

# THE <sup>2</sup> MILLION CANS RECYCLING CONTEST



## Program Guide 2024 - 2025 School Year

Recycling  
is  
the  
Magic!



Can  
Manufacturers  
Institute

# OVERVIEW

**The Can Manufacturers Institute and Recycling is Like Magic! launched a recycling contest in 2023 that challenged second and third graders in eight schools in seven states to collect as many used aluminum beverage cans as possible.**

The students collected over 1.3 million cans. Not only did the kids earn thousands of dollars in funding for their schools but they also helped keep their towns clean learned about the value of materials and enhanced a sense of pride in their community.

Building on that success, students from 18 schools across America will take part in the second edition of the contest between October 2024 and April 2025 with **a new goal of recycling 2 million cans!**





---

## First Year of the Contest by the Numbers

---

In **2023-2024**  
**1,076** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders  
from **8** schools  
in **7** states  
collected **1,374,100** cans  
earning **thousands** of dollars  
in supplementary educational  
funding.

# The 2023 contest also captured the attention of local news outlets!

13



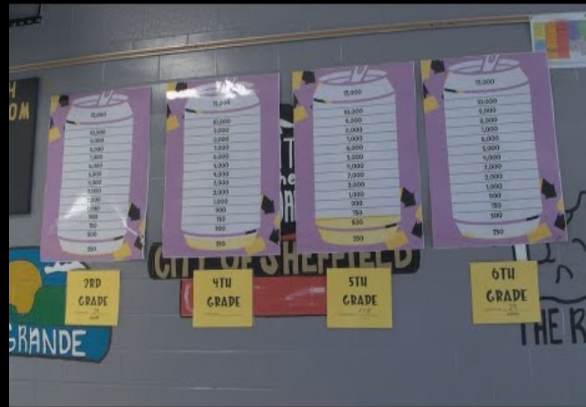
13

14



14

15



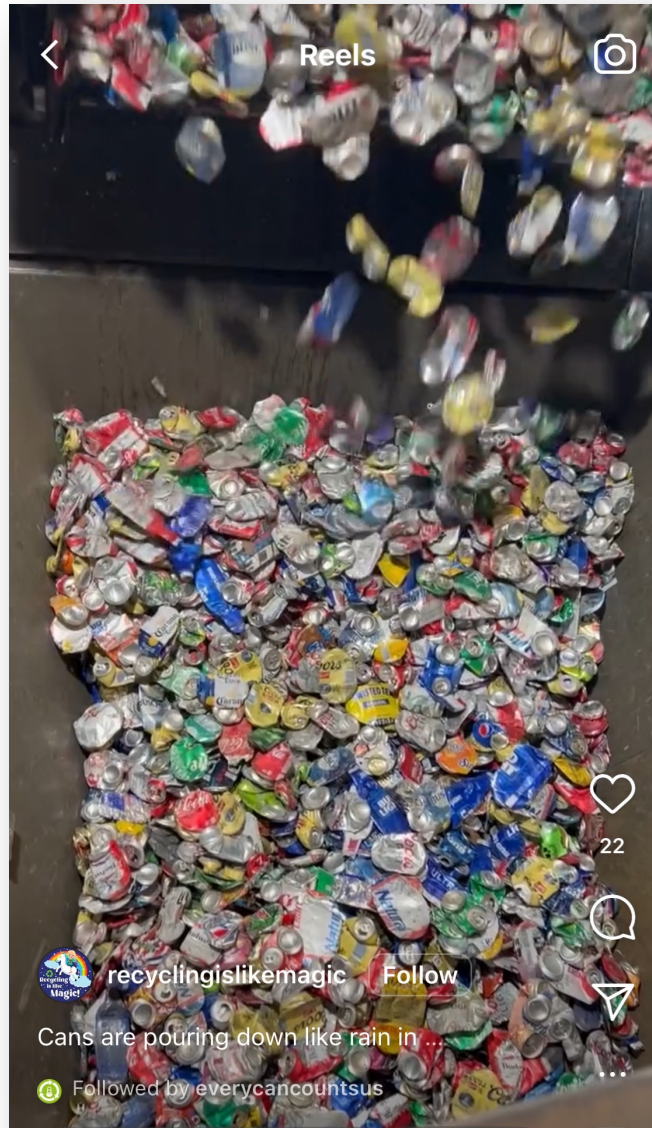
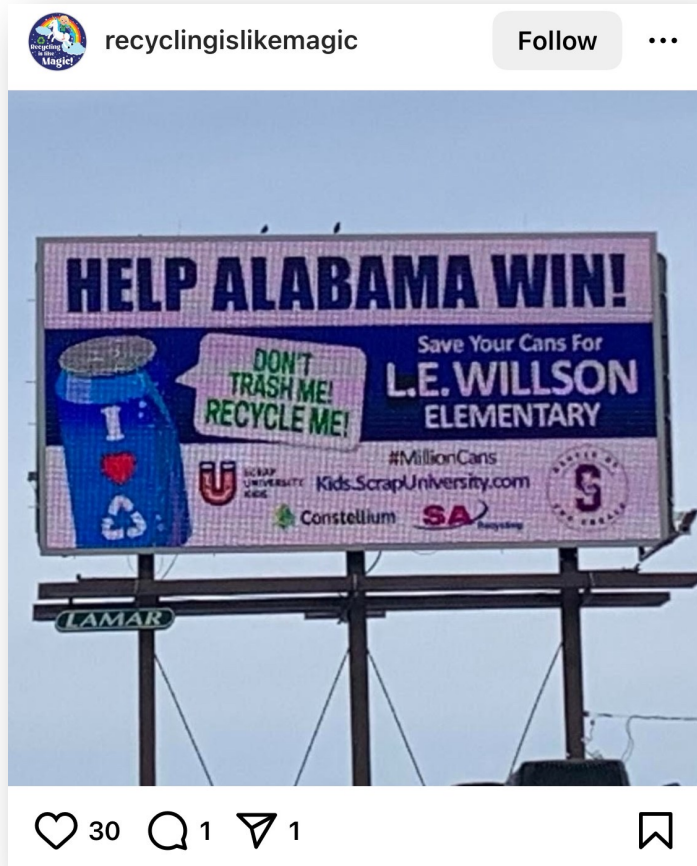
15

