

The Cat's Out of the Bag

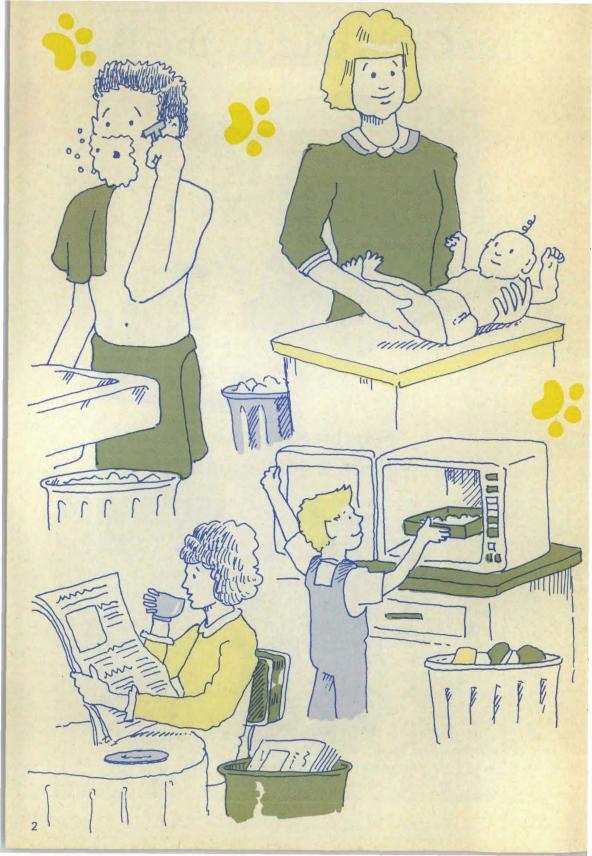


- Reduce Reuse
- Recycle Respond

This booklet describes how you can make a positive contribution toward a serious problem...what to do with all your garbage. As a consumer, you can help alleviate the garbage glut by making environmentally aware decisions about the products and packaging you purchase, use, and ultimately dispose of.

Like the old tale that says cats have nine lives, so do many of the items you use everyday. The container that began its life as a peanut butter jar can be washed and reused to store buttons or thumb tacks. The lemon juice bought to bake a meringue pie is also an excellent household cleaner.

Reusing products and packages is a practical way to cut down on what you throw away. This booklet describes many other waste reduction steps that you as a consumer can take. Why should you choose to reduce? Because you'll save money, protect the natural environment, and help improve the quality of everybody's life.



Be an Environmentally Alert Consumer

In one day, the average American generates several pounds of garbage. Just consider a typical family's daily routine....

Dad gets up, showers, and shaves with a disposable razor. Before heading to the daycare center, Mom puts a fresh disposable diaper on the baby. In the kitchen, the kids pop their pre-prepared breakfasts into the microwave and minutes later throw away the multiple layers of packaging the meals are wrapped in. There's no time to wash dishes, so everyone eats with throwaway utensils. After the morning paper gets a quick review, it gets tossed, too.

It's not even 9 o'clock and this family already has created a small mound of garbage. The pattern is likely to continue throughout the day, too. Every hour, at least one member of this family very likely throws something away such as disposable coffee cups from the

convenience store down the street, lunch containers, used ballpoint pens, shopping bags, and so on. Of course, they're not unusual. Americans generate millions of tons of municipal solid waste each year in the form of wrapping, bottles, boxes, cans, diapers, yard waste, food scraps, furniture, clothing, and many other items.

Though you may not realize it, the products you buy and throw away have a significant impact on the environment. The improper disposal of some products (such as motor oil and household cleaners) can introduce potential hazards into the environment and endanger plants and wildlife. Products and packaging designed to be thrown away after a single use can increase disposal costs, deplete our natural resources, contribute to litter, and add to our nation's waste disposal difficulties.





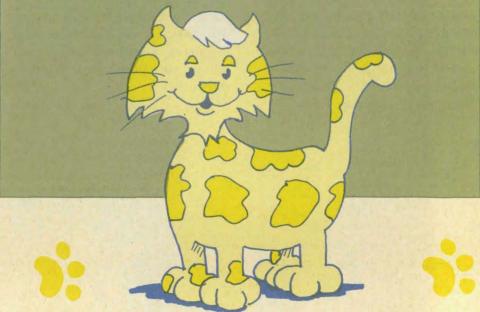




Integrated Waste Management

Integrated waste management refers to the complementary use of a variety of waste management practices to safely and effectively handle municipal solid waste. The following is the preferred hierarchy of approaches.

- Source reduction is the design, manufacture, purchase, or use of
 materials or products (including packages) to reduce their amount
 or toxicity before they enter the municipal solid waste stream.
 Because it is intended to reduce pollution and conserve resources,
 source reduction should not increase the net amount or toxicity of
 wastes generated throughout the life of a product.
- Recycling prevents potentially useful materials from being landfilled or combusted, thus preserving our capacity for disposal. Recycling also saves energy and natural resources.
- Waste combustion and landfilling also are essential to managing waste that cannot be reduced or recycled. Waste combustion reduces the bulk of waste by burning it in specially designed facilities, and often provides the added benefit of energy production. Source reduction and recycling can make combustion safer and more efficient by removing items from the waste stream that may be difficult to burn, that may cause potentially harmful emissions, or that may make ash management problematic. Landfilling is—and is likely to continue to be—a major component of waste management. You can, however, greatly reduce the portion of waste requiring land disposal by becoming aware of your own contributions to the garbage glut and by modifying your habits to promote wise use and reuse of our valuable resources.



The Solid Waste Crisis

It's no secret that many areas of the country are facing a solid waste crisis because there's too much trash and not enough places to put it all. Nearly half of the nation's landfills will close in the next several years. Few new landfills or combustors are being built to replace these facilities due to concerns over noise, traffic, air and water pollution, and potential health risks.

At the same time, many communities are finding creative solutions to their waste problems. Across the country, these communities are implementing "integrated waste management systems" that use a mix of solutions (source reduction, recycling, and combustion and landfilling) to manage their trash.

Source Reduction

Source reduction is any practice that reduces the amount or toxicity of a waste. It includes making goods last longer, reusing products, and reducing packaging. Because source reduction actually prevents the generation of waste in the first place, it is an approach that needs to preceed other management options that deal with the waste after it is already generated.

Source reduction can be as simple as reaching for a sponge instead of a paper towel, or as complex as redesigning a product so that less packaging is needed.

The concept is not new. Many people used to make quilts out of scrap clothing and buy their milk in bottles that were cleaned and reused by dairies.

