

1.4.12 Characteristics of U.S. Construction Waste

- Two to seven tons of waste (a rough average of 4 pounds of waste per square foot) are generated during the construction of a new single-family detached house.
- 15 to 70 pounds of hazardous waste are generated during the construction of a detached, single-family house. Hazardous wastes include paint, caulk, roofing cement, aerosols, solvents, adhesives, oils, and greases.
- Each year, U.S. builders produce between 30 and 35 million tons of construction, renovation, and demolition (C&D) waste.
- Annual C&D debris accounts for roughly 24% of the municipal solid waste stream.
- Wastes include wood (27% of total) and other (73% of total, including cardboard and paper; drywall/plaster; insulation; siding; roofing; metal; concrete, asphalt, masonry, bricks, and dirt rubble; waterproofing materials; and landscaping material).
- As much as 95% of buildings-related construction waste is recyclable, and most materials are clean and unmixed.

Source(s): First International Sustainable Construction Conference Proceedings, Construction Waste Management and Recycling Strategies in the U.S., Nov. 1994, p. 689; Fine Homebuilding, Construction Waste, Feb./Mar. 1995, p. 70-75; NAHB, Housing Economics, Mar. 1995, p. 12-13; and Cost Engineering, Cost-Effective Waste Minimization for Construction Managers, Vol. 37/No. 1, Jan. 1995, p. 31-39.