America Recycles Day is celebrated on November 15th to raise awareness about the importance of recycling, encouraging proper recycling practices, and inspiring people to take action to reduce waste. Sponsored by Keep America Beautiful, the day promotes community recycling efforts, helps educate people on how to recycle more effectively, and highlights how recycling conserves resources, saves energy, and reduces pollution.

This day is also a reminder to consider waste prevention strategies, like reducing and reusing, since avoiding waste creation in the first place has a greater environmental impact than recycling alone. The goal is to foster habits and choices that make sustainable materials management a part of everyday life.

Deschutes County Solid Waste wants to help students learn more about waste management and recycling. Here are some lessons, short films and educational materials you can share with students to help spark discussions about waste management strategies and increasing recycling rates.

Elementary Schools

K-2 – Recycling lesson from Subject to Climate. Recycling Simplified from Republic Services includes 3 unique age-appropriate lessons, classroom and take-home activities, teaching tools include videos, slides, and posters

3-4 – Recycling Simplified Slides, worksheet, and answer key.

- Kid Stuff – Discover the World of Resources Conservation

4-5 - Recycling Simplified - Three lessons from Republic Services about being a recycling hero.

- Young Voices for the planet from the Children' Environmental Literacy Foundation
- Saving Little Pieces of the Earth – Older video with great info. Available in Spanish.
- What Really happens to the Plastic You Throw Away? - a TED Ex for students video
- Taking action with the Former Oregon Green Schools- Top 3 Campaign
- *Microplastic Madness* is the award-winning true story of 56 New York City fifth graders who took on plastic pollution in their school and community. Get the free screening here. Toolkit here.

Middle Schools

- What you Can and Cannot Recycle Kahoot – 10-minutes activity with a Kahoot
- Chasing Arrows: The Truth About Recycling – 11-minute film about plastic recycling
- Recycle or not worksheet (answer guide) – Quick idea to have students decide what can and cannot be recycled.
- Footsteps on Katmai - 22-minute film about art, advocacy and action.
- What Really Happens to the plastic you Throw Away – TED-ed
- *Microplastic Madness* is the award-winning true story of 56 New York City fifth graders who took on plastic pollution in their school and community. Get the free screening here. Toolkit here.
- Taking action with the Former Oregon Green Schools- - Top 3 Campaign
- Play the Recycle or Not Game developed for the PDX region. With the new Recycling Modernization Act, we can all recycle the same things in Oregon!
- Recycling Simplified lessons 6-8th grade through Republic Services

High School

- What you Can and Cannot Recycle Kahoot – 10 minutes
- Chasing Arrows: The Truth About Recycling – 11 minutes
- The Plastic Problem – A PBS News Hour Documentary – 55 minutes
- Footsteps on Katmai - 22-minute film about art, advocacy and action.
- Is Recycling Worth It Anymore? – 15-minute NPR film
- Plastic Wars - a 60- minute PBS Frontline report about the plastic crisis.
- Play the Recycle or Not Game developed for the PDX region. With the new Recycling Modernization Act, we can all recycle the same things in Oregon!
- Recycling Simplified lessons 9th-12th grade through Republic Services.

Field trips to the landfill and school assemblies are available. Contact jackie.mueller@deschutes.org