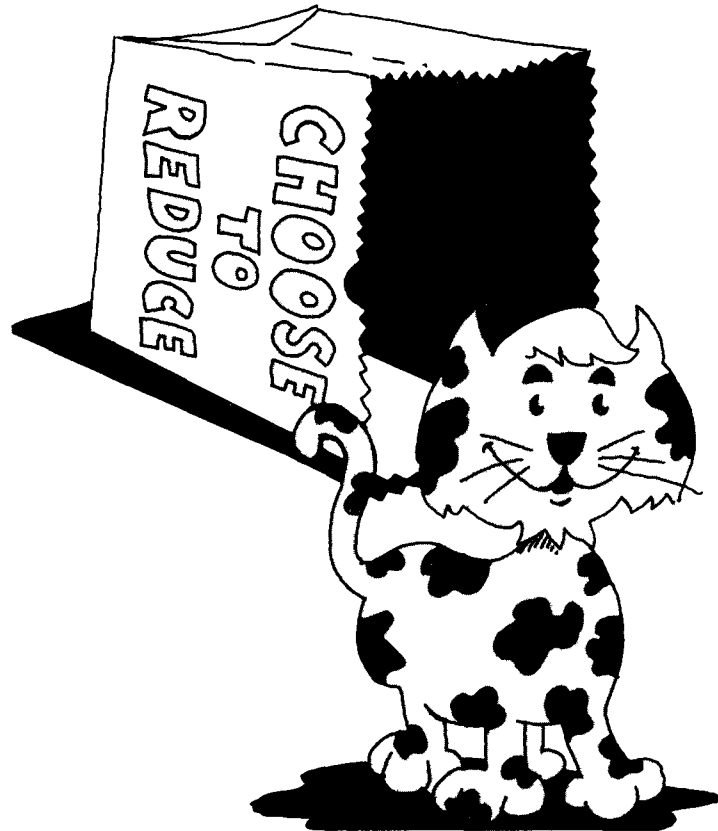
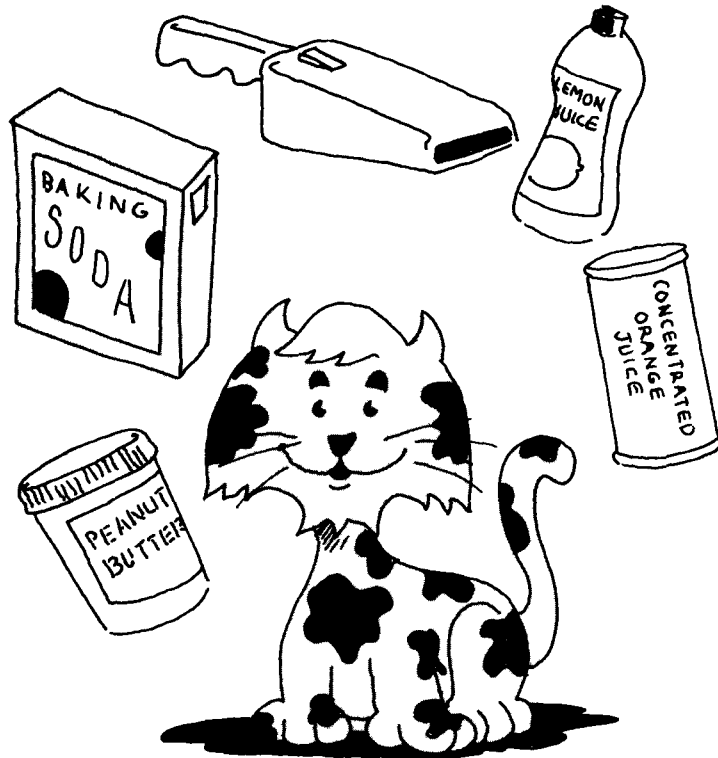


 **Be An
Environmentally
Alert Consumer**



**The Cat's Out of the Bag!
It's Simple to Reduce
Your Waste**

Like the old tale that says cats have nine lives, so do many of the items we buy and use everyday. Although we don't often think about it, many of the products and packages that we purchase have more than one function. The container that began its life as a peanut butter jar can be washed and reused, perhaps to mix a batch of concentrated juice or to store a prized marble collection. Certain household staples, like lemon juice and baking soda, are excellent nontoxic cleaners that have applications beyond the kitchen. And remember, buying durable and fixable products will help extend the lives of many of purchases, from clothing to luggage to appliances.



The Solid Waste Dilemma

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. At the same time, many communities are finding creative solutions to their waste problems. Across the country, officials are implementing "integrated waste management systems," a complementary mix of solutions (source reduction, recycling, combustion, and landfilling) to handle their community's trash.

A Baker's Dozen Tips for the Environmentally Aware Consumer

1. Buy reusable products and avoid disposables.
2. Buy, maintain, and repair durable and fixable 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 or rent things you use infrequently.
11. Buy, sell, or donate used and secondary goods such as clothes, furniture, and appliances.
12. Make your preferences known to merchants and politicians.
13. Be creative—look for opportunities to practice source reduction!