The Throwaway Society

It wasn't until the 1940s and 1950s that "throwaway behaviors" really took root in American culture. In 1955, a *Life* magazine article called "Throwaway Living" described the country's infatuation with such disposables as throwaway vases and draperies, disposable duck decoys, and barbecue grills that could be tossed after a single use.









Over the years, consumers have been persuaded that disposable products and throwaway packaging are more attractive and convenient than reusable or durable goods. It's easy to take for granted the vast array of products that are designed for one use and then discarded. And, how often have you thrown out broken items rather than repair them, or disposed of perfectly good products when "new and improved" ones come on the market?

Of course, every time you throw away an item, you pay a price. As a consumer, you pay to replace the products you toss out. As a citizen, you pay to have your trash hauled away and disposed of. And everyone pays for the toll all this waste can take on the natural environment.

It's time to change. You can make a difference.

A New Attitude

Solving the solid waste dilemma requires more than simply finding new places to put trash. It requires making changes in attitudes and behaviors. Just as you feel uncomfortable when you litter, you need to feel uncomfortable when you don't reuse and recycle, when you throw items away instead of repairing them, and when you buy products in "convenient" packages that immediately get tossed out. Evaluate your daily waste-producing

activities to determine which ones are essential (such as buying medicines and foods wrapped in packaging for your safety and health), and which are not (such as throwing away glass jars that could be reused or recycled).

A Fundamental Solution

Changing behaviors does not mean a return to a more difficult lifestyle, however. In fact, just the opposite may happen. If individuals don't practice source reduction, the economic and environmental costs to dispose of waste will continue to increase, and all communities—large and small—will face tough decisions about where to put their trash. Many municipalities already are confronting these difficult issues.

Source reduction is a fundamental solution to the garbage glut—if there's less waste, there's less of a waste problem. Source reduction also saves natural resources (such as trees and oil) that must be used to make new products, and prevents the air or water pollution often associated with manufacturing.

Everyone Has a Role

All sectors of society have a role in changing current patterns of consumption and disposal. Manufacturers can design products that are less toxic, that require less pack-







aging, that are recyclable, and that result in less waste at the end of their useful lives. Merchants can stock products that are truly environmentally friendly. You can respond by purchasing those products and by expressing your preferences for them.

As large consumers, manufacturers, retailers, schools, and all levels of government can buy products with source reduction attributes. Besides creating incentives to encourage all sectors of society to create less waste, the federal government can provide leadership, disseminate information, and assist communities in planning and implementing source reduction measures. State, local, and tribal governments can create the most appropriate source reduction measures for their locales. Some communities are already considering user fee charges, requiring households and businesses to pay a

certain dollar amount for every bag of trash they toss.

Your Role

The easiest, most direct way for you to make a difference is to watch what you buy and throw away. You can alleviate your individual "garbage glut" by following these basic principles:

- REDUCE the amount of trash discarded;
- REUSE containers and products;
- RECYCLE as much as possible;
- **RESPOND** to the solid waste dilemma by reassessing waste-producing activities and by expressing preferences for less waste.

How can you put these principles into practice? You can start by taking a few simple steps.



A Baker's Dozen Tips for the Environmentally Aware Consumer

- 1. Buy reusable products and avoid disposable goods.
- 2. Buy, maintain, and repair durable products.
- 3. Reuse bags, containers, paper, boxes, and other items.
- 4. Select products with the most purposeful, least wasteful packaging.
- 5. Buy concentrates, larger-sized containers, or products in bulk.
- 6. Buy products that can be recycled and make sure to recycle them.
- 7. Buy products made of recycled materials.
- 8. Buy nonhazardous products for use around the house.
- 9. Compost food and yard wastes.
 - 10. Borrow, rent, or share things you use infrequently.
 - 11. Buy, sell, and donate used and secondary goods such as clothes, furniture, and appliances.
 - 12. Make your preferences known to merchants, politicians, and community leaders.
 - 13. Be creative—look for opportunities to practice source reduction!

Buy reusable products and avoid disposable goods.

Each year, the United States produces 1.6 billion disposable pens, 2 billion throwaway razors and blades, and 16 billion disposable diapers, to say nothing of eating utensils, plates, cups, and even cameras that are used once and then thrown away.

- Instead of using disposable cups, take a ceramic mug or glass to work that can be washed and reused. Carry your own cup to working meetings or on breaks. At home, use reusable and durable plates, cups, silverware, and food containers.
- While disposable products for your baby may be necessary sometimes, when you can, consider using cotton or terry cloth diapers and washcloths you clean yourself.

• Buy refillable pens or ones with replaceable cartridges.

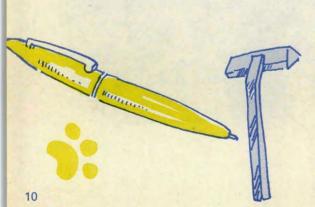
• Use razors with replaceable blades.

• Use rechargeable batteries and rechargeable small appliances whenever possible.

 Use sturdy washable utensils and dishes for picnics, outdoor parties, and potlucks.

 Use cloth napkins. Reach for a sponge or dishcloth instead of a paper towel to clean up.

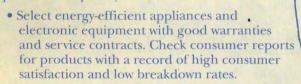
 Consider purchasing milk, water, soft drinks, or seltzer in reusable containers. In some areas, these items can be delivered to your home, picked up, and reused by the company that provides them.





Buy, maintain, and repair durable products.

Avoiding disposables goes hand in hand with buying durable and fixable products. Long-wearing clothing, tires, appliances, and other items may cost more at first, but they often save money in the long run. Ultimately, they need less repair and will not have to be replaced as frequently.



 Keep appliances in good working order. Follow manufacturers' suggestions for proper operation and maintenance. Manufacturers' service departments may have tollfree numbers; phone toll-free directory assistance at 1-800-555-1212 to find out.

10 YEAR

WARRANTY

- Buy long-lasting tires and maintain them. To extend tire life, check tire
 pressure once a month, follow the manufacturer's recommendations for
 upkeep, and rotate tires routinely.
- Mend your clothes instead of throwing them away.
- When possible, repair worn shoes, boots, handbags, and briefcases.
- Purchase durable furniture, luggage, sporting goods, and tools that will stand up to use.
- Buy low-energy fluorescent light bulbs rather than incandescent ones. They'll last longer and also reduce your electric bill.







Reuse bags, containers, paper, boxes, and other items.

Many everyday household goods have more than one life. After being emptied and cleaned, common items can be used in countless moneysaving and practical ways.

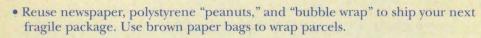
 Reuse paper and plastic bags, and twist ties. You might keep a supply of bags or boxes in your car to reuse on your next shopping trip. Where merchants allow, bring a string, mesh, or canvas bag to the store. If you buy only one or two items, decline a bag altogether.

