

Colorado Recycles is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that gathers information and conducts research concerning recycling of materials. That research is published for the benefit of the people of Colorado and may be accessed without charge through the web sites sponsored by Colorado Recycles.

Currently, Colorado Recycles is sponsoring 4 web sites.

The main web site is [www.colorado-recycles.org](http://www.colorado-recycles.org) and among other pieces of information available on the web site is the only statewide recycling available in Colorado. The Colorado Recycling Guide contains recycling information about drop off recycling programs, curbside programs, statewide and regional recyclers, national recyclers and nonprofit entities that conduct recycling activities as part of their mission or to raise money to support those missions. The Guide contains information on 50 different materials. The data base now has more than 2,100 individual recycler records and continues to grow. The Guide is very heavily used and has reached the point where it receives in excess of 1,200,000 visits a year. For example, as of February 6, the site had logged 1,216,311 visits in the past 12 months.

Colorado Recycles sponsors a special web site in conjunction with the Colorado Municipal League that is dedicated to curbside recycling programs within municipalities. That web site can be found at [www.coloradocurbside.com](http://www.coloradocurbside.com). The information on the web site was compiled from the first ever statewide survey of municipal trash collection and curbside recycling programs conducted by CML and Colorado Recycles. That baseline data is old and needs to be updated. The updating was anticipated to be done this past fall, but was delayed in response to the global economic downturn. Because this web site is a special web site mostly of interest to local government officials, it has not been promoted through the media. Even with its lower profile, the web site receives more than 10,000 per month. As of February 6, the web site had received 166,511 visits in the past 12 months.

Colorado Recycles sponsors a special web site that is dedicated to Christmas tree recycling, and can be found at [www.recycleyourchristmastree.com](http://www.recycleyourchristmastree.com). This is the only comprehensive guide to Christmas tree recycling in the state and is heavily used by the media for holiday stories related to Christmas tree recycling. This year the information on the site was expanded to include recycling information about Christmas tree lights. Not surprisingly, this site gets most of its use in December and January over the holiday season. This was the second year for this particular guide, and it received 322,262 visits in the past 12 months. Most of those visit occurred in December, 2008 (98,620 – more than 3,000 per day) and January, 2009 (162,813 – more than 5,000 per day).

The newest web site sponsored by Colorado Recycles is dedicated to plastic bag recycling. This web site was created last summer and was brought live in the fall. The web site can be found at [www.recycleyourplasticbag.com](http://www.recycleyourplasticbag.com) and is experiencing an increasing number of visits although it has not been promoted with the media yet. The web site contains the only statewide guide to locations where consumers can take their plastic bags for recycling. The web site is experiencing a sustained number of users between 5,000 and 6,000 per month – but it is too early to feel comfortable about trends.

As part of the research that was conducted during the creation of the Plastic Bag Recycling web site, 86 communities were identified as having bag recycling programs. These communities constitute 67.4% of the state population. These statistics, however, understate the availability of plastic bag recycling options because, by design, the web site posts the physical address of the site and does not attempt to portray the market area of the store.

For example, in Alamosa County, there is plastic bag recycling immediately available in the City of Alamosa. There is not, however, a recycling site in Hooper. It is highly probable that the residents of Hooper and in the unincorporated areas of Alamosa County shop in the City of Alamosa on a regular basis and can take advantage of the recycling bins located in the stores where they shop.

## Sources of MSW

We estimated residential waste (including waste from apartment houses) to be 55 to 65 percent of total MSW generation. Waste from commercial and institutional locations, such as schools, hospitals, and businesses, amounted to 35 to 45 percent.

Nationally, we recycled and composted 85 million tons of municipal solid waste. This provides an annual benefit of 193 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions reduced, comparable to the annual GHG emissions from more than 35 million passenger vehicles.

