

Car Recycling



Every year in the UK approximately 2 million cars reach the end of their life. This may be because they have been involved in an accident leading them to be classed as a write-off, or they may have merely become old, irreparable and obsolete.

2.3 million tonnes of material are available from this resource every year. Recycling metal saves 74% of the energy needed to make metal from raw materials.

End of life vehicles (ELV's) are mainly made of ferrous metals, but there are also a lot of other materials in a car, such as plastic, glass, carpet and fluids. 85% of a car's material is already being recycled, most of this being made up of steel, however recent legislation (the ELV directive) requires this percentage to increase to 95% by 2015.

How are cars recycled?

Dismantling - Cars need to be dismantled before recycling takes place, this involves depolluting the vehicle by removing oil, fluids, batteries and tyres (for tyre recycling, please see the separate tyre fact sheet). These items can then be recycled separately.

Shredding - Crushed vehicles, amongst other metal waste, are processed by a shredding facility. The result of this process is mainly shredded steel, about 70%, which is re-used by the steel industry. 25% of the material from the shredder is classified as shredder fluff, which contains foam, plastics, and other materials which had not been separated from the vehicle. This fluff is disposed of at landfill as it is very difficult to separate the mixed materials after they have been shredded. Intensive research is being conducted into how to recover plastics from the shredding process with the intention of then recycling them.

All the non-ferrous materials that were used in the car will then be sent to a Dense Media Facility and with the aid of specialist processes, will be further separated and refined for use in the manufacturing of new

Links:

Recycle Your Car

www.recycleyourcar.co.uk

A comprehensive website with useful information and a search engine to search for your nearest Authorised Treatment Facility. Also includes information on the recently implemented Car Scrappage Scheme.

End of Life Vehicles, Car and Tyre Recycling

www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/wasteguide/mn_wastetypes_endoflifevehicles.html

Contains information and statistics on ELV's from Waste Online.