

What You Can Do: Reduce Waste

The average person created 4.6 pounds of waste per day in 2007, nearly double the 2.7 pounds created per day in 1960 according to the Environmental Protection Agency <<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste>>.

Why is trash a problem? After our trash is collected, it ends up in landfills which are reaching capacity rapidly and can leach toxic chemicals into nearby soil or water supplies. Issues surrounding landfills and waste disposal include the high cost of collection and transport, possibility of environmental contamination, and inefficient use of land resources.

How can I reduce my daily waste production?

To reduce waste in landfills causing environmental issues, conduct a waste audit for your home. Make a list of everything you throw away. Let no piece of paper or food scrap go un-noted. Read over your week's patterns because you may be throwing away more than you realize.

To get started:

- Take cloth shopping bags to grocery stores, discount outlets, and large home-improvement stores
- Use safe reusable water bottles
- Donate old clothes and furniture
- Bring lunch in reusable containers
- Bring your own cup or mug to the office
- Avoid paper plates and plastic utensils
- Avoid products with excess packaging
- Utilize double-sided printing at the office
- Use cloth towels for cleaning and cloth napkins instead of paper napkins



For more information and ideas on how to reduce waste, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste> and <http://www.earth911.com>