

saving the world begins at home

A PERSONAL GUIDE TO MANAGING HOUSEHOLD WASTE



Government
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■

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By making better decisions
about what you buy and how
you dispose of it, you can
help protect our environment.

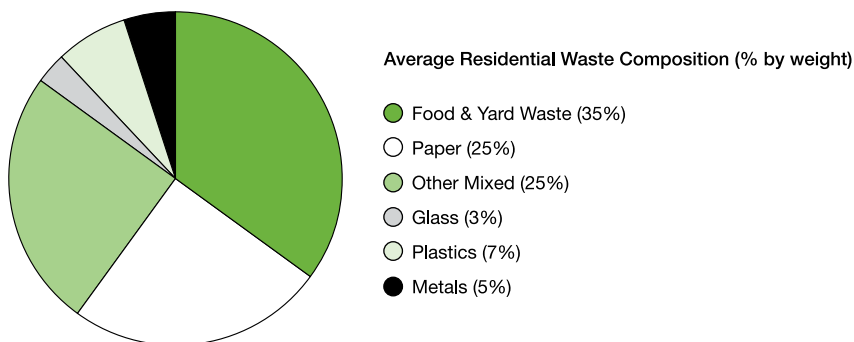
introduction

WASTE MATTERS

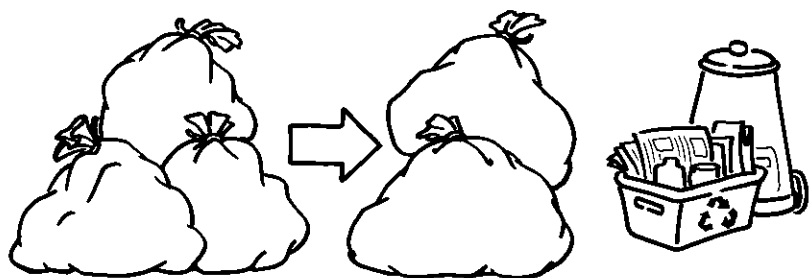
The trucks rumble down the lanes of our cities and towns, carrying away the week's garbage. The few bags set out don't appear to be much, but more than 2.4 million tonnes of solid waste goes to Alberta's municipal landfills every year. Municipalities are continuously challenged to make room for this tremendous amount of waste, some of it coming from commercial and construction activity, but much of it coming from our homes.

The amount of waste generated by humans has grown steadily in relation to our population and our economy. The postwar period of the 1950s saw a dramatic increase in economic activity in the industrialized world. Cheap plastics and aluminum revolutionized packaging and made possible a whole range of throwaway products and packaging. Since then, technology and growth have helped push the economy forward even further. With economic growth, consumption increases and everything consumed eventually becomes waste. What we do with that waste can make all the difference. Do we bury it and hope it "goes away", or do we get creative and put it to use?

*Three million tonnes of solid waste
would equal the weight of 300,000
garbage trucks.*



Landfills are difficult and costly to build and maintain. Few people want to have them close to where they live. Not only is pollution generated from transporting, treating and *otherwise* processing the waste we produce, there is also noise, litter, odour, pest, leachate, and methane gas. At the same time, the very land used for disposal destroys natural habitat and severely limits the use of the land for many generations – or longer! Alberta Environment is working to decrease the amount of material sent to landfills. You can contribute by reducing your garbage by one-third when you reduce, reuse and recycle resources.



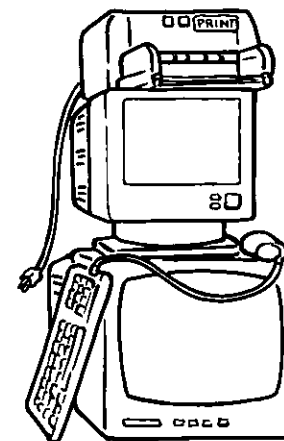
Leachate is the liquid that is produced when rain falls on a landfill, sinks into the wastes, and picks up chemicals as it seeps downward.

WASTE AND LANDFILLS

We often do not see the impact of the *types* of wastes we generate. Landfills are designed to take certain kinds of wastes. A few are specifically designed to contain hazardous waste materials, **but most are not**. If hazardous materials are disposed of in a landfill not designed for that purpose, the material can eventually seep through the soil, contaminating it and the groundwater. Some surprisingly common household materials, such as cleaning products, solvents, and pesticides can introduce hazardous or toxic substances into the environment. For this reason, Alberta's hazardous wastes are collected through various programs for proper recycling, recovery, treatment and/or disposal at the Swan Hills Treatment Centre and are kept out of landfills and sewers.