16

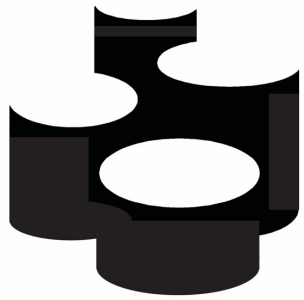


16

... And sparked a viral social media following with schools and their communities!



The official hashtag for the 2024 contest is **#2millioncans**



# Can Manufacturers Institute

## Each school gets a 'Can Champion' partner!

Members of the **Can Manufacturers Institute**, the national trade association for can manufacturers and their suppliers, serve as **Can Champions**. To every extent possible, Champions are located near the school.

Can Champions support their partner school in many ways. They can collect used beverage cans on the school's behalf, organize collection events, take part in an assembly dedicated to recycling, and/or visit classrooms to read: *The Girl Who Recycled 1 Million Cans*.

Can Champions can also help connect schools to other community partners or support media and local partnership efforts. Can Champions in the contest this year are listed on the left.



ArdaghMetalPackaging

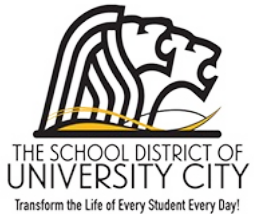


SHERWIN-WILLIAMS.



# 18 Schools in 12 states will compete!

State	Can Recycling Rate	School	City
Alabama	15%	L.E. Willson Elementary	Sheffield
Florida	16%	David Lawrence Jr. K-8 Center	North Miami
Illinois	22%	Bradley West Elementary	Kankanksee
Illinois	22%	Marya Yates Elementary School	Chicago
Indiana	15%	Yankeetown Elementary School	Warrick
Kentucky	15%	Rich Pond Elementary School	Bowling Green
Kentucky	15%	Lewisburg Elementary School	Lewisburg
Kentucky	15%	Mt. Washington	Louisville
Louisiana	11%	Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School	Lafayette
Mississippi	11%	Southaven Elementary	Olive Branch
Missouri	17%	Flynn Park Elementary	St. Louis
Pennsylvania	26%	Our Mother of Perpetual Help School	Ephrata
Pennsylvania	26%	Environmental Charter School	Pittsburgh
Pennsylvania	26%	Mendon Elementary School	Pittsburgh
Texas	15%	La Vega Elementary School	Waco
Texas	15%	Big Country Elementary	San Antonio
Washington	41%	Sherwood Forest Elementary STEAM School	Bellevue
West Virginia	6%	Fairplain Elementary	Ripley



