

## A circular approach to paper production

By taking a circular approach to paper production, Cascades is helping to reduce the global pressure on forests and natural resources. Sourcing paper from recycling bins instead of forests helps to conserve vast quantities of trees, water and energy, while reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollutants into the atmosphere.



### Did you know?

Every year, Cascades uses more than **3 million tonnes** of recycled fiber for its products, which is equivalent to **saving 46 million trees** from being cut down. That's enough to cover an area the size of **130,000 football fields** or the entire City of Toronto!<sup>1</sup>

# The Life Cycle of Paper

Your recycling bin is our forest!

## Step 1: Recovery

The circular journey of paper begins with recovery. Paper is collected from a variety of recycling programs including municipal, retail, manufacturing, commercial, and other private companies.

**What does Cascades collect?** Cardboard, boxboard, office paper, flyers, books, magazines, toilet paper rolls, and many other paper and boxboard products.

## Step 2: Sorting and Baling

Once collected, the paper products arrive at the Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) where they are sorted and all contaminants are removed. Then, all grades of paper are tied into large blocks called 'bales' and stored until they are ready to be shipped to the paper mill.

**What you can do to help:** Contamination in recycling bins such as food waste, garbage, hazardous materials, and non-recyclable plastics can significantly hurt the paper sorting process and can even be dangerous for those working in the recycling facility. Learn what is accepted in your recycling program and be sure to sort your materials properly!

## Step 3: Re-pulping

Next, the bales are added to a large tub with water, similar to a very large blender. The material is then mixed together to form a slushy pulp (called slurry). The slurry is cleaned to remove unwanted items, such as plastic and metal contaminants. The cleaned pulp is then filtered, pressed by huge rollers, and dried. The result is a large spool of recycled paper that can weigh as much as 10 school buses.

## Step 4: Paper products

Depending on the type of paper that is being pulped (like cardboard or white paper), the finished rolls of paper are sent to specialized production facilities that transform the recycled paper in a wide range of paper products that people use every day.

Here are a few examples of what products are created with materials you put in the recycling bin

White paper to  
Bathroom &  
Facial tissue



Cardboard boxes to  
Paper hand towels  
& Cardboard boxes



Newspaper to  
Egg cartons &  
To-go cup trays



**Your choices make a difference!** Post-consumer paper is another way of saying paper recovered in the recycling bin and used for new products. The more you choose products made from post-consumer content, the more products are made from recycled materials - which means less impact on the environment.

## Step 5: Recycling

Once these products have been used, the discarded paper materials are collected through recycling programs and the circular process begins again!

**Prioritize your actions!** The 3Rs hierarchy prioritizes our actions to reduce our overall impact on the environment. Always start with **reducing**, followed by **reusing**, and then **recycling**. By reducing first, we avoid making waste in the first place.

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Paper Network (2012). Comparing Recycled to Virgin Paper. Retrieved 2020.

Did you  
**know?**

Recycled paper production on average  
uses **33% less energy** and releases  
**37% less CO2** than virgin paper  
production.

**Thank you for recycling**  
and helping to care for our planet's natural resources.