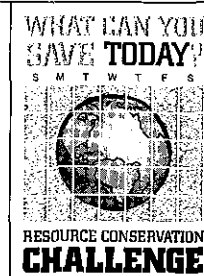


The Resource Conservation Challenge

What Can You Save Today?

...An Update



In September 2002, EPA announced the Resource Conservation Challenge (RCC), a major national effort to find flexible yet more protective ways to conserve our valuable resources through waste reduction and energy recovery activities that will improve public health and the environment.

Today, the RCC is expanding across EPA's programs—waste, water, air, toxics, pollution prevention, pesticides, and compliance—and also includes on-going projects in the regions, states and tribes. The RCC identifies areas of program focus, or "challenges" that are ready for voluntary partnerships. Each of these challenges works to resolve national environmental problems by finding environmentally acceptable solutions.

A Challenge to All Americans

The RCC challenges all Americans—makers of goods, sellers of goods, and buyers of goods—to:

- Prevent pollution and promote recycling and reuse;
- Reduce priority chemicals at all life cycle stages; and
- Conserve energy and materials.

The RCC is about adopting a resource conservation ethic; operating more efficiently; purchasing more wisely; and making and using products that are easy to recycle and consist of recycled materials.

Business Takes the Challenge

Since December, 2002, a number of business and industry sectors have accepted the challenge and joined one of EPA's national partnership programs. The commitments made under these voluntary programs support our drive to achieve the RCC's three goals.

- The National Waste Minimization Partnership Program encourages companies to make innovative changes in their manufacturing and production processes to reduce the use of priority chemicals. The Charter Members—American Video Glass Company; Dow Chemical Company, Texas Operations; International Truck and Engine Corporation; and Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana—have identified priority chemicals they want to reduce and have signed on to the program.
- The Plug-In To eCycling Program aims to increase the safe recycling of old consumer electronics, including TVs and computer monitors, by providing



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incentives for manufacturers and retailers to provide more support for eCycling. Private sector partners Sony, Sharp, Panasonic, JVC, Dell, Best Buy, AT&T Wireless, Recycle America Alliance, Envirocycle, and Nxtcycle have committed to make more recycling opportunities available to the public. A number of collection events have already been held and more are planned. At one recent event, 200 tons of old electronics were collected for reuse or recycling!

- Carpet America is an industry-led, multi-stakeholder organization that seeks to divert 40 percent of carpet from landfills by 2012 through recycling, reuse and other waste recovery and waste minimization activities. Carpet America's recovery effort had its genesis in a 2002 Memorandum of Understanding for Carpet Stewardship signed by EPA, the States, the carpet industry and other non-governmental organizations.

These programs are also significant because they embrace another RCC concept—the transfer of innovative ideas from the state or region to the national level and from one business to an entire industry sector.

Engaging Consumers

The RCC's retail component encourages and educates consumers about their role in resource conservation and environmental protection activities. Several recycling and waste minimization projects are currently underway to expand EPA's outreach efforts, build partnerships, and develop various communication tools.

- *"You Dump It, You Drink It"* outreach materials are designed for owners, operators and employees of automotive repair and service stations and for the general public. These materials are available in both Spanish and English and engage the Hispanic community in environmental protection by promoting the proper management of used motor oil.
- EPA is currently reaching out to the urban African American community to build neighborhood support for recycling and sound waste management. This RCC program enlists the help of nationally known African American personalities to produce public service announcements (PSAs). EPA's first PSA has been released in ten of the largest African American radio markets and features Shauntay Hinton, Miss USA 2002, with the message "Recycle - It's Our Neighborhood." EPA plans to record additional PSAs featuring musicians such as the Mighty Clouds of Joy.

Forming Partnerships to Meet the Challenge

EPA will rely on the development of voluntary partnerships to meet the Resource Conservation Challenge. We are initially focusing on nine areas for these partnerships. Each area will develop specific, measurable targets tied to RCC goals. The current RCC areas of focus are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Construction and demolition debris | • Green buildings |
| • Electronics | • Hospitals |
| • Paper | • Industrial wastes |
| • Priority chemicals | • Schools |
| | • Tires |

Additionally, EPA has identified hundreds of projects across the Agency and the states that support the RCC goals. The hallmarks of these projects are flexibility, partnership and innovation. Many projects utilize revamped technologies to reduce or eliminate the use of virgin materials and toxic chemicals and recover energy to produce power.

During the next year, the RCC will continue developing partnerships in these initial areas and will announce agreements and successes as they are achieved. Additionally, the RCC is working to identify additional areas that are ready to accept the challenge.

EPA's Commitment

EPA cannot achieve resource conservation goals on its own or regulate them into place. For those willing to accept the RCC, EPA commits at the highest level to mobilize its institutional resources to bring sustained and focused attention and responsive decision-making to achieving RCC goals. We will work with partners to create incentives that reward businesses and communities that meet program goals.

The transformation to a new way of thinking about wastes and materials is a joint effort between EPA, businesses and communities. Through a voluntary commitment to achieve RCC goals, we can improve public health and the environment.

For More Information

More information on the Resource Conservation Challenge is available at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/conserve. Your suggestions about how EPA can meet the challenge are welcome. E-mail us at rcc-challenge@epa.gov or write to:

U.S.EPA
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (5305W)
Washington, D.C. 20460
Attn: RCC

Information can also be obtained by calling the RCRA Call Center at 703-412-9810 or TDD 703-412-3323 (hearing impaired) if you are within the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. If you are outside the metro area, call 800-424-9346 or TDD 800-553-7672.



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