HEALTHY NEWS

The Recycling System in Sweden Is so Successful They Now Import Trash

By bestfolkmedicine · 18/05/2020 · 2 min read

In the world of recycling, Sweden is definitely one of those countries that's leading the way and setting an example we should all at least, try and follow.

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Their government is focused on sustainability so the Nordic country successfully recycles 1.5 billion plastic bottles and cans per year, which is a major amount for a population of 9.6 million (data from 2013).

Swedish people make only 1,106 pounds of waste averagely per year or less than a percent of it ends in landfills. This is below the half ton average elsewhere in Europe.

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But, being good at recycling has made Sweden import waste from other countries to keep the recycling plants working.

Other countries which don't have successful recycling systems often pay additional costs to be recycled overseas.

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Why Is Sweden so Ahead of Other Countries in Recycling?

The system of recycling in Sweden is very advanced because they have a culture which knows how to look out after their environment.

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They were one of the first countries that placed a heavy tax on fossil fuels back in 1991 and today; they get almost 50 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources.

Swedish people enjoy spending time in nature and they're well aware on what's necessary to tackle the environmental problems.

The country has worked for long on increasing their citizens' awareness about not throwing things into their garbage cans, but sending them for recycling.

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As the time went by, Sweden has successfully implemented a national recycling policy.

With this policy, although private companies undertake most of the importing and burning waste business, the energy is used towards a national heating network which helps heat homes during the cold and harsh Swedish winters.

In a way, they're using waste plants as a replacement for fossil fuel.

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The country's municipalities are investing in modern waste collection methods such as automated vacuum systems, eliminating the need for collection transport, as well as underground containers that free up the roads and remove the unpleasant odors.

Are They Doing It Right?

But, some argue that the country is dodging actual recycling by sending waste for incineration. According to paper plant managers, wood fiber can be used up to 6 times prior to becoming dust.

If the country burns paper prior to this point, taking away its potential for real recycling and replacement of used paper with raw material.

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