

America Recycles Day – November 15th
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Did you know that according to a presidential proclamation by President George W. Bush, each person in America produces about 4 pounds of waste every day? Every year, millions of people become educated about the importance of recycling and purchasing recycled products on America Recycles Day, which is celebrated on November 15th. This year's theme is "It all comes back to you."

The slogan sends multiple messages: a recycled product can return to consumers as another new product; recycling comes back to consumers as an improved environment, preservation of resources and economic well-being of the country; and it is everyone's responsibility to recycle.

America Recycles Day is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging Americans to recycle and buy recycled products. Since its inception in 1997, the campaign, which is led by grassroots organizers in communities nationwide, has grown substantially with residents in every state pledging to recycle.

Even if you are already recycling, chances are there are other ways you can increase your efforts. Take a look around the house, at work and even in school to identify ways you can practice recycling. Encourage others to recycle too and you will be making a difference in protecting the environment.

Recycling is not difficult. It sends less material to the waste stream, and it results in consuming less of our precious and limited natural resources. Listed below are some creative ways that we, as consumers and good stewards of our natural resources, can practice daily to be part of the solution and not the problem.

It is better to use canvas or cloth bags when shopping. But, if that is not an option, here are some ways you can reduce, reuse and recycle those plastic bags that pile up.

- Take them back to the store for recycling.
- Use them as bin liners.
- Scrunch them up to surround items when you're packaging as an alternative to bubble wrap.
- Use them in the garden to hold your grass cuttings and hedge trimmings before transfer to a compost bin.

Ideas for recycling paper:

- After children's drawings and paintings have been displayed for a while they can be used to wrap presents – this also makes the present special and personalized.
- Junk mail can be used as scrap paper or as bedding for pets.
- SPCA and pet shops appreciate old newspapers.
- Toilet roll centers can be recycled.

- Tear the paper into strips and put it in your compost.
- Old magazines are appreciated by many doctors, dentists, and motels.

Ideas for recycling household waste in the garden:

- Aluminum trays from pies and cakes make great drip saucers to put under potted plants.
- Plant seeds in egg cartons and cut up plastic containers such as 2 liter soda bottles or other food containers.
- Old stockings can be used to tie up plants in the garden.
- Old newspapers can be used to mulch and weed control the garden. Wet the newspaper and place thickly on the garden, cover with bark or stones.

Ideas for recycling other items:

- Many schools and kindergartens are often in need of boxes, plastic bags, old buttons, ribbons and other materials that you may usually throw away.
- Use empty plastic and cardboard food containers for storage for kid's toys and other items such as crayons, pencils, etc. They also make excellent storage for nuts and bolts in the garage or shed.

General tips for recycling:

- Reorganize the kitchen so that it has an efficient recycling area with good sized bins to help with sorting and holding. This will encourage other members of the household to contribute and help share the work instead of it being reliant on one person.
- Spread the word. By telling other people and helping them to get started, we increase the savings that can be made. Also get your children involved – if we can educate them early, they will grow up and appreciate waste reduction and will be able to apply these skills throughout their lives.