



RECYCLING

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE

We live in a vast and bizarre modern society, who's economic health is, in a large part, reliant on the consumption of goods and services. The scale of our consumption is so vast as to be almost incomprehensible. We throw numbers like millions and billions around so often, they lose their meaning. But these are real numbers describing the huge amount of waste entering our landfills, waterways and air.. Similarly, it describes all the resources being striped from our planet. We all have a role and a responsibility in this consumerism, and more importantly, the power to control it.

Let's face it, we all have stuff. And lot's of it. And when it has sat around long enough, the easiest thing to do is to throw it in the trash. Our disposal system is set up to make it easy to throw away our precious resources. And that is a shame. The good news is most things can be recycled and the system is slowly changing to make it easier to do just that. But it takes participation by all to make the industry of recycling work. The mantra Reduce, Reuse, Recycle makes sense. Let's look at what we can recycle, use again, and the kinds of stuff we really do not need to use so much.

RECYCLING.

The easiest way to start recycling is at the curbside. For just over two dollars a week, Columbus residents can recycle through a cooperative program with Rumpke Waste Services. Most other communities have similar programs. And there are many drop-off containers around town that are totally free. Once you've become comfortable with that, check out the other stuff we all live with that can be recycled. What's that? It seems silly recycling your little bin of papers and bottles each week? Well, see that number above, in the box? Each of those 15 million sheets of office paper are used one at a time. That's how we recycle, all of us, one item at a time!

15 Million: The number of sheets of office paper used in the U.S. Every 15 minutes.
60,000: The number of plastic shopping bags used in America; every 5 seconds.

Did You Know?

- Only 10% our waste is recycled.
- One third of waste is packaging.
- We make 400 billion photocopies per year.

Paper

Newspapers, office paper, statinary, envelopes, paper packaging and gift wrap are all recyclable.



SUSTAINABLE LIVING, RECYCLING cont'd

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Magazines, books, telephone books and plastic lined-paper drinking cartons are also accepted.

- Paper Retrievers Co. has drop off containers at many schools and churches in Central Ohio. They accept most paper items. Check out the website for Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO) for their drop box locations around town. All counties in Ohio are part of a Solid waste district and have similar programs.
- Remove stickers, laminated paper or paper full of oil or food debris.
- Cardboard is highly valued as a recycled item. Do not recycle cardboard that is wet, oily or full of food or debris.

PLASTIC

Most plastics are coded from #1-#7 as to the type of plastic they are made from. Some types of plastics are recyclable, as in #1, #2, #4 and #6. #5 and #7 are generally not recyclable. Most curbside programs take all types to avoid confusion and discard the 5's and 7's. If dropping off you will have to sort your plastic types. Anything made of plastic is potentially recyclable, so look for that symbol on plastics before discarding.

- Plastic bags can be reused or dropped off at grocery stores for recycling.
- Most programs accept #6 plastic, which is Styrofoam (polystyrene). Make sure it's clean.
- #5 plastics are used to make containers for vitamins, cottage cheese, food wraps and bottle tops. Though accepted by curbside programs, generally not recyclable. Try to reuse these types.
- #7 plastics are made from polycarbonate, and any other plastic that does not fit a category. Accepted by many curbside programs but not recyclable. A lot of controversy concerning their potential release of harmful chemicals if reused or heated.

Did You Know?

- In the U.S., 212,000 aluminum cans used every minute.
- 2 Million: Number of plastic bottles used in U.S. every 5 minutes.

Did You Know?

- 44 million U.S. workers eat lunch out every day.
- 270 million tires are discarded every year.

GLASS

Sort according to color, clear, green, brown. Restrict glass recycling to containers from food and drink.

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Glass cont'd

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- Paper labels can be left on bottles. Do not recycle window glass, light bulbs or mirrors.

METALS

Aluminum foil, cans, and packaging are recyclable.

Steel food cans are recyclable. Remove labels and rinse. Aerosol cans are taken but should be separated.

Larger aluminum and steel objects are accepted at area metal recyclers, and will pay money for items on a per ton basis. Don't forget copper, brass and bronze is recyclable also.

ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES

Electronics and appliances are the most recycled items on a percentage basis. That is great since many contain toxic chemicals that can leach into landfills if thrown away the usual way. Check out the SWACO website for a good list of area locations that take these items. Locator engines can be found at earth-easy.com and Earth911.com

3.6 million: number of SUV's sold every year.

