

Research Article

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Recycling Business in the 21st Century



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Abstract

For some people's view Recycling would be seen to start from the homes, but for the scientist it would be seen to start from the factory. It is a kind of good practice to the environment. Recycling has started solving part of the environmental and atmospheric problems, which we might not see now but would benefit the future generations. Sometime ago, metals were removed from the ground before planting crops, especially around our homes just because they do not know where to dispose them off. Now it is very difficult to find metals just lying on the ground anywhere as it was in the past. Metals, in any form have now been turned into wealth, and people are chasing metals for business. Used plastics have also been turned into business where people go around and pick used plastic water sachets and sell, in the name of recycling and making money. These are all forms of ways by which our environment is been cleaned up. Towns and cities are been paraded by individuals in the search of metals and plastics. There is a custom in Ghana which use beads in celebrating a yearly occasion, so recycling of broken bottles into beads have been an occupation for people in that community. Organic components in the waste that would be left after sorting out metals, plastics, and bottles can be used to fertilize crops on farms and gardens. It has become a global concern on how to clean the environment, so movements against single-use of plastics has been created in Africa, and other countries also take action to Beat Plastic Pollution for Clean Seas [1].

Keywords: Recycling; Environment; Metals; Plastics; Broken Bottles; Valves; Custom

Introduction

Physical materials involved in recycling mostly consist of metals, plastics, glass, and organic substances. It is just unfortunate that most people involved in the initiation of these recycling processes have no idea of how some of their processes could have effect on our environment. At Agbogboshie, a suburb of Accra in Ghana, the fastest, cheapest, and favored way to recycle copper from insulated wire is to burn it, which makes the place unpleasant to work. These are some of the only disadvantages that could be associated with recycling in our society. In a scientific household, refuse should be stored in different containers, depending on their types. One for metal plastics, others for metals, glass, and then for organics which would be thrown into the gardens for planting purposes. Metal substances had become money these days, any kind of metal is been bought and paid for. Plastic materials have gained the attraction for sales in our communities, which has helped in cleaning up urban areas.

Almost everybody makes use of plastic materials on daily basis and they are sometimes disposed-off without knowing of how it can seriously have effect on the environment [2]. Towards the end of the 20th Century metals and plastics were about to create a problem in towns and cities around the world just because of how they are disposed-off. Mechanics do not know where to dispose-off changed auto parts until the idea of recycling came up. Now waste metals have become scarce in the communities. Bushes around homes are now free from sharp edged metals that could cut people's feet as it was in the past. People now use the

collection of waste materials as their business, they go around looking for waste metals and plastics to buy. Spoilt machines parts are not left with mechanics anymore after replacements; instead they are taken away and sold to waive off part of the cost for the replacement (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Mr. Michael Padi, a Senior Meteorologist gathering old motor-bike engine spare-parts and other metals for sale [4].

Used water sachets that are thrown away indiscriminately by people are now being hunted by others; they move around and make sure every plastic is picked from the roadsides and marketplaces. Refuse dumps are now being visited by people who want to take something away, but not to take something there as others do. Sites are now being dedicated for buying metals and when people get waste metals they take them there for sale. Trucks fully loaded with waste metals are seen on our roads every now and then in Africa. Recycling is a very good act but in one way or the other it has brought problems to some individuals in the communities. The zeal for metal has made some people to even steal any metal they come across. Peoples' metallic properties that are left in the open are stolen in the communities [3-5]. Sometimes even metals in pillars of uncompleted houses are stolen and the owners would have to do replacement for the houses to be completed. Most

of the times these heavy dump trucks cause accidents on our roads because some of these metals fall off in the road when they are being transported and create difficulty for other road users. However, the business has supported a lot of households during this generation as it has become the source of income for bread winners. In the same way it has helped to reduce the rate at which the environment is being degraded. Previously water bodies suffer the dumping of waste materials, but now the story is different. It is quite surprising those who participate in this waste collection did not know anything about the recycling process, but the money involved is the main reason for them getting into the business. However, some few people get involved in the process just for the love they have for the environment. This small class of people could understand the atmosphere, so they would hardly classify anything as waste (Figures 2 & 3).



Figure 2: A United Nations Environment Programme publication on Twitter on 30th July, 2018 on the eradication of plastics [2].



Figure 3: A hot furnace used in baking beads in the Krobo District of the Eastern Region of Ghana [3].

Remolding has become the order of this 21st century. However, the bi-products of some of these materials seem questionable to some mechanics; they claim that there are of lags, as compared to the original, stainless kinds of metals. An example of these lags could be the usual damage of certain replaced parts in machines. Valves in motor bike engines do break more often, and cause inconveniences for users. These suspected motor parts have flooded our markets these days at low prices [6].