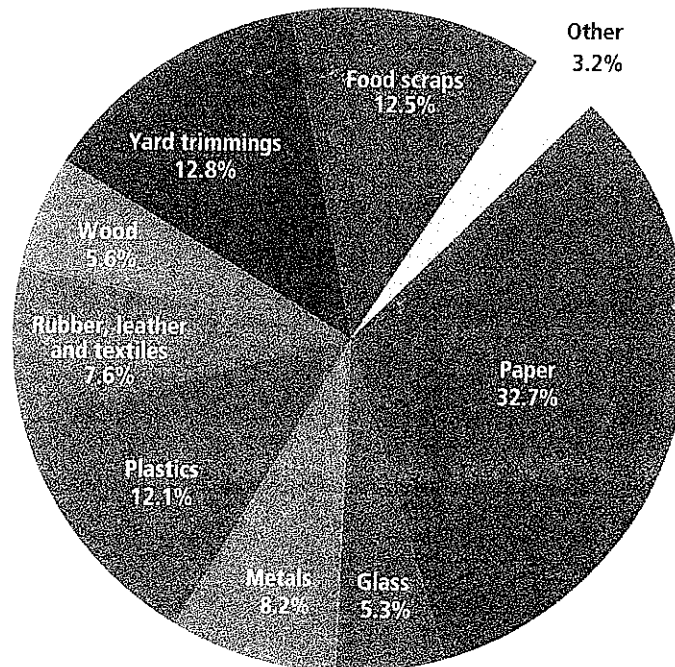
## Analyzing MSW

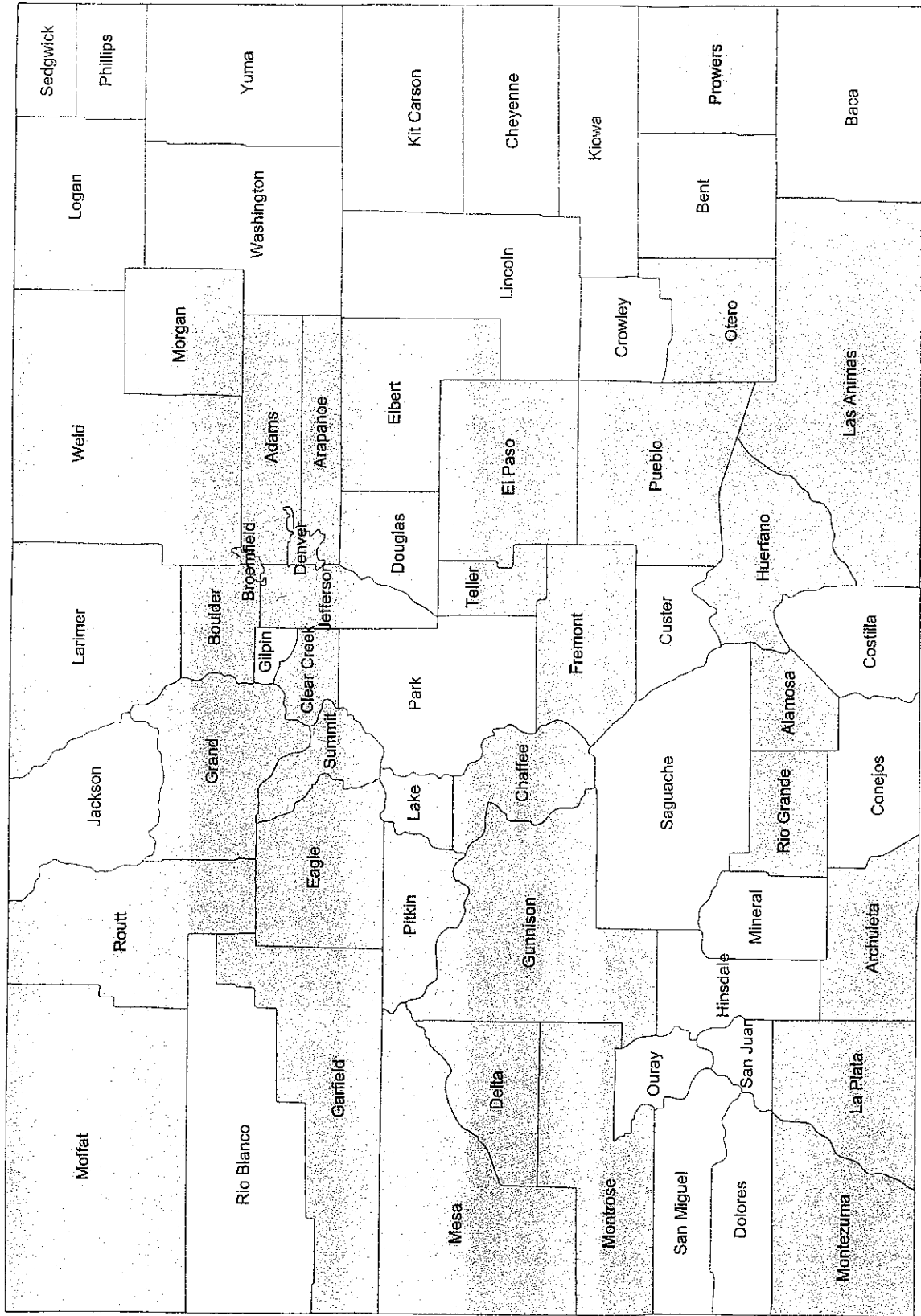
We analyze waste by material, such as paper and paperboard, yard trimmings, food scraps, and plastics, and by major product categories, which include durable goods (such as furniture), nondurable goods (such as paper or clothing), containers and packaging (such as milk cartons and plastic wrap), and other materials (such as food scraps).

