

Study shows new recovery rate of containers in Iowa

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DES MOINES -- A new Waste Characterization Study completed by the Iowa DNR has determined the recovery rate for containers covered under the bottle deposit law is 71 percent, down from 86 percent in 2007. The decrease in the recovery rate is consistent with other states that also have a bottle bill.

The DNR works with contractors every five years to complete a Waste Characterization Study to determine what types of solid waste is landfilled in Iowa. Through that study, along with beverage sales data from the Container Recycling Institute, the DNR is able to determine the recovery rate for the state.

The following is a breakdown for recovery rate by container type. The three percentages averaged together make up the recovery rate percentage.

- Aluminum = 69 percent
- Plastic = 60 percent
- Glass = 83 percent

A Waste Characterization Study samples solid waste and the quantities of recyclable materials taken to landfills. The study provides percentages of the overall waste stream for more than 60 categories of solid waste being disposed of. Those percentages are then multiplied by the total tons of solid waste disposed of in all Iowa landfills for that year to come up with tonnage data for the different categories of solid waste (e.g. paper, cardboard, plastic, organics, etc.).