The two most common types of electronic waste are personal computers and monitors which make up approximately 40 per cent of electronic waste in landfills.

Calgary's electronics recycling program in 2008 resulted in over 2,272,000 kg of electronics being kept out of landfill sites.



POLLUTION PREVENTION

Pollution prevention, also known as P2, is a term that describes using processes, practices, materials, substances or energy that avoid or minimize the creation of pollutants and waste, and reduce the overall risk to human health or the environment. Pollution prevention applies to many different processes in the world today, from resource extraction and manufacturing to transportation and water treatment. For the individual, pollution prevention means making choices every day that help reduce wasteful practices in order to preserve water, energy, air, and land resources.

Water Wise

Water is a resource that is so conveniently provided to us that we often take it for granted. Generally, every drop we consume in turn needs energy and resources to keep it flowing and safe for our use. Avoiding excess water use in the first place reduces the environmental impact through a reduced need to manage it.

Water Tips

- Turn off taps when brushing teeth or shaving
- Run fully loaded dish and clothes washers
- Use rain barrels for watering plants
- Use low flow shower heads and take a shorter shower

Energy Sense

From the food we eat, to the car we drive, energy use abounds. Every item we have in our home, including the home itself, takes energy to produce and energy to maintain. Purchasing and operating for better energy efficiency in our day-to-day lives can have a positive impact on the environment.

Energy-Saving Tips

- Turn off lights
- Use energy-saving light bulbs
- Lower the thermostat
- Seal air leaks around windows

Recycling an aluminum can takes only five per cent of the energy it takes to manufacture it from raw material.

Breathe Easier

We generate many different kinds of indoor and outdoor air pollutants. Wood smoke, tobacco smoke, combustion gases from cars, boats, lawnmowers and appliances, particulates from dusts and sprays, and vapours from glues, paints, furniture and flooring – can all affect air quality.

Become familiar with how your own activities might impact the environment. Every time you watch television, start your car, turn up the thermostat, cook your food or enjoy a fire, you are using valuable resources that will ultimately end up as waste being disposed of in our air, water and land. Although it may not seem like much at the time, it all adds up and can lead to serious consequences. The health of our environment depends on reducing wasteful practices and conserving resources.





reduce, reuse and recycle

The 3Rs – reduce, reuse and recycle – are the golden rules of responsible waste management. They form a hierarchy of actions that guide us towards avoiding disposal in order to prolong the life of our landfills. **Reduce** by adopting practices that eliminate waste in the first place. **Reuse** materials again and again in their original form. **Recycle** items that are collected through your community's recycling programs if they cannot be reused. These will be reprocessed or remanufactured into other useful products.

When the 3Rs have been exhausted and disposal is unavoidable, use the proper method.

- Double-bag messy items, like kitty litter and pet feces, vacuum cleaner bags, ashes and sawdust.
- Put sharp items like broken glass, needles or razor blades in puncture-proof containers before disposing.
- Keep the bags, cans or bundles lightweight, safe and manageable for collectors.
- Take potentially hazardous waste materials (see 'Potential Household Hazardous Wastes' on page 23) to a round-up or permanent drop-off facility for proper disposal – they do not belong in a landfill.

Stay mindful of the processes that are in place to help curb our waste habits. It takes only a few extra minutes to separate reusable items, recyclables, compostables, and hazardous wastes from the household garbage. Use this booklet as a guide to help you take care of the only planet we have!

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION – REDUCE

When we dispose of something, we are also essentially throwing away the energy, raw materials, emissions, water, and hard-earned dollars that went into making the once-useful item in the first place.

You can reduce the amount of solid waste you generate by shopping wisely and by ensuring purchases last as long as possible. Consider purchases carefully – perhaps you can rent, borrow, or buy second-hand instead. Consider not only the item, but how much you need it, how much of the purchase will be discarded (especially in the form of packaging), and whether or not it can be reused or recycled in the future.

CHOOSE TO REUSE

If materials or products are still useful but you no longer need them, it makes sense to reuse them by giving them away or reselling them to someone else. Consider having a garage sale. Consignment shops accept gently used clothing and accessories and will provide you with a percentage of the selling price. Many charitable groups accept toys, bicycles, appliances, and other household items. Some even specialize in building materials or sporting goods.

