

Recycling in America: A Reference Handbook

Patricia Murphy <pmurphy@vtvm1.cc.vt.edu>

Science Reference Librarian, Virginia Tech, University Libraries, Blacksburg, VA 24062-9001 USA. TEL: 703-231-9248

Kimball, Debi. *Recycling in America: A Reference Handbook (Contemporary World Issues series)*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 1992. 254 pp. US\$39.50 hardcover ISBN: 0-87436-663-1. Printed on recycled, acid-free paper.

As noted in the introduction, the field of recycling has been an evolving one, often affected by the needs and interests of society. For example, during World War II recycling was viewed as a necessity due to a shortage of certain materials. After the war, recycling was pushed to the background as disposable items were developed and consumers adopted a "use it once and throw it away" attitude. Only in recent years has recycling reemerged, this time as an industry driven by consumers more concerned about the environment than about personal convenience.

Because of the evolving nature of recycling, any reference handbook on the topic will be somewhat out-of-date even before publication, and this book is no exception. *Recycling in America* is not meant to be a comprehensive reference source, but rather a starting point for anyone gathering information on recycling. Following a format similar to other reference books in the Contemporary World Issues series, the handbook is divided into seven sections, including a directory of state, federal, and private recycling organizations; an annotated bibliography of print and nonprint reference materials; brief biographies of leaders in the national recycling effort; and a summary of state recycling legislation (compiled from the WESTLAW database). An overview of the recycling movement and a partial chronology of the history of garbage provide an interesting historical perspective. A short glossary, list of acronyms, and a comprehensive index complete the volume.

Appropriate for both public and academic libraries, the handbook presents a nontechnical look at recycling and a variety of resources where further information on the topic can be obtained.