1 million: Number of plastic cups used on airline flights in the U.S. in 6 hours.

CELL PHONES, RECHARGABLE BATTERIES

Most electronics, office supply stores now accept cell phones and rechargeable batteries. Also a number of online retailers will buy back these items.

OTHER RECYCLABLES

Car Batteries can be dropped off at auto parts retailers or service centers. Used Motor oil and automotive fluids can be dropped off at many service centers.

Single Use Batteries can be dropped off at Columbus area Batteries Plus stores, which maintain an impressive recycling program for all kinds of batteries.

Did You Know?

-6 Billion: The number of Energizer batteries made each year; Enough to make a wall 26 feet high and 146 miles long.

21,000,000 tons: Office paper use/ year

Tires can be taken to Liberty Tire Shredding at 2879 Jackson Pike 614-871-8097.

Yard waste is picked up periodically by the City of Columbus or can be taken to two area composting companies: Kurtz Bros. 491-0868 or Ohio Mulch., 921-9330.

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Log onto www.earth911.com to find out how to recycle blue jeans, gift and key cards, sports equipment, keys, cooking oil, snack wrappers and chip bags, and 6-pack beverage rings.

Reduce

Nip in the bud what you recycle, by using less in the first place.

- Stop junk mail by registering with a name selling company, to be put on a name removal file. Go to [swaco.org/Recycle 101](http://swaco.org/Recycle101) to see these companies.
- Donate unwanted items to Goodwill or other reseller for reuse.
- Put someone at home in charge of the three "R's".
- Use reusable containers instead of food bags or wraps.
- Use clothes or sponges instead of paper towels .
- Buy in bulk to reduce packaging. Don't buy products that are packed in unrecyclable packaging,
- Repair items instead of throwing out.
- Avoid using disposable items such as juice boxes, paper plates, cups and plastic ware.
- Use **Both** sides of paper, or dry erase boards, and electronic media when possible.

We toss out enough paper and plastic cups, forks and spoons to circle the equator 300 times.

We fill 63,000 trash trucks every day, enough to form a line from earth, half way to the moon.

Reuse

Our Grandparents knew better. True they had less disposable income, AND knew what hard times could bring. I remember when I was a kid growing up in Cleveland, watching my aunt saving rubber bands, twist ties and baby bottles. We would all roll our eyes. She could be a little extreme, but the point is, wasting anything was a sin to her, and to many people of that time. For different reasons we should rediscover these ways. Being frugal, practical and responsible makes sense now.

38,000: The number of shipping containers that pass through American ports every twelve hours.

Every year, 900 billion trees are cut down for U.S. pulp and paper mills.

Patronize Goodwill and other resellers of used goods to donate and buy goods. It is amazing the money that can be saved here.

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SUSTAINABLE LIVING, RECYCLING, cont'd

Close the recycling loop! Buy products made from recycled material. These days they abound.

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- Plastic outdoor furniture, carpeting and hard flooring, paper products of all manner, lumber, trash bins and many other plastic products, and clothing.
- Mulch and compost for your garden can be purchased from the city of Columbus in bulk, and from private companies bagged.
- Re-refined motor oil, retread tires, and remanufactured auto parts.
- Office paper made from recycled paper.
- Go to swaco.org for great re-use tips.

Resources:

www.swaco.org: Central Ohio's waste management district maintains a good website on waste reduction strategies.

The City of Columbus: has a good page on recycling.

earth911.com on everything to help the earth.

eartheasy.com: Excellent site, well organized on healthful living.

plantgreen.discovery.com: Good sites for recycling and environmental efforts around the globe.

cleanair.org: Comprehensive site on environmental health.

chrisjordon.com/current_set2.php: Great photo layout that puts into pictures the scale of our resource use.

1 ton of paper from recycled pulp saves 17 trees, 3 cubic yards landfill, 7000 gallons of water 4200 kW energy (enough to heat a house for 1/2 year), 390 gallons of oil, and prevents 60 pounds of air pollutants.

Did You Know?

- 60% of the world's lead comes from recycled batteries.
- U.S. is 5% of world population, but use 1/3 of it's resources.

George Kosko, Nursery Manager. Oakland Nursery. 2010

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