

Recycling is Good Business Cents

Colorado Iron & Metal

By Allie Comeau

In this age of growing environmental concern, it's more important than ever to reduce, reuse, and recycle. As our natural resources dwindle, it's up to consumers and businesses alike to get savvy about being "green."



Kent Garvin, Owner of Colorado Iron & Metal

No one knows this better than Colorado Iron & Metal. They pride themselves on their ability to give old scrap metal new life, and are helping businesses all over Northern Colorado lighten their loads at the landfill.

As builders and other businesses in the area strive to achieve LEED certification, Colorado Iron & Metal is making it easier for them by hauling

handle any job. All you have to do is collect the scrap... and watch your recycling "cents" grow.

You see, there's money to be made in scrap metal recycling. Colorado Iron & Metal buys scrap metal from area businesses and then sells it for reuse. It's a hole in one. Everybody wins... including the environment. "Instead of our customers sending excess metal building material to the landfill, we recycle it for them," says owner Kent Garvin.

it's used again for a multitude of purposes. "Some of the recycled metal is used domestically, but a lot of it is exported to places like China and Japan to build infrastructure," says Garvin. "The important thing is that it's being used again."

The world's supply of iron and metal is not limitless. Just like other natural non-renewable resources, it will one day be scarce. "The earth is running out of natural resources, so we need

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off their excess building and scrap metal. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, has many requirements for certification – all aimed at increasing energy efficiency and raising environmental design standards. One of the easier LEED requirements to satisfy, recycling excess metal, is made downright simple with Colorado Iron & Metal.

All you have to do is walk in, drop off your junk metal, and get paid for it. If you have bulk scrap, Colorado Iron & Metal also provides roll-off and container services, complete with pick-up, to haul the metal for you. From 90-yard containers to open-top trailers, they've got what it takes to

Garvin founded Colorado Iron & Metal in 1995. He operates the Fort Collins shop with his two nephews, Dan and Marty Garvin. Recycling scrap metal is their passion and there's a big market for their product. "Often times the recyclable value of debris will fund the entire operation to divert recyclables out of build sites and landfills," says Garvin. "And we have a lot of fun with it," adds Dan Garvin.

The scrap metal they collect gets recycled, minimally processed, and repackaged at their shop. The metal is then sold to brokers in Denver, who sell it to steel mills where it gets melted down to its original form for reuse. Once that happens,

to reuse them or they'll be gone," Dan Garvin says. "Our goal is to conserve natural resources through metal recycling."

That's certainly good news for the Larimer County Landfill. Less is more when it comes to waste. And that's precisely why Landfill Manager Robert Nielsen is a loyal customer of Colorado Iron & Metal. Nielsen tells us the 40-yard container he uses to collect recyclable "white goods" gets picked up twice a week. Appliances like refrigerators, washers, and dryers are thrown in the container, along with scrap metal, copper wiring, and other metal waste. "You'd be surprised how many refrigerators and washers we get up here,"



A Colorado Iron & Metal employee sorts copper scrap.

he says. "Now, instead of throwing them in the landfill, we can recycle them."

Nielsen used to contract with Denver recycling companies for this kind of work, but was happy to give the business to a local company. "We like to deal locally whenever possible," says Nielsen. "Plus, they give us a better price for the metal. The price of steel has gone up quite a bit recently, so everybody wins."

While the main business of Colorado Iron & Metal is recycling, the most important resource they deal with is their people. Garvin says the success of Colorado Iron & Metal is due to his employees. "Our business is borne on the backs of our employees," he says. "Without them, we couldn't have enjoyed such success."

Their success has come in many forms. Besides being one of Northern Colorado's largest recycling centers, Colorado Iron & Metal is also a new steel distributor and a metal fabrication shop. "We can do pretty much anything with metal," says Garvin. "You name it and we can fabricate it." What sets them apart from other metal fabricators is a high-tech water jet cutting system that allows them to do precision work and high-definition cutting. Structural work, architectural accents, and even small jobs – if it's metal, they can handle it.

And if it's scrap metal, they can recycle it.

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