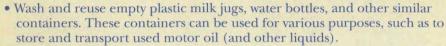
• Reuse glass jars, coffee cans, and dairy tubs to store foods; hardware (screws and nails); and other useful items (buttons, thumb tacks, or paper clips). Reuse aluminim foil, pie tins, and the trays that come with some frozen and microwavable meals.

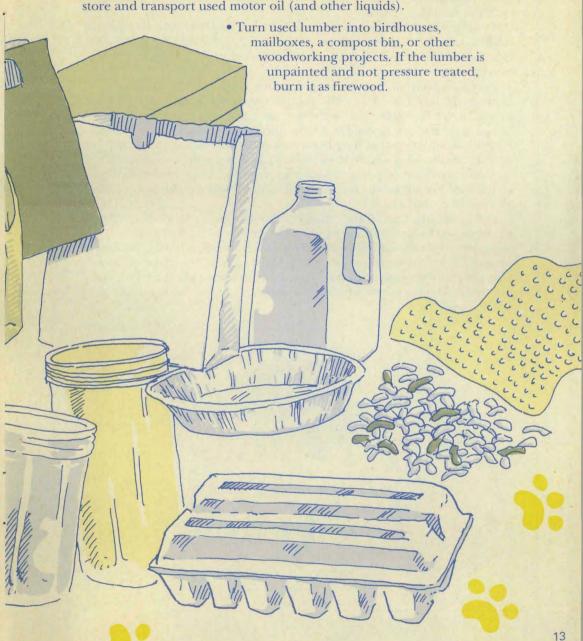
 Reuse scrap paper. Staple together sheets of scrap paper to make note pads and shopping lists. Use both sides of a piece of paper before recycling it. Save and reuse gift boxes, ribbons, tissue paper, and larger pieces of wrapping paper.

 Save packaging, colored paper, egg cartons, and other items for arts and crafts projects at day care facilities, scout troops, and senior citizen centers. Cut up old draperies, bedding, clothing, towels, and cotton diapers for use as patchwork, rags, doll clothes, or other projects.









The Degradable Plastics Debate

As a consumer, you must make some tough decisions every time you shop. Even with good intentions, however, it's not always apparent how to

"do the right thing."

One of the biggest debates has centered on degradable plastics, such as trash bags, grocery bags, and even biodegradable diapers. Is such technology the answer to the solid waste crisis? That remains to be seen. Little evidence exists that biodegradable plastics have the potential to reduce landfill space. Still, these products are tempting consumers with some rather remarkable claims.

Biodegradable plastics are made with a filler, usually cornstarch, that is broken down by microorganisms. Under the right conditions, the product is supposed to break down into pieces small enough to naturally degrade into carbon dioxide and water.

In reality, however, few data support these products' claims of biodegradability. First of all, little degradation of any kind is taking place in our modern landfills, which is where most of these "biodegradable" items would end up. Researchers have unearthed cabbages, carrots, and readable newspapers that have been in landfills for 30 years or more. It is unlikely that biodegradable trash bags would achieve better results. Secondly, there are few studies on the impact of small pieces of plastics, which would result from partial degradation of these products, on wildlife and the environment.

Even assuming that biodegradable plastics do perform exactly as they are supposed to, they still use up valuable resources that will not be reclaimed as they would be in recycling. It is feared that biodegradable plastics will continue to encourage consumers to dispose of their plastic waste, rather than reduce or recycle it. Biodegradable plastics could also interfere with the cost effectiveness of recycling and with the recycling process itself.



Select products with the most purposeful, least wasteful packaging.

Packaging materials account for a significant amount of all the trash consumers generate. Packaging is necessary to prevent tampering, and to preserve the hygienic integrity and freshness of certain products such as foods and drugs.

is difficult to recycle or serves no purpose except to enhance a product's attractiveness.

But some products are wrapped in packaging that

 Avoid buying goods with unnecessary packaging, such as "bubble-packs" that wrap items in plastic seals with cardboard backing just for display, or "double packaging" such as a bottle inside a box.

 Avoid packaging made with mixed materials, such as containers made of paper laminated with plastic or foil. Given two equivalent products, choose the one packaged more simply, with a single, recyclable material.

 Buy fresh produce sold without packaging whenever possible. Avoid using plastic bags for purchases such as a couple of cucumbers, cloves of garlic, or lemons.

Let store managers know you want less packaging.
 Ask clerks not to double or triple wrap your purchases.









Buy concentrates, larger-sized containers, or products in bulk.

The concept of buying in bulk is not new. Buying larger-sized packages not only saves money since you get more product, but it also makes sense environmentally because you get less packaging. For example, less waste is generated by using one 64-ounce box of laundry soap compared to two or three smaller size packages of the same product. GIANT SIZE

• Buy large or economy size items for household products you use regularly—laundry soap, shampoo, baking soda, pet foods, kitty litter, and the like.

 Buy the largest size food packages available that you can use without spoilage.

 Many manufacturers have created refillable product containers. Buy the original container once, and then refill it from a bulk container. Especially look for household and laundry products available in refillable containers.

 If you currently buy single food servings, try buying the next largest serving and storing the leftovers in reusable, sturdy storage containers.

 Buy concentrates such as fruit juices and drinks, detergents, and automobile windshield washer fluid to eliminate the need to pay for and carry a big package. Buy bouillon cubes instead of canned soup stock.

 Buy grains, beans, cereal, pasta, and other items in bulk whenever possible.

 If storage space is a concern, try sharing bulk purchases with friends and neighbors. You also can extend the "buying-in-bulk" concept to mail order purchases. Place an order with a group of people to save money on shipping costs and reduce packaging waste.







CONCENTRATED



Buy products that can be recycled and make sure to recycle them.

Producing goods from recycled paper, glass, and aluminum consumes significantly less energy and water, and results in less air and water pollution than producing goods from virgin or raw materials. Yet, our landfills are packed with products people routinely throw away that can be recycled. Besides environmental

advantages, recycling can have economic rewards. Many groups around the country have made money from recycling projects.

- Purchase products made of materials that are collected for recycling in your community, such as glass, aluminum, tin, some paper, and certain plastics. Look for the standard "recyclable" label depicted in the picture to the left. If a system is not in place for you to return a certain type of material, that material is not recyclable.
 - If your community recycles, be sure to participate, whether it is a curbside pickup or drop-off program. Call your local town hall to find out the schedule, how to separate your trash, what materials are accepted, and where the drop-off stations are located. For example, some communities require individuals to separate glossy paper from newspaper, and different types of cans. You can use a magnet to tell steel, tin, or bimetal cans

from aluminum cans (a magnet does not stick to

• If your community does not have a recycling program, participate in setting one up. Call local salvage operators to see if they will accept or pick up materials for recycling.