Look for creative ways to reuse household items. The handles of broken hockey sticks can make sturdy garden stakes. Beads, feathers, and even old greeting cards find new life in handcrafted items. Margarine tubs or coffee cans make great storage containers. Use your imagination!

Every time we reuse an item, it not only delays or eliminates disposal, it also reduces the need to use energy and resources to manufacture a new item in its place.



Worn towels and bedding can be used at animal shelters. Partially worn or outdated clothing can have a new life in the form of quilting patches or industrial rags.

RECYCLE, RECYCLE, RECYCLE

There are numerous recycling programs in place throughout Alberta. These programs vary from one municipality to the next, depending on the local availability of markets for the materials being collected. Alberta's Recycle Info Line, in operation since 1991, can help you identify the programs and materials collected in your municipality. Call 1-800-463-6326 or visit www.mynecoville.com/ca/ab/home.

Materials collected through municipal recycling programs generally include paper, newsprint, cardboard, glass, metals, and plastics.



PETE

polyethylene
terephthalate



HDPE

high density
polyethylene



PVC or C

polyvinyl
chloride



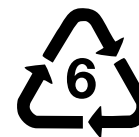
LDPE

low density
polyethylene



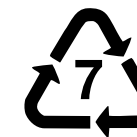
PP

polypropylene



PS

polystyrene



O

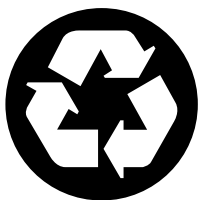
other
(all other resins)

Plastic is recyclable and the number printed inside the arrows is the plastic identification code which indicates the type of plastic resin that was used to make the item. Use these codes to determine which plastics are collected in your community.

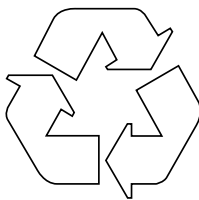
Familiarize yourself with the items that are collected in your community's program and how they should be prepared for recycling. Make recycling a habit! If your community doesn't have a recycling program, help to organize one.

Programs that collect specific items or materials are also in place throughout Alberta, operating in conjunction with municipal programs or as independent systems. These programs serve to recycle or otherwise divert difficult, potentially hazardous or bulky items from going to a landfill. Beverage containers, scrap tires, electronics, used oil materials, paint and paint containers are some of the materials that are collected through province-wide programs (see the chart on following pages of this booklet).

By purchasing products with these symbols you are ensuring that the material can be recycled or is made from recycled material. The Mobius loop shows the three stages crucial to the success of recycling – collection, processing and then purchasing recycled products.



recycled material



recyclable material

A circle with a dark background and white arrows indicates that the package contains recycled material, in this example it contains 20 per cent recycled materials. A light symbol, white arrows on a white background, means that the package itself is recyclable.

Recycle your:

- *beverage containers*
- *milk containers*
- *scrap tires*
- *obsolete electronics*
- *used oil*
- *paint and paint containers*

PROVINCE-WIDE COLLECTION PROGRAMS

WHAT?	WHY?	HOW?*
Automotive Switches	Switches in automobiles contain mercury. One gram of mercury can pollute an eight-hectare lake, rendering fish unsafe to eat for an entire year.	Automotive recyclers remove mercury switches from scrap vehicles.
Batteries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead-acid (auto/boat) • rechargeable 	Rechargeable and lead-acid are responsible for between 50 per cent and 70 per cent of all heavy metals found in landfills. Heavy metals can include cadmium, mercury, copper, zinc, lead, manganese, nickel and lithium.	Bring rechargeable batteries back to participating retailers or municipalities – check www.call2recycle.org . Outlets for lead-acid batteries can be found in most communities. Non-rechargeable batteries do not contain heavy metals and can safely go in the garbage unless there is a program in place such as Edmonton.
Beverage Containers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • juice containers • pop cans • water bottles • milk containers 	Reduces litter; empty containers can be recycled into new products, and this uses less energy than making products from raw materials.	Return to one of more than 200 bottle depots throughout Alberta.

* For program contact information, go to page 39.

continued next page

WHAT?	WHY?	HOW?*
Electronics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TV's • computers • computer peripherals 	Electronics contain materials such as lead, mercury, cadmium, beryllium and PVC plastics that can cause significant environmental and health risks if they end up in Alberta landfills.	Televisions, computers and computer peripherals are collected at municipal drop-off sites or through special round-ups. A fee is paid at point of purchase.
Fluorescent Light Bulbs	Fluorescent bulbs contain mercury, which is a toxic material and, if placed in landfills, can leach into the soil or groundwater systems.	Contact your municipality.
Household Hazardous Wastes (HHW) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aerosol cans containing product 	Removes unused, potentially hazardous materials from the municipal waste stream for safe disposal.	Take to your nearest HHW collection site or HHW round-up.
Medications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expired/unused prescription drugs • over-the-counter drugs 	Contain toxic/or hazardous pharmaceutical material.	Sponsored by the industry, take to any pharmacy for safe disposal.

