solid waste during 2005 -- down nearly 2 million tons from 2004. Officials said the decrease is due in part to the decline in individual waste generation to about 4.5 pounds per person per day, representing a 1.5-percent decrease from 2004. In addition to generating less waste, individuals recycled nearly 1.5 pounds per person per day.

Other data contained in the report show recycling trends across the board are generally up, with container and packaging recycling increasing to 40 percent.

"President Bush and EPA are transforming our throw-away culture into a recycling culture," said Johnson. "Environmental responsibility is everyone's responsibility. And with our partners like the National Recycling Coalition, we are encouraging individuals and businesses to embrace their environmental responsibility to recycle."

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