


Miscellaneous:

- Use cloths or sponges instead of paper towels.
- Use reusable containers for leftovers.
- Bring your own bags to the grocery and other stores.
- Reuse cardboard boxes.
- Send unwanted junk mail back to the sender and ask to be removed from the mailing list.
- Use both sides of a piece of paper.
- Donate useable, unwanted items to charitable organizations instead of throwing them away.



“51. The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself, and vice versa. This invites contemporary society to a serious review of its lifestyle, which, in many parts of the world, is prone to hedonism and consumerism, regardless of their harmful consequences.” “122. What is needed is an effective shift in mentality which can lead to the adoption of new lifestyles “in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments.”

Caritas in Veritate,
Pope Benedict XVI

Useful Websites:

www.earth911.org – especially good for information on recycling in specific areas.

For more ideas see the list called “50 Ways to Save the Planet.” This has good ideas compactly presented:

www.matessa.org/~mike/50ways.html

www.epa.gov – covers a very wide range of topics. Search for “wastes” to find specific info on safe disposal of items.

www.lavistacsa.org – website for the community-supported garden sponsored by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. It has many hints, including recipes for vegetarian dishes.

www.storyofstuff.com – offers a 20-minute film about origin, production and disposal of the stuff we buy.



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REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE



Why?

Reducing consumption, reusing items and recycling whenever possible reduces air and water pollution, keeps landfills from filling up so quickly and saves energy and money for both consumers and governments that have to deal with trash.

The website www.storyofstuff.com offers a 20-minute film that explains this well. In addition, check the website for the Center for a New American Dream: www.newdream.org.

Helping to make a cleaner environment in our homes and places of work makes a genuine contribution to the betterment of society.

Every little bit adds up!



Ways to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Garden: Yard cuttings can be used to make compost and mulch that enriches the soil and helps retain moisture, thereby reducing the need for watering. Result: better garden, less stuff to the landfill and saving of water. Use a push mower.

Paper: Many areas now are beginning to pick up paper or have recycling centers where paper can be taken. Areas have different regulations



about what is accepted, so one needs to contact the local government's Department of Public Works/Solid Waste for information.

Bottles, Cans and Jars: Many areas now collect these items separately and recycle them. The local Department of Public Works can give information on what is accepted and where to take it if not collected at each household.



Bottled Water: Make a pledge to stop using bottled water. If you need convincing, check:

- www.takebackthetap.org
- www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/bottled/real-story

Plastic Bags: Many grocery stores now have bins near their entrances where plastic bags can be deposited for recycling.



Running Shoes and Sneakers: All brands can be recycled. See: <http://www.nikereuseashoe.com>.

Clothing: Donate clean useable items to charity. Some areas have recycling programs for other textiles.



Household Food Scraps: Compost for the garden can be made from items like fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, teabags, coffee grounds and filters and even junk mail.



Transportation: Use public transportation when possible.

Join a carpool.

Walk more often or ride a bike.



Purchasing Items:

- Whenever possible, buy items made from or packaged in recycled and recyclable materials. Ask companies making the products you buy to use recycled and recyclable materials;
- Avoid disposable products such as razors or plastic silverware. For take-out food and drink, carry a mug or plastic container with you;
- Buy products with little or no packaging. Buy large, economy size products because there is less packaging for the same amount as compared with smaller packages;
- Avoid buying plastic whenever possible, especially that used for food packaging.
- Buy energy-efficient appliances.

Eating: Consider being a vegetarian or at least reducing the amount of fish and meat consumed.

Animal food production uses far more resources and causes much more pollution than does the production of fruits and vegetables.