* For program contact information, go to page 39.

WHAT?	WHY?	HOW?*
Paint and Paint Containers	Oil based paint contains combustible materials; older paints may contain lead, mercury and other heavy metals; paint containers are a valuable resource, where potential is there to reuse, recycle and recover the material.	Take left over paint and empty paint containers to your municipal collection site.
Scrap Tires	Stockpiles pose environmental hazards; bulky in landfill.	Collected through tire retailers and at landfill sites (fee is paid when tire is purchased).
Used Oil Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used oil • filters • containers 	Used oil is the largest single source of hazardous recyclable material in Western Canada and poses an environmental risk if improperly managed.	Take a specially designed EcoCentre site, one of a network of oil collection points, or a Household Hazardous Waste location.

* For program contact information, go to page 39.



the dirt on composting

Composting is a simple recycling process and is a perfect example of pollution prevention in action because it can be carried out at home – no need for extra collection, transportation, or processing off-site. Close to one-third of the average household's waste is organic material that can be composted.

WHAT GOES IN

Fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, grass clippings, leaves, and straw can be added to your compost pile or bin. You can also add small amounts of shredded paper, coffee filters, and tea bags. Eggshells can also be included as they add nutrients to the compost but they do not break down.



Cooked foods, fats, milk products, meat scraps or bones should **NOT** go into the backyard compost bin, as these will create odours and attract pests.

To compost, all you do is:

- mix one half nitrogen-rich materials ("green" material like fresh vegetable matter, grass clippings) with
- the other half with carbon-rich materials ("brown" material like dried leaves, shredded paper, straw),
- supply enough moisture (the contents of the composter should be moist like a wrung-out sponge),
- air (lift/turn it) and let natural organisms do their job.

You can speed up the process by adding a shovelful of soil, which contains tiny organisms that break down the material.

Landfills are designed to keep waste relatively dry and airtight much like a giant tomb. It can take decades or even centuries for material to break down.

WHAT COMES OUT

Your reward is a nutrient-rich humus-like material that you can add to soil and plants anywhere in your yard.

Humus is the dark or black carbon-rich, relatively stable residue in soil resulting from the decomposition of organic matter.

BUILD YOUR OWN COMPOSTER

A compost pile can be as simple as a shallow hole at one end of the garden into which kitchen and garden wastes are added, or you can buy or build a compost bin.

Check out the 'Waste Reduction Tips' section of this booklet on page 37 to see additional tips for reducing lawn and garden waste.



plastic bin
composter

wooden enclosure
composter

wire mesh
composter

Compost results from the controlled process of decomposing organic material under oxygen-rich conditions.

As organics slowly decompose in landfills, they produce the potent greenhouse gas, methane. In Canada, landfills produce three to five per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions.



household hazardous waste

Many common household products contain hazardous chemicals. Once released into the environment, these substances may pose a serious threat to living organisms. Small quantities of hazardous substances can accumulate over time to reach dangerous levels and contaminate the air, water, and/or soil. Others can have a more immediate and devastating effect, such as poisoning.

Pesticides, fertilizers and other products can wash off lawns and gardens into storm drains and streams, polluting water. Solvents can escape to the atmosphere from the normal use of cleaners, paints and aerosol sprays, as well as from disposal or accidental spills. These substances not only pollute the air but they can also return to earth as precipitation, further polluting water and soil.

Chemicals from hazardous wastes buried in unsecured landfills can leach out and move through the soil, eventually entering groundwater. From here, contaminants can spread to wells or surface water, making it unsafe to drink.

This doesn't necessarily mean that we should stop using products that are an integral part of our daily lives – some of them are vital to our very existence. What it does mean is that we must understand the nature of the hazardous materials we use around the home, learn to use them wisely (reduce, reuse, recycle), and dispose of them carefully.

WORKING WITH HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE

Follow these basic guidelines on the proper use of potentially hazardous materials.

- Read and follow all directions carefully;
- Store materials securely in a well-ventilated area in original containers;
- Use only for the intended purpose as it is risky to improvise;
- Give products time to work (i.e., cleaners time to soak or pesticides time to react).

