

# Why RECYCLE?

Recycling is a critical component of a more sustainable, circular economy and is crucial to maximizing natural resources, saving water and energy, creating local supply chains, and creating more resilient communities.



## When we RECYCLE, we:

### 1 SAVE (A LOT) OF ENERGY

By adopting Zero Waste strategies, including recycling, we could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 400 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, the equivalent of taking more than 20% of US coal-fired power plants off the grid.

Manufacturing products from recycled materials saves 30%–90% of the energy needed to manufacture these products from natural resources, and doesn't require additional extraction of trees, fossil fuels, or metal ores.

### 2 REDUCE EXTRACTION OF NEW NATURAL RESOURCES

Recycling extends the life span of materials, reducing pressure on finite natural resources. For example, aluminum cans and glass bottles can be recycled indefinitely! When we recycle these materials, it reduces the need to extract more bauxite ore or silica from the Earth.



### 3 SAVE WATER

Manufacturing from recycled materials saves water. For instance, producing paper from virgin pulp (from trees) creates the largest industrial demand for water per ton of product in the US. Recycling one ton of paper saves 7,000 gallons of water.



### 4 STOP BURYING VALUABLE RESOURCES

We bury or burn more than two-thirds of our waste every day in the US, destroying the value of these materials. Colorado throws away nearly \$265 million worth of recyclable material each year, such as aluminum, cardboard, paper, glass, and plastic.



### 5 CREATE MORE JOBS

Recycling creates an average of nine times more jobs than landfilling per ton. In the US, we could create 1.1 million new jobs by recycling 75% of our discards.

