

## National Paper Recycling Rates: American Forest & Paper Association Releases 2019 Data



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The American Forest & Paper Association (“AFPA”) released data for 2019 addressing national paper recycling rates.

AFPA states that 66.2 percent of paper consumed in the United States was recovered for recycling in 2019.

The 2019 paper recycling rate declined from the 2018 rate of 68 percent. The decline was stated to be principally the result of a “sharp drop in recovered paper exports” referenced as 13.6 percent. The export reduction was mainly attributed to China’s import restrictions.

The information provided also included the amount of paper transferred to landfills. This is stated to have declined significantly over the past 10 years from approximately 33 million tons in 2008 to approximately 21.5 million tons in 2019.

The recycling rate for old corrugated containers in 2019 was estimated to be 92 percent. The three-year average recycling rate for this material was 92.3 percent.

The AFPA information also addressed the destination for recycled paper. The data indicates 37.8 percent of the paper and paperboard recycled in the United States was utilized to produce container board and 12.2% was stated to produce box board. Box board includes base stock for folding boxes such as cereal and medicine boxes, and gypsum wallboard. Exports of recovered paper to China and other nations is stated to have accounted for 35 percent of the paper collected for recycling.

A link to the AFPA information can be found [here](#).