



EnviroShopping



Learning new habits can be difficult. You may spend more time in stores trying to find products that meet your new standards. You may spend a few minutes longer at certain tasks when you buy packaging that is less convenient. You may need to reorganize a kitchen cabinet to make use for reusables and recyclables. But the effort is worth it, and gradually these habits will be easier and easier.

BEST PRACTICE AREA: ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED PURCHASING

DID YOU KNOW?

Every year, Americans use approximately 1 billion shopping bags, creating 300,000 tons of landfill waste.

The City of San Francisco determined that it costs 17 cents to handle each discarded bag.

HINTS FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS FOR THE HOME:

- Look for products that use less hazardous ingredients.
- Use products that can be reused.
- Buy products made from recycled products that save resources.
- Use products that can be recycled.
- Look for products that save energy or water.
- Buy products made from renewable raw materials.

ALWAYS BRING YOUR OWN BAG!

- Reusable bags are offered by most stores for sale.
- If you don't have a reusable bag, save and reuse paper or plastic shopping bags on your next trip.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

Each week, a routine called "taking out the garbage" is repeated in nearly every household. In tied up trash bags are the unwanted fragments of our daily lives. Once at curbside, the garbage is picked up and hauled to a landfill for disposal and forgotten by those who generated it. Reducing waste is an important component to sustainable living at home. Products that are reusable, refillable, more durable, or repairable create less waste and are more cost-effective in the long run than disposable or single-use products.

Enviroshoppers play an important role in reducing the solid waste problem. To actively support the environment in the marketplace, make choices according to the 5 "R's" of enviroshopping....

PRECYCLE

Reduce your garbage before you buy it — PRECYCLE! It is the most important thing you can do. If you never buy it and bring it into your home in the first place, then you don't have to "manage it". Here are a few simple ways...

- Look for packages that use least amount of material.
- Look for products in reusable dishes, rather than throw-a-ways.
- Choose loose fresh fruits and vegetables.

You will save energy, conserve resources, reduce pollution, and possibly save money too.

REUSE

Packaging choices are endless...metal tins, glass jugs, boxes, tubes, with lids, seals and sprayers...just to name a few. We can use them for other purposes after they are empty. Here are some examples...

- Cut small plastic container in half lengthwise to make a flour scoop.
- Reuse microwavable convenience dishes for making your own convenience meals or leftovers.
- Use packaging for storage in garage, sewing room, kitchen, playroom and even the car.
- Donate to S.C.R.A.P.S. where they will provide resources for creativity of young and old.

When we reuse packages we save money and landfill space, conserve resources and reduce pollution.

RECYCLE

Recycling allows us to utilize packaging that would otherwise end up in a landfill. The materials are processed and converted into other products that can be purchased.

- Aluminum and glass are recyclable,
- Some paper and some plastic containers can be recycled,
- Steel or "tin" cans are recyclable,

Consumers need to be involved in both steps of recycling: providing raw materials and buying the recycled material after it is made into something else. Look for the recycled symbol on packages that you buy.

REJECT AND RESPOND

The products you buy determine which companies stay in business, so they pay close attention to your shopping habits. Avoid buying items that are wasteful, environmentally harmful, or of poor quality in favor of those that can be reduced, reused and recycled.

Your preferences are important to stores and manufacturers. Tell them what you like and what you don't. Use consumer hotlines.

- Ask them to consider recyclability and source reductions in the products they offer for sale.
- Encourage simpler, less complex packaging i.e. label information on hanging tag or peel off label rather than needing a whole package.

