



PRINT IS GOOD FOR TREES

Tired of all the hype about how we should all go paperless and “save a tree”? So are we. After all, media campaigns such as “National No Print Day” only serve to perpetuate the myth that printing and packaging are major causes of deforestation. Which, as it turns out, is really not true. In fact, print is actually good for trees.

Consider these facts:

- Nearly all of the wood harvested in the US – 91 percent – comes from privately owned forests; the rest comes from government and tribal lands.¹
- 35 percent of US forestlands are owned by family forest owners. This is more than the federal government or private industry. Most only own small parcels of land. These families rely on income from their land to offset the costs of sustaining their forests.²
- When a working forest cannot make money, the landowner will often sell the land for other uses. The use of print on paper is one of the things that helps provide landowners with a financial incentive to continue to grow trees rather than permanently convert the land to other uses.³
- Only 17 percent of the wood consumed worldwide each year is used to make paper. Even at that, much of this is in the form of wood scraps and chips leftover from sawmill operations. Of all the trees cut from the world’s forests, over half is used for fuel, mostly for cooking and domestic heating.⁴
- Trees are infinitely renewable. We can keep planting trees forever, providing resources for products we use every day, such as paper.⁵
- Paper is 100 percent recyclable. In 2013, 63.5 percent of the paper consumed in the US was recovered for recycling.⁶
- Much of that recycled paper is used to make more paper. 33 percent of the fibers used to make paper come from recycled paper, 33 percent comes from wood chips and scrap from sawmills, and just 33 percent comes from virgin trees.⁷

But this is not the whole story. Paper manufacturers and printers often provide chain of custody certification, through FSC, SFI and PEFC. This certifies that trees used to make paper have been harvested from forests that support responsible, sustainable forest management practices. In addition, the Lacey Act amendments of 2008 require paper importers to declare that the paper did not come from illegally harvested sources.

¹ Fun Facts, American Forest and Paper Association.

² Building with Wood Helps Keeps Forests as Forest, American Forest Foundation.

³ Print Grows Trees.

⁴ Frequently Asked Questions, Paper University.

⁵ Go Paper. Grow Trees. International Paper.

⁶ Frequently Asked Questions, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

⁷ Paper and Paperboard Recovery, Paper Recycles.

In the end, from sustainable forests to the renewable nature of trees and recyclability of paper, the paper and printing industries have a positive environmental story to tell. Print on paper and healthy forests go hand-in-hand.



5800 South Eastern Avenue
Suite 400
Los Angeles, CA 90040
P.O. Box 910936
Phone: (323) 728-9500
FAX: (323) 724-2327