

SIMPLIFYING YOUR WASTE

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“Reduce, reuse, recycle” – a familiar motto encouraging less waste. While most of us are familiar with the benefits of recycling, consider some opportunities to reduce and reuse items that will eliminate unnecessary waste. Paper and plastic products from shopping bags to paper towels to food storage bags to beverage containers consume tremendous quantities of oil and wood to produce and then wind up in landfills. The fact is most of these disposable products are unnecessary but out of convenience businesses and consumers have become attached to practices that are wasteful and harm wildlife and the Earth.

Following are some ideas for “reduce and reuse” alternatives to some common paper and plastic products. Which are you already practicing? Which one would you like to try to incorporate into your personal or community life?

Reduce and reuse ideas:

Use cloth towels instead of paper for kitchen clean-up and add them to the laundry.

Use reusable cloth bags for shopping – make “Thanks, I don’t need a bag; I brought my own” your shopping check-out mantra.

For those plastic and paper bags you inevitably wind up with, reuse them as trash bags or to collect your recyclables and return the extra plastic bags to a grocery store for recycling.

Rinse out plastic food storage bags, let them dry, and reuse them. Most can withstand multiple uses which will allow you to waste less and save money. Even better, use reusable food storage containers and reduce or eliminate your use of plastic baggies.

Carry a reusable handkerchief with you and reduce your use of facial tissue.

Carry a reusable water bottle or travel mug with you to refill when you need a drink rather than purchasing a beverage in a disposable container.

For additional information visit:

Reuse It provides information on the environmental impacts of plastic bags and offers a variety of reusable products such as lunch and shopping bags and non-toxic water bottles - www.reuseit.com.