 Encourage local businesses and your merchants to recycle office paper and beverage cans and bottles, and to use shredded paper for shipping.
 Businesses also can recycle cardboard boxes or donate them to recycling drives.

aluminum).

 Bring used car batteries and motor oil (saved in clean plastic jugs) to automobile service centers and other places that collect these items for recycling.



Buy products made of recycled materials.

Merely separating your glass, cans, paper, and plastic trash is only part of the recycling process. For recycling to be successful, these materials must be processed into new goods and marketed. And, to close the recycling loop, you must purchase the products made from recycled materials.

- Shop for cereals, detergents, pasta, cake mixes, and other items in packages made of recycled materials. Once you've bought a product, you'll be able to tell if it's a recycled package by examining its interior (recycled cardboard is grey not white). In addition, the recycling symbol may be displayed on the package or container.
 - Buy beverages in bottles and cans that have been made from recycled materials.
 - Buy products with recycled content such as stationery, wrapping paper, toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, tissues, note pads, and computer paper. These items, along with plastic, glass, and other material, are available through mail-order catalogues, stationers, print shops, and a growing number of grocery and drug stores.
 - Encourage your employer to purchase and use recycled stationery, note pads, computer paper, and other such items.









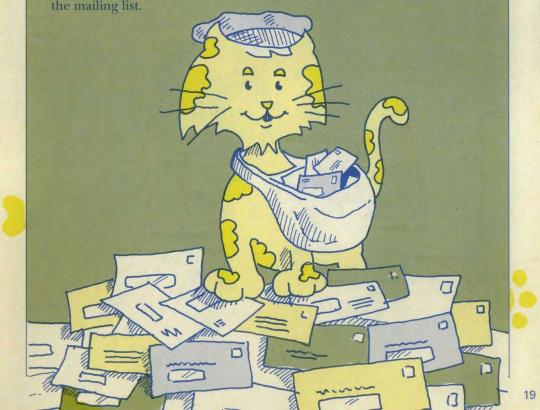
Reduce Your Advertising Mail

In 1989, over 90 million Americans made one or more purchases through the mail. When consumers make these mail-order purchases, their names are often added to a list and marketed to other places that do business through the mail. While many people enjoy the catalogues, sweepstakes offers, magazines solicitations, and other advertising mail they receive as a result of these lists, those who'd like to receive less national advertising mail can choose either of two options. Consumers making mail or telephone purchases can ask companies not to rent or share their names with other mailers. Consumers who choose not to shop at home can write to:

Mail Preference Service Direct Marketing Association 11 West 42nd Street P.O. Box 3861 New York, NY 10163-3861

The Mail Preference Service is a no-charge service program that removes consumers' names from many national mailing lists. Be sure to provide your name and address, including zip code, when writing to to the Mail Preference Service.

It may take a few months before there is a noticeable decrease in the amount of national advertising mail you receive. In addition, local advertising mail, such as store flyers, will not be affected. In these cases, you can write directly to the mailer and request that your name be removed from



Buy nonhazardous products for use around the house.

You don't consciously think of putting "hazardous substances" on your shopping list, but that's just what you do when you purchase such items as corrosive toilet cleaners and ignitable paint thinners. Not only do these and similar products add to health risks in your home, but they become hazardous to the environment when you improperly use them, wash them down the drain, pour them in your backyard, or improperly dispose of the containers that contain product residuals. Hazardous wastes disposed of with the regular trash pick-up can potentially harm the collectors, catch fire, work their way into ground water, or create dangerous gases that can escape into the air.

 Avoid buying products that contain toxic materials

· Be alert to labels. Words such as "danger," "poison," "warning," and "caution" indicate that a product is harmful and may need to be specially disposed of. "Nontoxic" typically means a product is safe for humans, but may not be safe for the environment. Other warning signals include "do not get in contact with eyes," "do not swallow," "avoid inhalation of vapors," and "use in a wellventilated area."

 Ask your local merchants what nontoxic alternatives to toxic household items they carry, and use them. If they don't stock any, encourage them to.



 Check with your local library or bookstore for guidebooks containing nontoxic household tips or look in the "Bibliography" section of this booklet.

NOTICE

HOUSEHOLD

HAZARDOUS

COLLECTION

NONTOXIC

HOUSEHOLD

TIPS

WASTE

WED., APRIL 17

• For products containing toxic substances, purchase only the

amount you can use at one time. If you do have leftover materials, ask neighbors if they can use them or donate them to a nonprofit group, shelter, or theater group.

- Dispose of product containers properly, according to your community's policy on household hazardous waste disposal. Product labels may also include specific disposal instructions.
- Check with your local chamber of commerce, county, or state environmental agency to see if your town sponsors periodic household hazardous waste collection days. On these days, qualified professionals collect hazardous wastes at a central location to ensure safe waste disposal. Refer to the list of state waste management agencies at the back of this booklet.
- Encourage your community to begin a collection program, if one does not already exist.







Hazardous Products Commonly Found Around the House

- Bathroom: air fresheners; disinfectants; tub and tile cleaners.
- Living and Storage Areas: furniture polish; fabric cleaner; rug shampoo; spot remover; flea spray; nail polish remover; mothballs.
- Kitchen: oven cleaner; floor wax; disinfectants; drain cleaner.
- Basement and Workshop: oil-based paints; stains and varnishes; pesticides; and photographic chemicals.
- Garage and Outdoors: antifreeze; lighter fluid; car batteries; used motor oil; gasoline; rust remover; vinyl cleaner; degreasers; pesticides; lawn fertilizers; swimming pool chemicals.

Safer Substitutes for Household Hazards

Here are a few of the hundreds of safe substitutes for household hazardous products readily available. Some are time-tested favorite remedies and others are modern day innovations.

Household Safer Product Substitute

All-purpose cleaner In 1 quart warm or hot water, mix 1 teaspoon liquid soap, boric acid (borax), lemon juice, and/or vinegar.

Make stronger according to the job to be done.

Glass cleaner Mix 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice in 1 quart

water. Spray on and use newspaper to wipe dry.

Drain cleaner Pour boiling water down drain once a week. Use a

plunger or snake.

Oven cleaner Clean spills as soon as the oven cools using steel wool

and baking soda; for tough stains, add salt (do not use this method in self-cleaning or continuous-clean ovens).

Furniture polish Wipe with mixture of 1 teaspoon lemon oil in 1 pint min-

eral or vegetable oil.