A mechanic, in his assertion, complained that some of these latest engine parts that flooded the markets are made up of these waste, recycled metals. Motor bike repairers in Ghana, can bear the fact that 'valve' problems had been another common engine fault that they solve when bikes are brought for maintenance at their workshops. Recently, the springs that hold the valve in motor-bike engine got broken, and an experienced mechanic confessed that this is the first time of seeing that kind of spring been broken in a motorbike engine [7] (Figure 4). Mechanics at workshops, usually

called 'machine shops' have developed new ways of calving old car valves to replace these motor bike valves in engines to customers which solves the problem of frequent breaking of valves in engines. Motor bike business has erupted in most communities in Africa where bikes are used as means of commercial transport. It is fast and economical. However, most people thought of it is dangerous but others too, see it as conducive, convenient, and satisfying so they battled with authorities to maintain the business when governments try to abolish it. Manufacturers use techniques to manufacture materials in large quantities from these wasted metals, but their use are not well defined to end user. For example, a 125-cc bike cannot be used to be crossing long distances for a long time; it is believed to be meant for town movements. The mechanism of these bikes is very good, they can be used even without batteries, and comparatively consumes less fuel than some others. If the technology of recycling has done something like this, then it has to be embraced globally.



Figure 4: Broken bottles ground into powder to be baked into beads [5].

Broken glasses are used in making beads and it has been the occupation for some people in Somanya, the Eastern Region of Ghana. The town is noted for beads making. In the localities, one can find a number of ovens in front of homes that are used for baking beads (Figure 3). They go to breweries to buy broken bottles for the manufacturing the beads, even if small quantities are brought from households, they are still priced for, and bought for recycling. There are shops loaded with beads and is very common on the market. There is a puberty right custom that is performed every year in the township, so beads are needed every year for that occasion. Such a custom can be described as a scientific custom; a custom that would not allow broken bottles to flood the land surface, the land that will be used for planting crops.

Farming is practiced by almost everybody in the community, front yards and backyards are used for growing cassava and maize for domestic consumptions .

Recycling has come to save the land and it is a strategy that is going to preserve the land for the next generation. Used plastics would have covered the surface of the Earth entirely just as how they have covered the floors of the oceans [8]. Sophisticated cups, plates, and bowls are made from wasted plastics and they are in abundant on our markets at low prices. It should be known that these products are not for carrying too much heavy loads otherwise they will be destroyed. They are very good in containing light wears, very durable and economical for domestic use. In

Chemba Town, Tanzania, a group of young people have turned plastic waste to their advantage with an innovative solution: they

collected plastic bags and repurposed them into mattresses [2] (Figure 5).



Figure 5: A motor-bike valve and broken springs [7].

Materials and Methods

Metals fall off from vehicles and lie in the streets, they are picked and gathered for selling purposes by passers-by. Most of these metals gathered are bolts and knots, screws and washers in the road. A technique of tying magnets at the tip of rods and using them to attract and pick these metals on the roads without bending down is what people practice. Metals that are replaced on vehicles by the owners are now sold out. The buyers do not sort out aluminum from iron, or from brass but they sell them together. People use separate containers for the storage of used plastic water sachets at homes then after some time people come around to the houses and buy these plastics. People in the communities now compete for the search of these recycling products, thereby cleaning the communities. Businessmen now go around with bicycles, and tucks to look for waste metals in the countryside to buy. They carry lots of money to buy these waste plastics and metals from individuals in the households, and then later sell them to recycle manufacturers.

Results

It has been realized that recycling is very good financially, and environmentally. Plastics cannot be used for mulching on farms and if they remain on the surface of the Earth, crop planting would face challenges. It is believed that some Plastic chairs are made from these waste materials which make gathering activities and the need for chairs very easy, and these problems have been addressed by this recycling business. Spare parts of vehicles and motorbikes are now very common on the market, but still, advanced mechanics prefer to use alterations from original old

parts to repair machines. They say it is for durability, especially when the damaging situation is rampant. Old lorry valves are carved to suit motorbikes which they sometimes look satisfying than the new ones bought on the market these days.

Discussion

Plastics have found themselves under the sea floor of our oceans; fishermen cast nets and come out with chunk of rubber plastic instead of fish that they wanted. These plastics could be used in manufacturing something else to make way for fish to grow in the sea. Now the land is free from metals and plastics, but it is left with the sea that will needs a clean-up exercise. It is very difficult for inorganic materials to decay and that is why they should not remain on the ground for long periods. Organic materials quickly decay and for that matter it is advisable to leave them on the ground in order to add some manure to the ground for crop growing purposes. There should be a way to support this recycling business by training those that are involved to use atmospheric and environmental preservative methods to make recycling friendlier to the society in which we live.

Conclusion

Burning of materials of plastics and electronics in the name of recycling should be discouraged in our society in order to avoid health hazards. Components of carbon will stay much longer in the atmosphere when plastics are burnt, and they will act as greenhouse to promote global warming. Bush burning should be discouraged, the leaves should rather be left on the ground in the farms to fertilize the land. It is well to understand recycled

products, they are attractive but not always strong. Most rubber plastic buckets break most often in our society, just because the users may not know the limit of weight that the such products could carry. Metallic buckets could carry much more water than plastic buckets. Everybody should embrace recycling and practice it.

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