

For recycling and solid waste information in Omaha, try these information resources.

By Phone & Fax



From a touch tone phone, call 444-3610, then select from these categories:

	Voice	Fax
Recycling, Curbside	680	109
Recycling, Special Topics	683	113
Recycling, Drop-off	685	107
Garbage Collection	682	127
Yardwaste Collection	681	127
Collection Complaints	684	127
Bulky Item Disposal	686	108

By Internet



Information is also available through the internet from the Environmental Quality Division's home page. Visit it at:

<http://www.wasteline.org>

The City of Omaha's home page is:

<http://www.ci.omaha.ne.us>

Think before you buy

- ▲ Do I need it?
- ▲ Do I want it?
- ▲ How many or much do I need?
- ▲ How long will it last?
- ▲ How will I dispose of it when I'm done using it?
- ▲ Can it be maintained or repaired?
- ▲ Could I buy it secondhand or rent it?
- ▲ Is the packaging appropriate for the product?
- ▲ Is the use or pleasure I will receive from it equal to the work I had to do to pay for it, the cost of my time, and the cost to the environment?



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Recycling
Collection &
Processing



Garbage
Collection &
Disposal



Yardwaste
Collection &
Processing



Air Quality
Monitoring &
Enforcement



Waste Water
Monitoring &
Enforcement

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

Waste reduction
is an important part of
Omaha's
solid waste
management plan.

Official Program
City of Omaha
Public Works Department
Environmental Quality Division

As a nation, we are starting to realize that we can't solve the solid waste dilemma just by finding new places to put trash. Across the country, many individuals, communities, and businesses have found creative ways to reduce and better manage their trash through waste reduction and other waste management practices such as composting, reuse and recycling.

Slim it down

Simply put, waste reduction is preventing or not creating waste. Waste reduction can conserve resources, reduce pollution and help cut waste disposal and handling costs because it avoids the costs of recycling and landfilling.

Waste reduction is a basic solution to the garbage glut: less waste means less of a waste problem and less consumption of resources. Because waste reduction actually prevents the generation of waste in the first place, it comes before other management options that deal with trash after it is already generated. After waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting are the preferred waste management options because they reduce the amount of waste going to landfills and conserve resources.

Putting waste reduction into practice is likely to require some change in our daily routines. Changing habits does not mean a return to a more difficult life-style. In fact, just the opposite may happen. For example, you might need to take out the trash less often.

If we don't reduce waste, the economic and social costs of waste disposal will continue to increase, and communities—large and small, urban and suburban—will face increasingly harder decisions about managing their trash.

Everyone has a role

We all need to evaluate our daily waste-producing activities to determine which ones are essential (such as buying medicines and food wrapped in packaging for our safety and health), and which are not (such as over packaged single serving items). Ask yourself the question "Do I really need this?" before making a purchase.

Buy Quality to Avoid Waste

Purchase the most durable products you can afford. You will save money in the long run. Also, provide proper maintenance and repairs to keep products running longer. Higher quality items are usually more repairable, whereas cheaper alternatives often cannot be repaired and must be replaced.

Packaging

Buy wisely to avoid excessive packaging. Packaging serves many purposes, but its primary purpose is to protect and contain a product. It also can prevent tampering, provide information and preserve hygienic integrity and freshness. Some packaging, however is designed largely to enhance a products attractiveness or prominence on the store shelf. Since packaging materials account for a large volume of the trash we generate, they provide a good opportunity for reducing waste.

- ▲ Look for refillable bottles.
- ▲ Buy products whose packaging can be recycled and make sure to participate in the recycling process.
- ▲ When choosing between two similar products, select the one with the least packaging and packaging that is recyclable locally.
- ▲ Buy concentrates, larger-sized containers or products in bulk. Keep in mind that as the amount of product in a container increases, the packaging waste per serving or use usually decreases. Single serving foods have the most packaging.

- ▲ Remember that wrenches, screwdrivers, nails and other hardware are often available in loose bins. At the grocery, consider whether it is necessary to purchase items such as tomatoes, garlic and mushrooms in prepackaged containers when they can be bought without packaging.
- ▲ Refill a small plastic bottle or use a thermos instead of buying juice boxes.

Around the Home

- ▲ You can reduce the number and toxicity of products you buy for cleaning by using solutions of baking soda, vinegar, salt, and lemon for most cleaning jobs. Omaha's Household Hazardous Waste Alternatives and Disposal brochure helps you do this. Contact the Recycling Hotline at 444-4500 to request the brochure.
- ▲ Have a hand drying towel by the kitchen sink instead of paper towels. Use paper towels only for messy things. Use rags and sponges instead of paper towels for cleaning.
- ▲ Use cloth napkins instead of paper.
- ▲ Buy only the amount you need of paint and chemicals.
- ▲ Use cloth diapers instead of disposables. Diaper services make cloth diapers as easy and as economical as disposable diapers. Look in the yellow pages under the heading Diaper Services.
- ▲ Reduce unwanted mail (commonly called junkmail) by utilizing the city's Eliminating Unwanted Mail brochure. Contact the Recycling Hotline at 444-4500 to request the brochure.
- ▲ Use both sides of paper. Make double sided photocopies.
- ▲ Avoid disposable utensils, dishware and glasses.
- ▲ Borrow or rent items that you use infrequently. Find them under the heading Rental Service Stores in the yellow pages.
- ▲ Use shaving soap instead of aerosol cream.