KNOW YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE SYMBOLS

The hazard potential of products can be identified by the following product hazard symbols:



Flammable – can burn easily (e.g., paint solvents or degreasers)



Corrosive – can eat away at surfaces, including skin (e.g., acids, rust removers, alkaline cleaning fluids, battery acid)



Reactive/Explosive – can react violently when mixed with other agents, or when placed under heat or pressure (e.g., bleaches, aerosols)



Toxic/Poison – can poison or damage living organisms (e.g., materials containing lead, mercury, cadmium or other heavy metals, pesticides, antifreeze)

Buy products only in quantities that you need. If you can't use up all of a potentially hazardous product, give it to someone else to use. Otherwise, household hazardous wastes, including glues, solvents, oil-based paints, etc., must be taken to a household hazardous waste drop-off facility or round-up for proper disposal.

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW)

Many Alberta municipalities have permanent, year-round facilities to safely collect HHW. The City of Calgary accepts HHW at collection drop-off locations at designated fire stations in the city. The City of Edmonton accepts HHW at its Eco Stations. Close to a dozen other communities have permanent drop-off facilities, while still others hold special collection events known as HHW Round-ups or sometimes called Toxic Round-ups.

Contact Alberta's Recycle Info Line (see page 39) or your municipality to find out where to take your HHW. The types of items commonly accepted at a HHW facility or round-up are listed on the next page. Remember, HHW drop-off facilities and round-ups accept residential household chemicals only (not from commercial businesses or industries).

POTENTIAL HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES

Any household product, with one or more hazard symbols, that can't be used up (or in some cases recycled) may be taken to a HHW facility or round-up for proper disposal. **Always keep each material – never mixing – in its original labelled container and store safely out of reach of children and pets.** Examples of products may include (check labels):

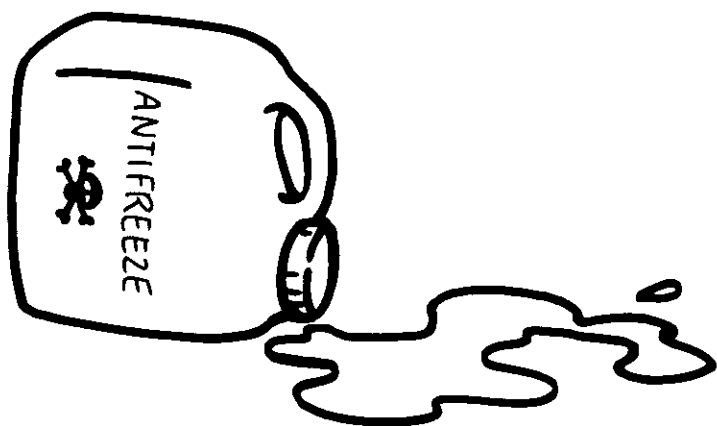
In the Bathroom

- Air fresheners (aerosol)
- Drain cleaners
- Hair colouring
- Hair perm solutions
- Hair sprays (aerosol)
- Mildew removers
- Nail polish and remover
- Toilet cleaners
- Tub and tile cleaners

Over 1.5 million litres of HHW is collected and properly disposed of annually in Alberta.

In the Garage

- Aerosol sprays
- All-purpose solvent-based cleaners
- Ant/Wasp spray
- Auto body filler
- Automotive antifreeze
- Barbeque fire starter products
- Brake fluid
- Butane refills
- Car batteries (lead-acid)
- Car waxes and polishes
- Carbon tetrachloride
- Contact cement
- Degreasers (petroleum based)
- Fertilizers (weed and feed)
- Fungicides
- Gasoline
- Glues (solvent and water-based)
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Kerosene
- Lighter fluid
- Lye
- Paint thinners and strippers
- Solvents, turpentine
- Spa and pool chemicals
- Transmission fluid
- Weed killers
- Windshield washer fluid with methyl alcohol
- Wood preservatives



In the Kitchen

- Abrasive powders
- Oven cleaners

In the Laundry Room

- Ammonia
- Bleach
- Detergents
- Dry-cleaning fluids
- Fabric softeners
- Laundry stain removers
- Laundry starch
- Liquid cleansers

Other

- Acetone
- Alcohol-based lotions
- Disinfectants
- Floor wax strippers
- Furniture polishes and waxes
- Glass cleaners
- Muriatic acid
- Photographic chemicals
- Propane gas cylinders
- Rechargeable batteries
- Rubbing alcohol
- Rug and upholstery cleaners
- Rust remover
- Septic tank degreaser
- Shoe polish
- Silver and brass polish
- Spot removers
- Treated wood

Note

Ammunition and explosives should be brought to the local police or RCMP detachment for special handling.



environmental alternatives

There are simple and effective alternatives for many potentially harmful chemicals used in the home. Here are a few examples:

AIR FRESHENERS

Use an open box of baking soda or a dish filled with vinegar.

