

BLUE BIN NEWS

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REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE: FOR KIDS



Start making wise “package” selections. Why is it important to consider how something is packaged when you consider what to buy? You can reduce waste by selecting products that are not wasteful in their packaging. Flashy and fun packaging costs more, usually adds little or no value to the product, and (worst of all!) can do considerable harm to our environment by creating more waste or waste disposal difficulties. Keep the following package-related tips in mind no matter what you are buying:

Precycle by purchasing products in materials/packaging that can be readily recycled. So whenever you have a choice, put plain and recyclable packages high on your list to reduce packaging waste in our environment.

Avoid single-serve containers. You can buy juice or water in large recyclable bottles or cans and then divide it up in reusable, washable containers as you need it at home or to take with you. And if you want to take juice or water with you on your bike rides or to the gym, just take it along in your own reusable sports bottle.

Before you buy bottled water, first find out if you really even need bottled water. City water (and clean well water) is usually just as healthy, much cheaper, and may even be safer than bottled water products.

Refuse store bags! When you buy one or two items at a store, carry them out in your hands; or take a reusable bag with you to carry the items you buy. And don't forget to take your old plastic and paper bags back to the grocery store for reuse or recycling. Most grocery stores have convenient paper and plastic recycling bins located near the entrance. (*Courtesy of National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences*)



A City of St. Louis Refuse Division--Recycling Program Publication
Reader Submissions Welcomed!

Share your waste management questions, activities, “how to” tips, calendar items, etc.

Website: <http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/street/refuse/recycle/>

Email Blue Bin News at recycle@stlouis-mo.gov

WAYS TO GO GREEN AND \$AVE GREEN

Save energy to save money.

Set your thermostat a few degrees lower in the winter and a few degrees higher in the summer to save on heating and cooling costs.

Install compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) when your older incandescent bulbs burn out.

Unplug appliances when you're not using them. Or, use a "smart" power strip that senses when appliances are off and cuts "phantom" or "vampire" energy use.

Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible. As much as 85 percent of the energy used to machine-wash clothes goes to heating the water.

Use a drying rack or clothesline to save the energy otherwise used during machine drying. If you must use a dryer, consider adding dryer balls to cut drying time.

Save water to save money.

Take shorter showers to reduce water use. This will lower your water and heating bills too.

Install a low-flow showerhead. They don't cost much, and the water and energy savings can quickly pay back your investment.

Make sure you have a faucet aerator on each faucet. These inexpensive appliances conserve heat and water, while keeping water pressure high.

Plant drought-tolerant native plants in your garden. Many plants need minimal watering. Find out which occur naturally in your area.

Less gas = more money (and better health!).

Walk or bike to work. This saves on gas and parking costs while improving your cardiovascular health and reducing your risk of obesity.

Consider telecommuting if you live far from your work. Or move closer. Even if this means paying more rent, it could save you money in the long term.

Lobby your local government to increase spending on sidewalks and bike lanes.

With little cost, these improvements can pay huge dividends in bettering your health and reducing traffic.

Eat smart.

If you eat meat, add one meatless meal a week. Meat costs a lot at the store-and it's even more expensive when you consider the related environmental and health costs.

Buy locally raised, humane, and organic meat, eggs, and dairy whenever you can.

Whatever your diet, eat low on the food chain [pdf]. This is especially true for sea-food. (*Courtesy of Environmental Health and Safety, Columbia University*)