Laundry detergent Use natural soap flakes. Add 1/4 cup vinegar during the

first rinse if the water is hard to prevent the soap from

leaving a film.

Rug deodorizer Deodorize dry carpets by sprinkling liberally with baking soda. Wait at least 15 minutes and vacuum, Repeat if nec-

soda. Wait at least 15 minutes and vacuum. Repeat if necessary. To clean rugs, vacuum first to remove dirt. Mix 1 quart white vinegar and 3 quarts boiling water. Apply to nap of rug with wet rag being careful not to saturate rug

backing. Dry thoroughly. Then vacuum.

Silver polish Boil 2 to 3 inches of water in a shallow pan with 1 tea-

spoon salt, 1 teaspoon baking soda, and a sheet of aluminum foil. Totally submerge silver and boil for 2 to 3 more minutes. Wipe away tarnish. Repeat if necessary. Another alternative is to use nonabrasive toothpaste.

Plant sprays Wipe leaves with mild soap and water; rinse.

Mothballs Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mint, or

white peppercorns.

Fly paper Boil together sugar, corn syrup, and water. Spread on

brown paper and hang.

Roach and Sprinkle powdered boric acid in cabinet edges, around baseboards, and in cracks.

Put brewer's yeast or garlic in your pet's food; sprinkle fennel, rue, rosemary, or eucalyptus seeds or leaves

around animal sleeping areas.





Compost food and yard wastes.

Backyard composting of food and yard wastes can significantly reduce the amount of waste you produce. When properly composted, these wastes can be turned into natural soil additives for use directly on your

lawn and garden. Composting will improve soil texture, increase the ability of the soil to absorb air and water, suppress weed growth, decrease erosion, and reduce the need to apply commercial soil additives and peat moss.

• Learn how to compost food and yard wastes in your backyard (see the guidelines below). For more information, see the materials listed in the back of this booklet, or check with your local environmental, agricultural, or park service.

Unfortunately, composting foods in highly populated areas is not recommended because it will very likely attract rodents and other pests.

If you don't have room for a compost bin, see if a neighbor or community garden project can use your compost.

You can also donate your yard debris and leaves to a community composting program or garden project.

Composting Is Easy!

You can set up a compost pile in a corner of your yard with few supplies. Choose a level spot about 3-feet square near a water source and preferably out of direct sunlight. Clear the area of sod and grass. If you build a composting bin, such as with chicken wire, scrap wood, or cinder blocks, be sure to leave enough space for air to reach the pile. One removable side makes it easier to tend to the pile.

Almost all foods can be composted, including vegetable trimmings, egg shells, coffee grinds with filters, tea bags, and fish leftovers. In addition to leaves, grass, and yard clippings, vacuum cleaner lint, wool and cotton rags, sawdust, shredded newspaper, and fireplace ashes can also be composted. DO NOT compost meats, dairy foods, or any fats, oil, or grease.

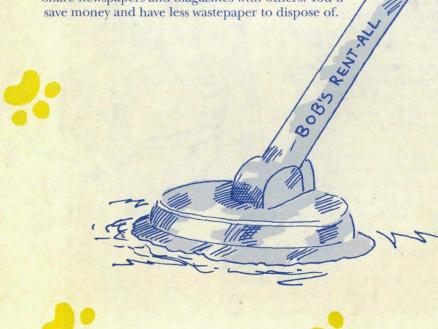
Start the pile with a 4-inch layer of leaves, loose soil, grass clippings (not treated with weed killer), or other coarse yard waste. Now begin to build a 6-inch layer of food wastes. Continue alternating food waste with layers of soil, grass, or leaves, until the pile is about 4 ft high. Add alfalfa meal or clean cat litter to the pile to absorb odors. In dry weather, sprinkle water on the pile, but don't get it too soggy. Turn the pile every few weeks with a pitchfork to circulate air and distribute moisture evenly. Don't be surprised by the heat of the pile or if you see worms, both of which are part of the decomposition process.

In most climates, the compost is done in 3 to 6 months when it becomes a dark crumbly material that is uniform in texture. Spread it in the garden or yard beds, or under the shrubbery. You also can use the compost as potting soil.

Borrow, rent, or share things you use infrequently.

Seldom used items like certain power tools and party goods often just collect dust, rust, and take up valuable storage space. Why not rent or borrow these items the next time you need them?

- Rent party decorations and supplies such as tables, chairs, centerpieces, linens, dishes, and silverware.
- Rent or borrow audiovisual equipment instead of buying it.
- Rent or borrow tools such as ladders, chain saws, floor buffers, rug cleaners, and garden tillers.
- If you own any equipment others can borrow or rent from you, let them know what is available.
- Before discarding old tools, camera equipment, or other goods, ask friends, relatives, neighbors, or nonprofit groups if they can use them.
- Share newspapers and magazines with others. You'll save money and have less wastepaper to dispose of.



Buy, sell, and donate used and secondary goods such as clothes, furniture, and appliances.

Peanut butter jars aren't the only products that have more than one life. Instead of discarding your unwanted appliances, tools, or clothes, try selling or donating them. You can also extend the lives of products by purchasing used and "irregular" items. Such products are often less expensive than new or "first-quality" goods, and buying them will keep them from being thrown away by retailers and manufacturers.

 Donate or resell items to thrift stores or other organizations in need. Donors sometimes receive tax deductions or even cash.

 Buy and sell secondhand items at fairs, bazaars, swap meets, and garage sales if they will do the job just as well as newly manufactured goods.

• Hand-me-down clothes can be given not only to other family members, but to neighboring families or the needy. Shop for used clothing at thrift or consignment stores. The condition of recycled clothing in these stores is carefully monitored. Clothes must be laundered, and cannot have tears or stains. Some stores even have their own laundering facilities.

 Encourage area merchants to donate damaged goods or food items that are still usable or edible, but may have expired "sell by" dates, to local charitable organizations, such as food banks, shelters, and groups that care for the needy.

Make your preferences known to merchants, politicians, and community leaders.

You have the power to influence others and help create the type of world you want to live in. Inform businesses and decision-makers about critical solid waste issues and inspire them to implement and promote Dear XYZ Co. source reduction measures.

- Let stores and manufacturers know how you feel about unnecessary packaging.
- Ask companies hard questions about their products or operations. Write to company executives and tell them what you like or don't like about their policies. If you stop buying a product because it results in too much waste or poses a waste disposal problem, write to that company explaining why.
- Write to consumer magazines asking for coverage of the environmental impact of products.
- Encourage your community to set up yard waste composting programs, curbside recycling, or drop-off points for recyclables.
- Urge schools to provide environmental education by teaching source reduction and recycling.
- Encourage your workplace or company to be less wasteful, to use recycled and recyclable materials, and to perform double-sided copying.
- Let local government officials and business leaders know you need waste receptacles for separated garbage (especially if you live in an urban area).
- Write to your government representatives stating your opinions on environmental issues or legislation. Vote for candidates who share your desire for a cleaner, safer, and healthier environment, and tell them why you voted for them.
- Your community needs access to adequate and safe solid waste facilities such as recycling centers, combustors, and landfills. Support an environmentally sound waste program in your community that starts with source reduction.