ALL-PURPOSE CLEANER

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) vinegar

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 ml) baking soda

1 gallon (4 litres) hot water

Mix, label and use for general purpose cleaning.

CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS

Use compost, manure or fish fertilizer to enrich soil.

CHLORINE BLEACH



Use washing soda or non-chlorine bleach.

(NEVER mix chlorine bleach with ammonia – a poisonous chlorine gas forms.)

DRAIN CLEANER

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 ml) baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) vinegar

Pour soda, then vinegar and close drain until fizzing stops. Flush with boiling water.

HERBICIDES

Use a mulch in the garden to minimize weed growth; handpick stray weeds.

INSECTICIDES

Wash or spray plants with soapy water. For major problems, call a professional.

LAUNDRY DETERGENT

Use biodegradable products or pure soap with washing soda.

Detergents in general are less biodegradable, more toxic, and more expensive than soaps. Soap cleans well on its own in soft water, but will likely need a boost with washing soda for doing laundry in hard water.

OVEN CLEANER

Absorb fresh spills by sprinkling with table salt while still warm. When cool, brush and wipe off. Soften baked-on spills with a borax and lemon juice paste.

PAINTS AND THINNERS

Use latex or water-based paints whenever possible.

SCOURING POWDER

Make a paste of baking soda and water. Leave on a few minutes for tough stains.

TOILET BOWL CLEANER

Make a paste of borax and lemon juice. Rub the toilet bowl with the paste and leave on for a few hours. Scrub with a brush and flush.

TUB AND TILE CLEANER

Use baking soda for routine cleaning; a borax and lemon juice paste for tough soap scum.

WINDOW/GLASS CLEANER

1/4 cup (60 ml) vinegar

1 cup (250 ml) water

Mix and label in a pump spray bottle.



waste reduction tips

The following tried-and-true tips will help get you started on reducing wasteful practices.

SHOPPING SOLUTIONS

- Buy recycled products. Look for the recycled symbol and support businesses that show environmental responsibility.
- Buy durable products that will last, from items such as dishcloths to efficient and durable building products. Cheaper is not always better.
- Buy products that aren't over-packaged. A similar product may be available with no packaging or in reusable containers.
- Buy in bulk or 'right size' for your use.
- Never buy more potentially hazardous materials than you need to do the job.
- Look for less toxic options.
- Bring your own reusable shopping bags.
- Tell manufacturers or retailers when you are unhappy with excess packaging.
- Choose durable materials such as hardwood, tile floors, or exchangeable carpet tiles.

Many manufacturers provide comment cards or web sites to register product warranties and/or provide feedback. Use these opportunities to express your views on excess packaging, product durability, etc.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING AND MAINTENANCE

- Control heating, air-conditioning and hot water temperatures to reduce your overall energy consumption. Programmable thermostats can help.
- Turn off lights and small appliances, like radios, TVs, coffee pots and computers when not in use.
- Use compact fluorescent light bulbs. They last ten times longer and are four times more efficient than regular incandescent bulbs.
- Use less toxic or non-toxic cleaning supplies (see ‘Environmental Alternatives’ page 27).
- Keep filters/fans/coils clean on all appliances to maximize efficiency.
- Use timers and/or sensors to limit power use on lights, vehicle block heaters, etc.
- Have an Energy Audit done of your home and see how much money you can save.
- Consider upgrading old appliances like refrigerators and furnaces to energy-efficient ones.

LED (Light Emitting Diode) holiday/accent lights are up to 10 times more efficient than mini lights, safer and more durable.

Website for Home Energy Assessment is www.atcoenergysense.com

FOOD PREPARATION

- Reuse an ice cream pail to collect compostable materials. Keep it handy, incorporating materials into your compost pile or bin every few days.
- Use in-sink garbage disposals **sparingly** to avoid wasting water and overloading treatment systems.
- The kitchen often works well as a hub for collecting recyclables. Space permitting, devise a system convenient for the entire household to use.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables after peeling, not continuously under running water.
- Run the dishwasher only on full loads. Scrape food residue instead of rinsing whenever possible. Use the recommended amount of detergent.
- Use the microwave instead of a conventional oven for cooking whenever possible.
- Pack lunches in reusable containers.
- Opt for dine-in rather than take-out restaurants to avoid disposable packaging.

