



What is Source Reduction? Simply stated, Source Reduction is the elimination of waste before it is created. It involves the design, manufacture, purchase, or use of a material or products to reduce the amount of material that is discarded. Source Reduction can go a long way to reducing the costs associated with the transportation, disposal or recycling of waste. Best of all, practicing Source Reduction can **SAVE YOU MONEY!!!**



Choose less packaging

- Buy refillable bottles of milk, soft drinks, beer and other beverages.
- Look for products with minimal packaging. Buy the ones with the fewest layers.
- Bring your own cloth or paper bag when shopping. Reuse plastic bags when buying produce or bulk items.
- Use reusable storage containers instead of single-use plastic bags.
- Buy items in bulk to avoid extra packaging and expense. Products available include nails, screws, bolts, cereals, pasta, spices, candy and dried fruit.
- Avoid individually wrapped items. Buy economy-size packages of products you use a lot.
- Make a shopping list of items you really need and stick to it. Impulse buying may add to waste.

Use products that last a long time before they wear out

Products that last a long time create less waste, and you will often save money in the long run.

- Use reusable cloth napkins, diapers and towels.
- Take a reusable coffee mug to work.
- Use silverware and heavy-duty, reusable plastic plates and glasses for parties and picnics.
- Ask for high-mileage tires. They usually cost less per mile traveled. Keep them filled to the proper air pressure for maximum wear.
- Buy compact fluorescent lights instead of incandescent ones.
- Clean, maintain and repair your tools, appliances, vehicles, shoes and clothing.
- Check consumer publications for lists of durable items.

Reuse it

- Use glass jars for storing foods, screws and nails, and sewing supplies.
- Make a kit of twist ties and plastic bags to take along when you go shopping.
- Save plastic tubs from prepared foods to use as storage containers in the refrigerator and freezer.
- Use plastic jugs from windshield-washer fluid to collect used oil for recycling.
- Reuse scrap paper that's printed on one side. Use the blank side for phone messages or notes.
- Reuse greeting cards by using the front flap as a post card.
- After you've read a magazine, give it to someone else to read, such as friends, nursing homes, hospitals, schools, doctors' waiting rooms or the library.
- Save plastic foam peanuts and other packing materials to use with your next fragile package.
- Save used gift wrap to use again on a smaller package.
- Cut old bedding, drapes and clothes into pieces for rags, or use them in braided rugs or patchwork designs.
- Remove nails and hardware from used lumber so it can be reused in smaller projects. Lumber that is not painted or treated can be safely used for firewood.
- Donate unwanted household items, clothes and appliances that are still usable to charitable organizations. You can also sell them through classified ads, community bulletin boards or garage sales.
- Buy used or remanufactured products and goods when they will do the job as well as new items.

For Additional Recycling Information: Contact the St. Mary's County DPW&T at (301)863-8400 or visit our website at www.stmarysmd.com