

# 4 Myths vs Facts about PV RECYCLING

*It's time to set the record straight on PV recycling*



MYTH #1:	PV modules are useless after 25 years
FACT:	Photovoltaic (PV) modules do not have an end date and can last in the field for more than 30 years. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, PV modules can retain 90% or more of their operating lifetime at year 20 and can continue to stay in operation beyond 25 years.
MYTH #2:	Solar panels leach toxic chemicals into the ground
FACT:	In 2020 the International Energy Agency analyzed “the potential human health risks” associated with lead, cadmium and selenium in various PV modules disposed in landfills. The study found that cancer risks and non-cancer hazards are below the U.S. regulatory screening thresholds and are also within water quality guidelines from the World Health Organization. While it is not encouraged by SEIA or researchers, this study showed that PV modules disposed in a landfill pose very limited risks to human health, even using the most conservative assumptions.
MYTH #3:	PV panels cannot be recycled
FACT:	The claim that 1 in 10 solar modules are being recycled is based on anecdotal evidence according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and should not be stated as fact. The claim that most solar modules are too “contaminated” to be recycled is inaccurate. In 2015, California passed a law declaring PV modules be sent for recycling as universal waste to ease logistics and recognize that like e-Waste, any exposures to raw materials were manageable.
MYTH #4:	The solar industry is unprepared to deal with PV recycling
FACT:	The solar industry has been proactively working on PV recycling since 2015 in an effort to build solutions with all stakeholders in mind. SEIA has developed a national PV recycling program that provides benefits for all clean energy companies and also SEIA members who utilize the services of SEIA’s Preferred Recycling Partners.



Find out more about PV recycling at [seia.org/recycling](http://seia.org/recycling)