A reuseable juice container in a packed lunch can pay for itself in less than a week of use and create less waste.

There are more than 1.6 billion beverage containers being recycled in Alberta annually.

HOME OFFICE

- Keep a box or bin handy for recyclable paper. Tear up sensitive information first.
- Use rechargeable batteries. When they lose their ability to charge, recycle them properly.
- Bring non-working computers and televisions to an “e-roundup” or a collection centre near you. Donate working equipment to an appropriate charity.
- Recycle printer/toner cartridges where services exist.
- Consider electronic banking and bill payment options to reduce paper waste.

Alberta's Electronics Recycling Program has recycled well over two million televisions, computers, laptops and printers since it was launched in 2004.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

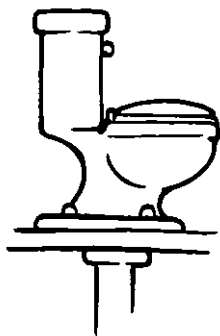
- Turn off the tap (except to rinse) when brushing teeth or shaving.
- Showers generally use less water than baths.
- Bring all expired drugs to your local pharmacy for proper disposal (remember to keep all drugs well out of reach of children). Never rinse medicine down the drain or flush down the toilet.
- Choose solids or pump sprays over aerosols.
- Consider using a diaper service or cloth diapers to reduce the use of disposables.
- Use a rechargeable razor, or razors with replaceable blades instead of disposables.

WATER AND LAUNDRY

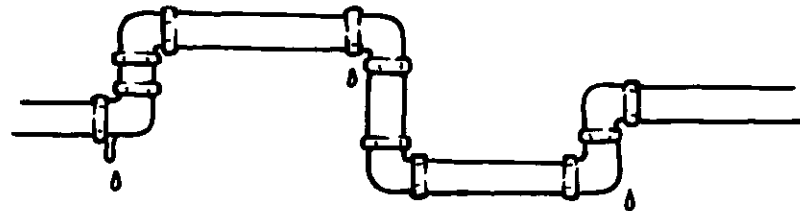
- Wait for full laundry loads. When you can't wait, use the appropriate water levels and settings.
- Consider upgrading to energy efficient front-loading washing machines.
- Follow manufacturers directions for using detergents, additives or spot removers.
- Consider high efficiency washers and dryers when it comes time to replace.
- Fully or partially air dry heavy or bulky laundry items, like jeans, sweatshirts and towels.
- Install a clothesline to reduce dependance on a dryer.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

- Fix leaks and drips in toilets and faucets promptly.
- Install flow restrictors in showerheads and faucets.
- Consider retrofitting existing toilets with approved water-reduction devices. Install low-flow toilets when it comes time to replace.
- Weatherize and properly ventilate your home to help maintain comfort and health.
- Use low VOC (volatile organic compound) water-based paints, stains, sealants and adhesives.
- Look for energy rating guides when buying new appliances. The EnerGuide and Energy Star labels help consumers choose for efficiency.
- Select contractors who have a proven track record for environmental responsibility.
- Inform yourself on the environmental options for "big-ticket items" that have a long-term impact, such as a new house or a car.
- Always check the energy rating of new appliances.
- Use CMHC Flex Housing concepts for homes that adapt to your current needs and do not require renovation – www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/buho/flho/index.cfm



Consider a low-flow toilet. Find out if there is a residential toilet replacement program in your municipality.



*Visit Maintaining a Home at
www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/maho/*

HOBBIES AND LEISURE

- Share hobby materials, especially toxic ones, with another enthusiast to reduce potential waste.
- Keep potential craft items for reuse yourself, or check with a local seniors club, hospital, school or daycare to donate.
- Borrow books, videos and games instead of buying.
- Use your library instead of purchasing new books.
- Donate used items, such as toys, games and sporting goods, to charity.
- Try recreational activities that don't require engine power – and save a trip to the gym!
- Walk, bike or take transit to reduce emissions.
- Take action on climate change, find out what you can do at www.climatechangecentral.com.

The Energy Star name and symbols are registered trademarks of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, identifying products that meet or exceed premium levels of energy efficiency. Canada's EnerGuide Program has been providing comparative information on the energy efficiency of household appliances for many years. An Energy Star symbol on an EnerGuide label means the product is one of the most efficient available.