THE 2 MILLION CANS RECYCLING CONTEST  
2024 - 2025

# Schools are also supported by local scrap yards.

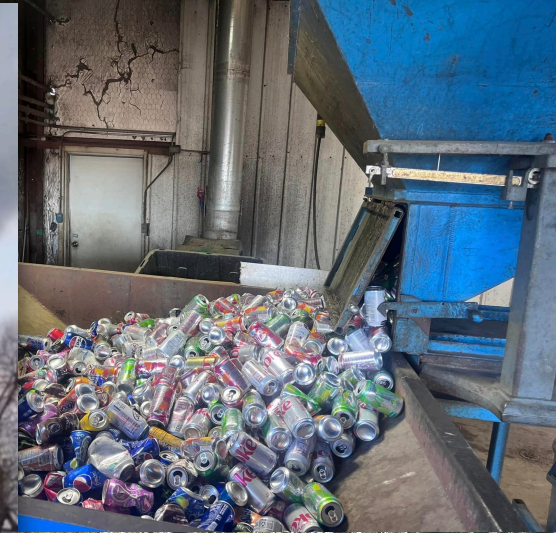
Scrap yard partners organize recycling containers for each school and come to collect the cans when the containers are full.

They will then weigh the cans collected and report the volume to the contest organizers and the school. **There is no need for the schools to count each can.**

Scrap yards can also agree to receive cans from the community on behalf of the school and add those cans to the school's total recycled volume.

Some scrap yards (like the one to on the right) may even be willing to help promote the contest.

**The Recycling Is Like Magic!** team will identify and pair the schools with scrap yard partners.





The amazing scrapyards who are helping teach the next generation to never toss metal in the trash.



Scrapyard
S.A. RECYCLING
Big Daddy Scrap
Cumberland Scrap Processors
Grade A Auto and Recycling
LA Scrap Metal
Iskiwitz Metals
Alter Trading
SAHD Metal Recycling
Mon-Valley Recycling Center
M Lipitz
CMC Recycle
Radius Recycling
RJ Recycling LLC



Your partner in metal recycling



# STUDENTS

In addition to learning about used beverage can recycling and the importance of its environmental and economic impact, students will practice teamwork, communication, and gain a better appreciation of the value of civic responsibility.

There are also opportunities for lessons in reading, writing, math and science as students engage in unique classroom learning during the competition.

# THE BOOK THAT INSPIRED THE CONTEST

Courtesy of the **Can Manufacturers Institute**, each participating student receives a copy of *The Girl Who Recycled 1 Million Cans*.

The book, which was created by **Recycling is Like Magic!**, follows Ellie, a can-recycling superstar who's on a mission to save the planet – and maybe buy her very own unicorn! As Ellie gathers her friends to help, young readers will discover how they can help too, one can at a time.

Students will learn fun facts about recycling, earning and saving money, and teaming up to achieve big goals.



# A CHANCE TO SUPPLEMENT FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

The contest gives an opportunity for schools to earn money by selling the collected used beverage cans to a local scrap yard and through contest incentives funded by Can Manufacturing Institute. Funds can be used for educational needs the school determines. Last year one school used the money collected from cans to replace their worn-out wooden bleachers with aluminum – a major infrastructure upgrade!

## Selling Cans to Scrap Yards for Dollars

Scrap yard partners pay the school for every pound of used aluminum beverage cans collected. In addition to prizes and incentives, last year, **schools earned more than \$21,000 from recycled cans.**

The price of used aluminum beverage cans varies widely depending on local markets. In cooperation with CMI and Recycling is Like Magic!, the local scrap yard partner for each school will determine pricing. Regardless of the market price, **the more cans collected, the more funding schools receive.**

## Prizes and Incentives for Schools to Compete

The top-three schools that collect the most cans per student participating by the end of the contest earn prizes. **First place wins \$3,000. Second place receives \$2,000 and third place gets \$1,000!**

Regardless of the final standings, every school has a chance at additional incentives. **After each school collects 75,000 cans, students will earn a pizza party! And all schools that reach 150,000 cans collected receive a \$500 bonus!**

# PROMOTIONAL FUNDING

To help get each schools' can collection campaign launched, **participating schools will be reimbursed up to \$200 each for marketing expenses.** Last year, schools used their promotional budgets to create creative signs. **Other ideas include:**

- Designing and placing advertising around the school and community for can collection.
- Communicating updates to the students and parents in school newspapers or newsletters.
- Hosting recycling events in the community.
- Promoting and hosting can collection drives at school-sponsored events (like carnivals, sporting events, and theater or music performances).