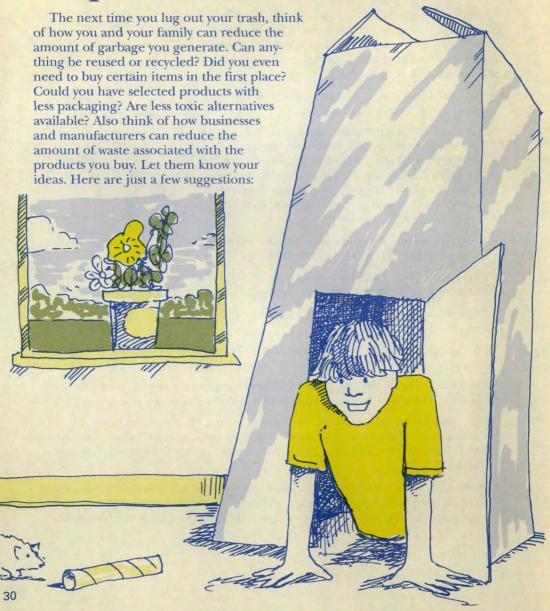


Dean Acme.





Be creative look for opportunities to practice source reduction!

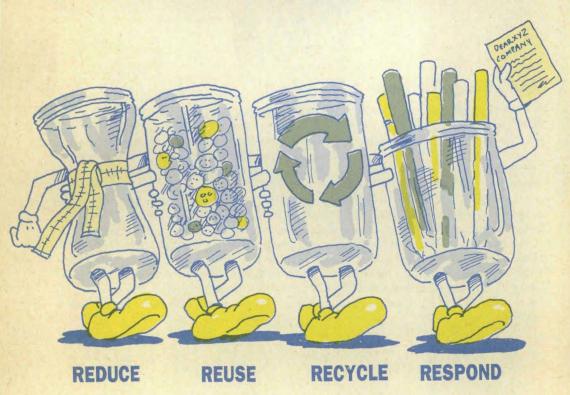






- Turn a giant cardboard box into a child's playhouse.
- Transform a plastic ice cream tub into a flower pot or a bucket for toys.
- Give your pet hamster or gerbil leftover paper towel and toilet paper cardboard tubes to play with.
- Turn used tires into children's swings or other playground equipment.
- Combine source reduction techniques. For example, when you accumulate
 more coffee cans than you or your friends need, store coffee bought in bulk
 in the empty containers.

Now it's your turn. The next time you're about to put something in the trash or are faced with a consumer buying decision, stop a minute. What else can you do to alleviate the solid waste dilemma? Besides incorporating these dozen-plus-one-tips into your lifestyle, look around your house and remember the dancing jars....



Success with Source Reduction

Dozens of small towns, as well as big cities and whole states, are implementing innovative source reduction programs. Through consumer education campaigns, school curricula, tax incentives, and other legislative, financial, and educational measures, these communities are setting the pace for new ways to reduce solid waste.



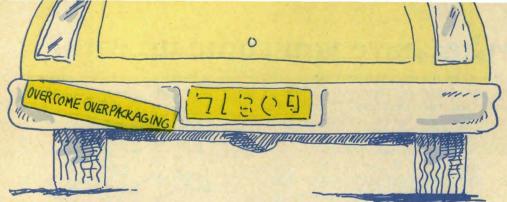




Champaign-Urbana - A Model City.

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, is quickly becoming a model source reduction city. Developed by the Central States Education Center (CSEC), a nonprofit group, the Champaign-Urbana program has set up a "model" waste hauler, newspaper, and school, as well as several supermarkets and copy shops. These model facilities operate as examples to show other small communities how they, too, can reduce the amount of solid waste they generate.

A model waste hauler provides discounts to customers who produce only one can of trash per week. In the city's model school, recycling bins are placed in classrooms, and the cafeteria uses durable, washable tableware. A model supermarket has implemented a shelf-labeling program to highlight products with least-waste and recyclable packaging and those that do not contain harmful chemicals. As a result of these model facilities, most Champaign-Urbana waste now gets routed to the community recycling center, rather than the landfill. Plans are underway to recruit volunteer model bars and restaurants, offices, a church, and a hospital, too.



Berkeley - Doing It Right from the Start.

Berkeley, California, is implementing an active citywide campaign to help consumers make environmentally sound decisions before they buy. Program designers call it "Precycling," which stresses "demand-side waste management." Consumers tell manufacturers which products they want and use, and which ones they leave on the shelf.

Using catchy slogans such as, "do it right from the start," "be picky about packaging," and "overcome overpackaging," the program urges shoppers to think about what they buy and how products are packaged and ultimately disposed. Berkeley consumers are also asked to avoid buying goods purposefully manufactured for automatic disposal. An informal status report of the Berkeley Precycle program indicates that many people favor the concept of taking control of solid waste management right from the beginning.



3:

Smallest State Is Big on Source Reduction.

By being the first state to pass a mandatory curbside recycling program, Rhode Island became a maverick in solid waste management. Furthering its commitment to a cleaner environment, the smallest state also has set up a Source Reduction Task Force. Made up of representatives from industry, public interest groups, the state government, and academia, the task force has initiated an aggressive program to promote more careful and effective use of materials and products.

The task force has established a product labeling and logo system to inform shoppers about the environmental impact, durability, reusability, and recyclability of various products. In the public schools, children in grades four to eight are learning about source reduction through a specially prepared curriculum. A public education campaign is waging a war on "disposables" to reduce their consumption.

What have you come up with?

We want to hear about your innovative ideas on source reduction. Send us a source reduction tip, and we'll send you a magnet (while supplies last) that can be used to stick your shopping list to your refrigerator and to discern aluminum cans from bimetal and steel cans (magnets are not attracted to aluminum). Send your name, address, and tip to Source Reduction Tip, the RCRA Docket (0S-305), U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW, Washington, DC 20460.

Reusable Vocabulary

Bimetal - Typically refers to beverage containers with steel bodies and aluminum tops. Steel companies do recycle bimetal cans, but they are handled differently in the recycling stream than pure aluminum.

Combustion - The controlled burning of municipal solid waste to reduce volume, and commonly, to produce energy.

