

# PRECYCLING

It is easy to blame others for abusing the environment, but in just one year we New Yorkers created more than 21 millions tons of solid waste. Americans are more wasteful than people in any other country. Recycling is one solution, but not the only one.

Although recycling is preferable to landfilling, or incinerators, it still costs money and uses many resources for the transportation and processing of the materials.

PRECYCLING and WASTE REDUCTION mean making less garbage. Precycling is the easiest, cheapest, and most environmental responsible way to deal with the garbage glut and help our environment. See how many of the following ideas you can try:

1. Choose reusable alternatives to disposable products:
  - a. A sponge instead of a paper towel
  - b. A mug instead of disposable (plastic or paper) cups
  - c. Washable plates or china instead of paper plates
  - d. Cloth napkins instead of paper ones
2. Be an environmental shopper:
  - a. Don't buy things that are over packaged. Ask yourself, "Is this packaging really necessary?"
  - b. Avoid single serving packages.
  - c. Use a soap bar instead of liquid soap dispensers.
  - d. Buy toothpaste in large tubes instead of other, more wasteful containers.
3. Buy in bulk to reduce packaging waste that is thrown away:
  - a. Buy concentrates of products like detergents, cleaners, and juices.
  - b. Buy large sizes of products.
  - c. Buy fruits and snacks loose instead of in packages.
4. Bring your own bags to the grocery store. When you're asked "paper or plastic, say "No thanks, I have my own bag." If you buy only one or two items, don't use a bag.
5. Use both sides of a sheet of paper when making copies or writing. Reuse glass, plastic and metal containers to hold small items such as bulk purchases, sewing supplies, crayons, hardware, etc. Cardboard boxes can also be used again.
6. Invest in a battery charger and use rechargeable batteries, or better yet, avoid using batteries whenever possible.
7. Share your magazines and newspapers with your friends. Bring recent magazines to hospitals, nursing homes, doctor's and dentist offices.
8. Cut down on junk mail by writing to:

Direct Marketing Association  
6 East 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10017-4601
9. Donate reusable clothes, toys and other items to charity. Make old clothing into new by painting, decorating or remodeling in some way. Make rags out of unusable clothes.
10. Get your nickel back. Return used soda containers to the store to redeem your nickle deposits. Yes, the big plastic bottles too.
11. Repair appliances and furniture instead of throwing them out. It's usually less expensive.
12. Write to manufacturers about excessive packaging. They'll listen.
13. Compost grass, leaves and other yard waste in your backyard.
14. Tell your friends, family and neighbors that precycling is here!