

10 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR SOLID WASTE

As Ecology Center members continually demonstrate through their informed actions, "Ecology begins at home." Each small step we take to protect our environment adds up to significant improvements, especially as the behavior becomes shared by others. Here's a quick check list of ten ways to lower your own solid waste:

1. RECYCLE ALL THE ITEMS ACCEPTED BY RECYCLE ANN ARBOR.

At this point: newspapers; clear, green and brown glass; tin cans; aluminum; brown paper bags; flattened brown cardboard boxes; motor oil; and car batteries. In addition to the monthly curbside collections in Ann Arbor, and the Recycling Drop-Off Station on So. Industrial, there are now several recycling drop-off stations located throughout Washtenaw County. These stations, most of which are open 24 hours a day, opened last year and are serviced by Recycle Ann Arbor. Call 665-6398 for more information.

2. GET OFF THE JUNK MAIL LISTS.

Send a postcard to the Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 3861, Grand Central Station, NY, NY 10163.

3. START COMPOSTING or expand your current composting system.

See the composting article on page 3.

4. PRECYCLE.

Use your power as a consumer to buy only materials that can be recycled or reused. Pre-select the eventual waste you bring home while you are in the marketplace. For example, select milk sold in biodegradable waxed paper cartons or returnable glass bottles rather than plastic jugs. Buy foods in bulk and bring your own containers. Let your produce manager know that the plastic tray and wrap covering two zucchini are unnecessary.



5. REUSE PAPER.

Set aside a tray at home and the office to catch paper that has been used on only one side. Use the other side for scrap paper or periodically cut and staple together the collected paper to use for notepads, grocery lists, etc.

6. USE RECYCLED PAPER.

Recycled paper is available for stationary and computer paper, as well as for printing. A few local printers and photocopying stores now stock recycled paper, and the availability of recycled paper will improve as the consumer demand increases. Two companies in particular offer useful catalogs for ordering a wide range of recycled paper products for home and office use:

Earth Care Paper Co.
100 S. Baldwin St.
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 256-5522

Conservatree Paper Co.
10 Lombard St., Suite 250
San Francisco, CA 94111
(800) 522-9200

A short list of additional manufacturers and distributors of recycled paper is available from the Ecology Center.

7. REUSE ITEMS CREATIVELY.

From the mundane cloth napkin to the playhouse built from a discarded cardboard refrigerator box (and later recycled), there are dozens of ways we can step back from the consume-and-discard cycle. Reuse gift boxes, take unwanted articles to local thrift stores, use empty containers to store nails. The Ecology Center's public library has several craft books with thousands of ideas for reusing items. Other project ideas are available at the Scrap Box, 2455 S. Industrial, 994-4420.

8. GET OTHERS MOTIVATED.

Recycle Ann Arbor offers free presentations to Ann Arbor schools, youth groups, and adult organizations, and asks only a small charge for presentations outside of the city limits. Call 665-6398.

9. BE AN ADVOCATE OF RECYCLING.

If you live in Ann Arbor, contact your local city councilpersons about your support of a comprehensive city-wide recycling ordinance. Send a copy of your letter to the *Ann Arbor News*.

10. WATCH YOUR HAZARDOUS WASTE.

Take your unwanted toxic oil paints, pesticides, automotive fluids, and cleansers to the next free hazardous waste collection day. Call the Washtenaw County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Office at 994-2492 for information on the next scheduled event. Purchase less toxic substances for future use, such as latex paint (water based), Murphy's Oil Soap (for walls, floors, woodwork, counters), vinegar (for glass), and baking soda (for sinks and stoves). N.S. ♦