Composting - The controlled microbial decomposition of organic matter (such as food and yard wastes) in the presence of oxygen into a humus- or soil-like material.

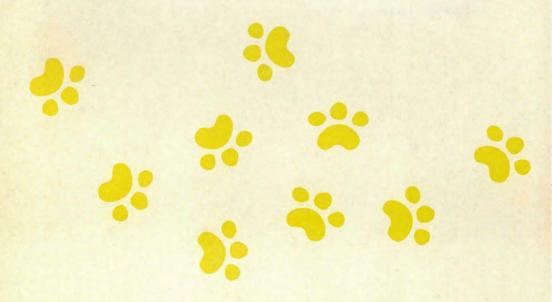
Curbside collection - A method of collecting recyclable materials at individual homes, community districts, or places of business by municipal or private parties for transfer to a designated collection site or recycling facility.

Demand-side waste management - The process whereby you, through your purchasing decisions, communicate to product manufacturers your desire to buy environmentally sound products that are packaged with the least amount of waste, are made from recycled and recyclable materials, and do not contain hazardous substances.

Drop-off - A method of collecting recyclable materials whereby individuals transport the materials to a designated collection site.

Household hazardous waste - Products containing toxic substances that are used and disposed of by individual rather than industrial consumers.

Integrated waste management - The complementary use of a variety of waste management practices to safely and effectively handle municipal solid waste.
Integrated waste management techniques include source reduction, recycling and combustion and landfilling.



- Landfilling The disposal of solid waste in a series of compacted layers on land and the frequent (daily) covering of the waste with soil. Fill areas are carefully prepared to prevent nuisances or public health hazards and clay and/or synthetic liners are used to control water drainage.
- Municipal solid waste (MSW) Waste generated in households, commercial establishments, institutions, and light industries. Industrial process wastes, agricultural wastes, mining wastes, and sewage sludge are not MSW.
- **Recycling** The process by which materials are collected and used as raw materials for new products. There are five steps in recycling: collecting components of MSW, separating waste materials by type (before or after collection), processing them into reusable forms, marketing the "new" products, and purchasing and using the goods made with reprocessed materials.
- **Reuse** The use of a product more than once in its same form for the same purpose or for different purposes, such as reusing a soft-drink bottle when it is returned to the bottling company for refilling or reusing a peanut butter jar as a container for leftover food.
- Solid waste According to the Recource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), garbage; refuse; sludge from a waste treatment plant, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility; and other discarded materials, including solid, liquid, or contained gaseous material resulting from industrial, commercial, mining, and agricultural operations, and from community activities.
- **Source separation** Separating waste materials such as paper, metal, and glass by type at the point of discard so that they can be recycled.
- **Source reduction** The design, manufacture, purchase, or use of materials or products (including packages) to reduce their amount or toxicity before they enter the municipal solid waste stream.
- Virgin materials Resources extracted from nature in their raw form, such as timber or metal ore.
- **Yard waste** The component of solid waste composed of grass clippings, leaves, and garden refuse.







EPA Resources

The following EPA publications are available at no charge through the Agency's RCRA Hotline. Call 1-800-424-9346 Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST. For the hearing impaired, the number is TTD (800) 553-7672, and in Washington, D.C., call (202) 382-3000 or TDD (202) 382-9652.

- Bibliography of Municipal Solid Waste Management Alternatives (EPA/530-SW-89-055). A listing of approximately 200 publications available from industry, government, and environmental groups.
- Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste in the United States: 1990 Update (EPA/530-SW-90-042A). The summary of the latest in a series of reports characterizing the nation's municipal solid waste stream.
- Characterization of Products Containing Lead and Cadmium in Municipal Solid Waste in the United States, 1970 to 2000 (EPA/530-SW-89-015C). The summary of a report characterizing the products that contribute to the lead and cadmium found in municipal solid waste.
- Decision-Maker's Guide to Municipal Solid Waste Management (EPA/530-SW-89-072). A guide book to help policy makers understand and evaluate their current waste management problems and formulate possible solutions.
- Methods to Manage and Control Plastic Wastes Executive Summary (EPA/530-SW-89-051A). The summary of a report examining many issues related to plastics, including reduction, recycling, degradability, and damage to marine life.

Plastics Fact Sheets

A series of five fact sheets about plastics:

- Plastics: The Facts about Production, Use, and Disposal (EPA/530-SW-90-017A). A fact sheet reviewing major uses of plastic and impacts of disposal.
- The Facts about Plastics in the Marine Environment (EPA/530-SW-90-017B). A fact sheet summarizing the main sources and impact of plastic found in the ocean.
- Plastics: The Facts on Source Reduction (EPA/530-SW-90-017C). A fact sheet
 describing the possibilities for source reduction of different types of plastic
 products.
- The Facts on Degradable Plastics (EPA/530-SW-90-017D). A fact sheet outlining
 the information currently available on degradable plastics, their uses, and
 impact on humans and the environment.
- The Facts on Recycling Plastics (EPA/530-SW-90-017E). A fact sheet summarizing
 the opportunities available for plastic recycling, and the current state of plastic recycling technology.

Recycling (EPA/530-SW-88-050). A concise citizen's brochure on recycling and its role in solid waste management.







Recycle Today!

A series of five publications aimed at educators and students:

- Recycle Today! An Educational Program for Grades K-12 (EPA/530-SW-90-025). A
 concise pamphlet explaining the goals and objectives of EPA's educational
 recycling program and the four resources listed below.
- Let's Reduce and Recycle!: A Curriculum for Solid Waste Awareness (EPA/530-SW-90-005). A booklet of lessons and activities to teach students in grades K-12 about solid waste generation and management. It teaches a variety of skills including science, vocabulary, mathematics, and creative writing.
- School Recycling Programs: A Handbook for Educators (EPA/530-SW-90-023). A
 handy manual with step-by-step instructions on how to set up a school recycling program.
- Adventures of the Garbage Gremlin: Recycle and Combat a Life of Grime (EPA/530-SW-90-024). A comic book introducing students in grades 4-7 to the benefits of recycling.
- Ride the Wave of the Future: Recycle Today! (EPA/530-SW-90-010). A colorful poster designed to appeal to all grade levels that can be displayed in conjunction with recycling activities or used to help foster recycling.

Recycling Works! (EPA/530-SW-89-014). A booklet describing 14 successful state and local recycling programs in the United States.

Reusable News. A periodic newsletter covering a diverse array of articles related to municipal solid waste management, including source reduction and recycling.

