

“Trashy Stats That Will Make You Feel Like Garbage”

- ✓ The average United States resident creates over **4.9 pounds** of trash per day and up to **56 tons** of trash per year.
- ✓ Americans make up roughly **4%** of the world’s population, but generate nearly **12%** of the world’s total waste.
- ✓ On a daily basis, the United States produces enough trash to fill **63,000** garbage trucks.
- ✓ If every garbage truck we filled (annually) was placed end-to-end, it would cover half the distance to the moon or **~119,450 miles**.
- ✓ The average college student produces **640 pounds** of solid waste *each* year, including roughly 500 disposable cups and 320 pounds of paper.
- ✓ In a lifetime, the average American will leave a legacy of **90,000 pounds** of trash for future generations.
- ✓ Today, most communities are spending more on waste management than they are for schoolbooks, fire protection, libraries, and parks.
- ✓ Globally, enough hazardous waste is generated each year to fill the New Orleans Superdome more than **1,500 times over**.
- ✓ New York City residents throw out enough garbage *each day* to fill the entire Empire State Building.
- ✓ The only relatively “clean” place on Earth is Antarctica. It is protected by the Antarctic Treaty, which prohibits military activities, mineral mining, nuclear explosions and nuclear waste disposal.
- ✓ The amount of office paper wasted *each year* in the state of Massachusetts is enough to fill Fenway Park to the height of the Prudential Building (920 feet high).
- ✓ Nearly **one-third** of the waste generated yearly in the United States is from product packaging.

- ✓ Roughly **8,000-10,000** disposable diapers are used and thrown away before an average child is potty-trained.
- ✓ Annually, potty-training in the US accounts for the use of **18 billion** disposable diapers per year, **49 million** per day, and **570** per second.
- ✓ Diaper disposal costs equate to **\$350 million annually**.
- ✓ Disposable diapers will still be in the landfill **500 years** *after* they were put there.
- ✓ Americans throw out enough plastic cutlery (disposable cups, forks, spoons, and knives) annually to wrap around the equator **300 times**, or **7,470,435 miles** worth.
- ✓ Americans throw out roughly **300 million** tires annually.
- ✓ Annually the United States discards roughly **1.6 billion** pens and **2 billion** razor blades.
- ✓ Packaging represents about **65%** of household trash.
- ✓ Because landfills are so densely packed, much of the degradation that occurs is anaerobic (without air).
- ✓ Anaerobic processes create a tremendous amount of methane gas, a major greenhouse gas whose environmental impact is **25x greater** than carbon dioxide.
- ✓ Americans throw away **5.7 million tons** of [carpet](#) every year.
- ✓ Only **3.1%** of the world's children live in the US, but Americans buy (and throw away) **40%** of the world's toys.
- ✓ Americans throw out roughly **43,000 tons** of food daily.
- ✓ Each American throws out roughly **1,200 pounds** of organic garbage that could be repurposed as compost.
- ✓ Roughly **one-third** of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year (approximately **1.3 billion** tons) is wasted.
- ✓ Latin America: The food currently lost or wasted could feed **~300 million** people.
- ✓ Europe: The food currently lost or wasted could feed **~200 million** people.
- ✓ Africa: The food currently lost or wasted could feed **~300 million** people.
- ✓ If **one-fourth** of the food currently lost or wasted globally could be saved, it would be enough to feed roughly **870 million** people.