### Composition of MSW

Total MSW generation in 2007 was 254 million tons. Organic materials continue to be the largest component of MSW. Paper and paperboard account for 33 percent, with yard trimmings and food scraps accounting for 25 percent. Plastics comprise 12 percent; metals make up 8 percent; and rubber, leather, and textiles account for almost 8 percent. Wood follows at around 6 percent and glass at 5 percent. Other miscellaneous wastes make up approximately 3 percent of the MSW generated in 2007 (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Total MSW Generation (by material), 2007  
254 Million Tons (before recycling)





Communities With Plastic Bag Recycling

County	City
Adams	Brighton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton, Westminster
Alamosa	Alamosa
Arapahoe	Aurora, Bennett, Centennial, Englewood, Greenwood Village, Littleton
Archuleta	Pagosa Springs
Baca	
Bent	
Boulder	Boulder, Erie, Lafayette, Longmont, Louisville, Superior
Broomfield	Broomfield
Chaffee	Buena Vista, Salida
Cheyenne	
Clear Creek	Idaho Springs
Conejos	
Costilla	
Crowley	
Custer	
Delta	Delta, Hotchkiss
Denver	Denver
Dolores	
Douglas	Castle Rock, Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree, Parker
Eagle	Avon, Basalt, Eagle, Vail
Elbert	Elizabeth
El Paso	Colorado Springs, Falcon, Fountain, Monument
Fremont	Canon City
Garfield	Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Parachute, Rifle
Gilpin	
Grand	Fraser, Granby
Gunnison	Gunnison
Hinsdale	
Huerfano	Walsenberg
Jackson	
Jefferson	Arvada, Bergen Park, Conifer, Edgewater, Evergreen, Golden, Lakewood, Wheat Ridge
Kiowa	
Kit Carson	Burlington

Communities With Plastic Bag Recycling

Lake	Leadville
La Plata	Durango
Larimer	Estes Park, Fort Collins, Loveland
Las Animas	Trinidad
Lincoln	
Logan	Sterling
Mesa	Fruita, Grand Junction
Mineral	
Moffat	Craig
Montezuma	Cortez
Montrose	Montrose
Morgan	Fort Morgan
Otero	La Junta
Ouray	
Park	
Phillips	
Pitkin	Aspen
Prowers	Lamar
Pueblo	Pueblo, Pueblo West
Rio Blanco	
Rio Grande	Monte Vista
Routt	Steamboat Springs
Saguache	
San Juan	
San Miguel	
Sedgwick	
Summit	Breckenridge, Dillon, Frisco
Teller	Woodland Park
Washington	
Weld	Firestone, Fort Lupton, Greeley, Windsor
Yuma	