Used Oil Recycling Publications

A series of three brochures and a manual on ways to recycle used oil:

- How to Set Up a Local Used Oil Recycling Program (EPA/530-SW-89-039A). An
 easy-to-follow manual for local decision-makers, environmental groups, and
 community organizations.
- Recycling Used Oil: What Can You Do? (EPA/530-SW-89-039B). How the general public can participate in used oil recycling.
- Recycling Used Oil: 10 Steps to Change Your Oil (EPA/530-SW-89-039C). How citizens can change their car oil.
- Recycling Used Oil: For Service Stations and Other Vehicle-Service Facilities (EPA/530-SW-89-039D). How service station owners can play a key role in facilitating used oil recycling.







Bibliography

This bibliography provides a listing of resources and organizations used to develop this booklet, which may also be of use to you. It is not, however, a comprehensive list of all available information on source reduction. The listing of publications, products, or organizations does not constitute endorsement or approval for use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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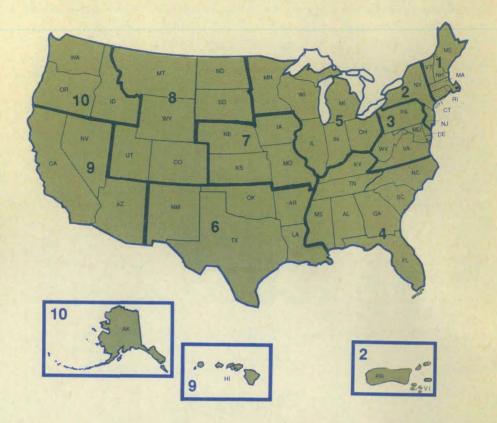
Catalogues

- Co-op America Order Service. 10 Farrell St. South Burlington, VT 05403. (800) 658-5507. Reusable, recyclable, and nontoxic products (and other items.)
- EarthCare Paper, Inc. Recycled paper catalogue. P.O. Box 3335. Madison, WI 53704. (608) 256-5522.
- EastWest Health Books. P.O. Box 1200. Brookline, MA 02147. (800) 876-10001. Books related to the nontoxic home.
- Livos PlantChemistry. Nontoxic home products. 1365 Rufina Circle. Santa Fe, NM 87501. (505) 438-3448.
- Seventh Generation. Products for a healthy planet. 10 Farrell St. So. Burlington, VT 05403. (800) 456-1177.
- Solstice General Store. 201 East Main St., Suite H. Charlottesville, VA 22901. (800) 979-0189. Nontoxic household products (and other items).









EPA Regional Offices

Region 1 U.S. EPA - Region 1 J.F.K. Federal Building Boston, MA 02203 (617) 565-3715

Region 2 U.S. EPA - Region 2 26 Federal Plaza New York, NY 10278 (212) 264-2657

Region 3 U.S. EPA - Region 3 841 Chestnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215) 597-9800

Region 4 U.S. EPA - Region 4 345 Courtland Street, N.E. Atlanta, GA 30365 (404) 347-4727 Region 5

U.S. EPA - Region 5 230 South Dearborn Street Chicago, IL 60604 (312) 353-2000

Region 6

U.S. EPA - Region 6 First Interstate Bank Tower 1445 Ross Avenue Dallas, TX 75270-2733 (214) 655-6444

Region 7 U.S. EPA - Region 7 726 Minnesota Avenue Kansas City, KS 66101 (913) 551-7000 Region 8

U.S. EPA - Region 8 Denver Place (811WM-RI) 999 18th Street, Suite 500 Denver, CO 80202-2405 (303) 293-1603

Region 9

U.S. EPA - Region 9 1235 Mission Street San Francisco, CA 94103 (415) 556-6322

Region 10 U.S. EPA - Region 10 1200 Sixth Avenue Seattle, WA 9810 (206) 442-1200



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Department of Environmental Management Solid Waste Division 1751 Congressman Wm. Dickinson Drive Montgomery, AL 36109 205-271-7700

Alaska

Department of Environmental Conservation Solid Waste Program P.O. Box O Juneau, AK 99801 907-465-2666

Arizona

Energy Office 1700 W. Washington Street Phoenix, AZ 85017 602-542-3633

Arkansas

Department of Pollution Control and Ecology Solid Waste Division 8001 National Drive Little Rock, AR 72204 501-562-7444

California

Recycling Division Department of Conservation 1025 P Street Sacramento, CA 95814 916-323-3743 800-642-5669

Colorado

Department of Health 4210 E. 11th Avenue Denver, CO 80220 303-331-4830

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Recycling Program Department of Environmental Protection 165 Capital Avenue Hartford, CT 06106 203-566-5847

Delaware

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control 89 Kings Highway P.O. Box 89 Dover, DE 19903 302-736-4794

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Department of Public Works Office of Policy and Planning 2000 14th Street NW Washington, DC 20009 202-939-8115

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Department of Environmental Regulation 2600 Blair Stone Road Tallahassee, FL 32301 904-488-0300

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Department of Natural Resources 205 Butler St., SE Atlanta, GA 30334 404-656-2833

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Idaho

Department of Health and Welfare State House Boise, ID 83720 208-334-5879

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Dept. of Energy and Natural Resources 325 West Adams Springfield, IL 62704 217-524-5454

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Department of Environmental Management 105 S. Meridian Street Indianapolis, IN 46225 317-232-8883

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Department of Natural Resources Waste Management Division 900 E. Grand Avenue Des Moines, IA 50319 515-281-8176

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Department of Environmental Protection Cabinet for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Fort Boone Plaza, Bldg. #2 18 Riley Road Frankfurt, KY 40601 502-564-6716

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Solid Waste Division Department of Environmental Quality P.O. Box 44307 Baton Rouge, LA 70804 504-342-1216

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Waste Recycling and Reduction Department of Economic and Community Development State House Station #130 Augusta, ME 04333 207-289-6800

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Department of the Environment 201 W. Preston Street, Room 212 Baltimore, MD 21201 301-225-5647

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Recycling and Recovery Unit Department of Natural Resources P.O. Box 30038 Lansing, MI 48909 517-373-2730

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P.O. Box 10385
Jackson, MS 39209
601-961-5047

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Solid and Hazardous Waste Bureau Department of Health and Environmental Sciences Cogswell Building, Room B201 Helena, MT 59620 406-444-2821

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Department of Public Health Division of Solid Waste Management Customs House, 4th Floor 701 Broadway Nashville, TN 37219-5403 615-741-3424

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Department of Waste Management Monroe Building, 11th Floor 101 N. 14th Street Richmond, VA 23219 804-225-2667

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Office of Waste Reduction Department of Ecology Mail Stop PV-11 Olympia, WA 95804-8711 1-800-Recycle 206-459-6316

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Department of Natural Resources 1260 Greenbriar Street Charleston, WV 25311 304-348-5935

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