For More Information...

If you would like more information on how you can alleviate the garbage glut, send for the free booklet *The Environmental Consumer's Handbook* from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Call the RCRA/Superfund Hotline at (800) 424-9346 from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST, and ask for publication number EPA/530-SW-90-34B. In Washington, D.C., the number is (202) 382-3000 or TDD 475-9652; for the hearing impaired, call TDD (800) 553-7673.

- Merchants can stock and conspicuously mark products on the shelf that are truly environmentally friendly. Consumers can respond by purchasing those products and by expressing their preferences for them.
- Schools can teach about source reduction and recycling.

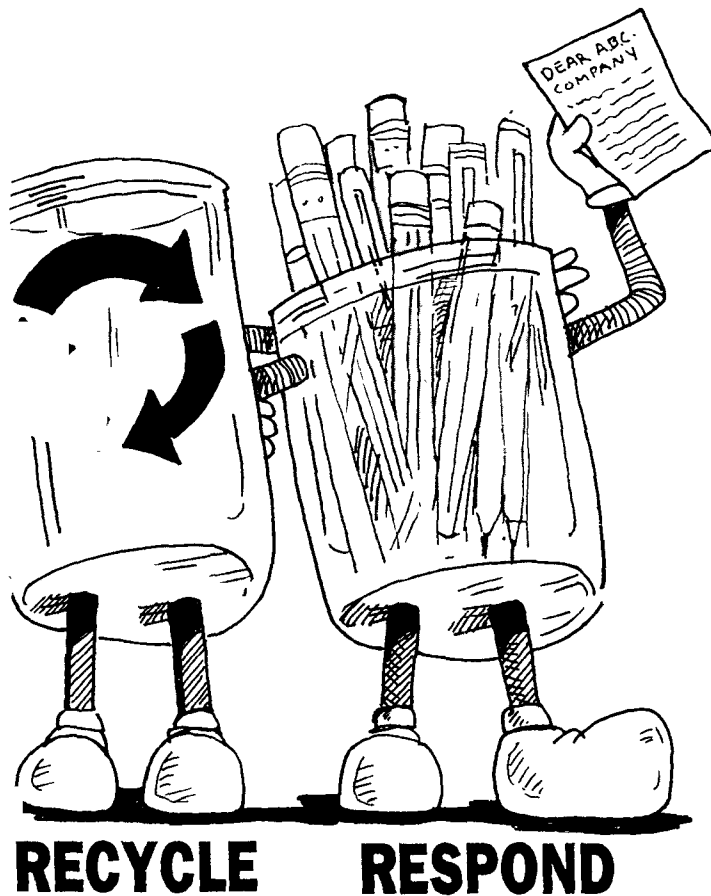
The easiest, most direct way for citizens to make a difference is to watch what they buy and throw away. We can alleviate our individual “garbage gluts” by following these basic principles:

REDUCE the amount of trash you discard;

REUSE containers and products;

RECYCLE as much as possible;

RESPOND to the solid waste dilemma by reassessing your waste-producing activities and by expressing your preferences for less waste.



Source Reduction

Source reduction is any practice that reduces the amount or toxicity of a waste, and includes making goods last longer, reusing products, and reducing packaging. It is a preferred waste management option since it actually prevents the generation of waste in the first place. In addition, the practice doesn't result in simply moving waste from one place to another. Source reduction also saves natural resources (such as trees and oil) that must be used to manufacture new products, and prevents the air or water pollution often associated with manufacturing. Source reduction can be as simple as reaching for a sponge instead of a paper towel, or as complex as re-designing a product so that less packaging is needed.

Everyone Has a Role

We all need to evaluate our daily waste-producing activities to determine which ones are essential (such as buying medicines and foods wrapped in packaging for our safety and health), and which are not (such as throwing away glass jars that could be reused or recycled).

- Governments can create incentives to encourage all sectors of society to create less waste.
- Manufacturers can design products that are less toxic, that require less packaging, that are recyclable, and that result in less waste at the end of their useful lives.



Safer Substitutes for Household Hazards

Post this list in a convenient place as an easy reference guide.

Hazardous Product Safer 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).
Toilet bowl cleaner	Use a toilet brush and baking soda or vinegar.
Furniture polish	Wipe with mixture of 1 teaspoon lemon oil in 1 pint mineral or vegetable oil.
Rug deodorizer and shampoo	Deodorize dry carpets by sprinkling liberally with baking 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.
Plant sprays	Wipe leaves with mild soap and water; rinse.
Roach and ant repellent	Sprinkle powdered boric acid in cabinet edges, around baseboards, and in cracks.
Mothballs	Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mint, or white peppercorns.
Flea and tick removers	Mix brewer's yeast or garlic in your pet's food; sprinkle fennel, rue, rosemary, or eucalyptus seeds or leaves around animal sleeping areas.