**Schools that want to use promotional funding must contact the contest team to have promotional ideas approved first.** *Once approved they can send related receipts and expenses to the contest team for reimbursement.*



# The Contest Website

Each school will feature on the [2 Million Cans Recycling Contest Web Page](#) hosted by Recycling is Like Magic!

**Be sure to bookmark this page!** The site will also include recycling facts, media coverage, social media posts, and the official contest score board.

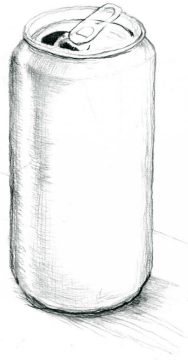


# Timeline

August	Confirm Schools, Update/Distribute Program Guide
September	Deliver Recycling Bins, Connect Schools & Partners, Launch Community Outreach
October	<b>Contest Begins October 1<sup>st</sup>.</b>
November	America's Recycling Day Outreach
December	
January	Mid-Winter Outreach
February	
March	
April	Earth Month Media Outreach, <b>Contest Ends April 30<sup>th</sup>.</b>
May	Confirm Winners, Celebrate Each School's Success, Recognition for Students and Teachers, Media Outreach



# ALUMINUM BEVERAGE CAN FACTS TO KNOW...



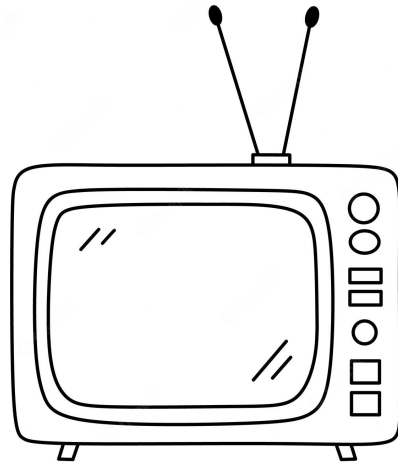
Aluminum is 100% recyclable and can be recycled indefinitely without losing its quality.



It takes as little as **60 days** from the time you put a can in a recycling bin till it's back on the store shelf.

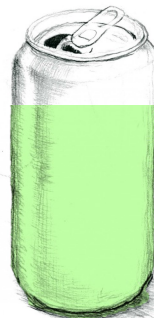


Recycling a single aluminum can saves enough energy to power a TV for up to three hours and run a laptop for up to four hours.



Using recycled aluminum takes **only about 5% of the energy** required compared to using new aluminum.

The average aluminum beverage can contains 73% recycled content.



Nearly 90,000 aluminum beverage cans are recycled every minute in the United States and 93% of those recycled cans become new cans.



For questions about the contest, or to sign your school up to participate, contact Jess Alexanderson at Recycling is like Magic!



# ABOUT THE CONTEST ORGANIZERS

[Can Manufacturers Institute \(CMI\)](#), is the national trade association of the metal can manufacturing industry and its suppliers in the United States. The can industry accounts for the annual domestic production of approximately 131.6 billion food, beverage, aerosol and general line cans; employs more than 28,000 people with plants in 33 states, Puerto Rico and American Samoa; and generates about \$15.7 billion in direct economic activity.

[Recycling is Like Magic!](#) (formerly Scrap University Kids) coordinates the program and serves as liaison between the schools, CMI, and the scrap yards. The goal the organization is to eliminate metal from the waste stream within the next 30 years through education by teaching kids that their everyday actions make a lasting impact on the environment.

## A Common Purpose

Both organizations understand the value of our nation's recycling system and aluminum resources.

One of CMI's core goals is to increase aluminum beverage can recycling in the United States from its present rate of 45% to 70% by 2030 and over 90% by 2050.

Similarly, Recycling is Like Magic! seeks to eliminate metal from the waste stream within the next 30 years by teaching kids that their everyday actions make a lasting impact on the environment.