AUTOMOTIVE

- Keep your car well tuned, paying special attention to correct tire pressure.
- There is no need to idle a car's engine more than one minute before driving, even in cold weather.
- Plan trips to maximize the use of your vehicle. Better still, walk, bike or take the bus when you can.
- Avoid hard accelerations and heavy braking when driving. Reduce drag by removing unnecessary accessories, such as roof racks or boxes.
- For the do-it-yourselfer, recycle used lead-acid car batteries and tires. Recycle used oil, filters, and containers.
- Keep hazardous materials, like antifreeze, safely stored away from children and animals.
- Check the Energuide and Transport Canada ratings when looking for a new vehicle. You could save thousands of \$s.

3 million tires are recycled in Alberta every year.

*Every litre of gasoline **not** burned translates into less greenhouse gases, cleaner air and \$\$ savings for you.*

BURNING ISSUES

- Woodstove or fireplace fires should burn hot, using only clean, split and well-seasoned wood. Wet, green or treated/manufactured wood should never be burned. Check out Home Heating and Wood Burning at www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair-airpur for more information.
- Ensure that your fire is getting enough air so it will burn hotter and cleaner, reducing emissions (smoke) and the potential for creosote build-up.
- Never burn household garbage in a woodstove, fireplace, burn barrel or pit.
- Choose high-efficiency EPA/CSA approved wood-burning appliances designed to burn better, safer, and with less smoke.
- Always check local regulations regarding fire safety.

Read the "Before You Burn Fact Sheet" for good tips at www.gov.ab.ca/env/info/infocentre/pubs/factsheet-backyard_burning.pdf

LAWN AND GARDEN

- Start a compost bin and use it year-round.
- Consider renting a chipper when trimming shrubs and trees. Use the chips for mulch.
- Practice grasscycling. Leave clippings on the lawn to reduce waste and retain moisture.
- Try natural landscaping by replacing high-maintenance lawns with native and low water plant species.
- Landscape for windbreaks, shade and natural pest controllers like birds and ladybugs.
- Enrich garden soil or top dress lawns with finished compost.
- Maximize rainwater by directing flow from downspouts, etc. to areas that need it most.
- Don't water outside on windy days or in the hot sun.
- Watering one hour per week, early in the morning, is usually sufficient for proper lawn maintenance.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks, or driveways.

Visit the Healthy Yards Program at www.calgary.ca/parks/healthyyards

OTHER IDEAS

Use this space to write additional tips that will work for you. Revisit this booklet from time to time and make note of your progress. Share this booklet with a friend.



where to get more information

To help you follow up on some of the ideas in this booklet, the following resources are just a click or phone call away.

Alberta's Recycle Info Line
1-800-463-6326
www.myecoville.com/ca/ab/home

Alberta Beverage Container
Recycling Corporation
403-264-0170
www.abcrc.com

Alberta Environment –
Information Centre/Publications
780-427-2700
www.environment.gov.ab.ca/edu/homeEd.asp
www.environment.gov.ab.ca/info/home.asp

Alberta Plastics
Recycling Association
780-939-2386
www.recycleyourplastic.ca

Alberta Recycling
Management Authority
1-888-999-8762
www.albertarecycling.ca

Alberta Used Oil
Management Association
1-888-922-2298
www.usedoilrecycling.com

Beverage Container
Management Board
1-888-424-7671
www.bcmb.ab.ca

Built Green Alberta
Visit their website for locations
and phone numbers
www.builtgreencanada.ca

Canadian Centre
for Pollution Prevention
1-800-667-9790
www.c2p2online.com

Canada Mortgage
and Housing Corporation
1-800-668-2642
www.cmhc.ca

City of Calgary
403-268-2489 or if in city limits 311
www.calgary.ca

City of Edmonton –
Waste Hotline
780-496-5678 or if in city limits 311
www.edmonton.ca

Climate Change Central
1-866-609-2700
www.climatechangecentral.com

Composting Council of Canada
1-877-571-4769
www.compost.org

Environment Canada
1-800-668-6767
www.ec.gc.ca

Natural Resources Canada –
Office of Energy Efficiency
1-800-387-2000
www.oeenrncan.gc.ca

Rechargeable Battery
Recycling Corporation
1-877-273-2925
www.call2recycle.org

Recycling Council of Alberta
403-843-6563
www.recycle.ab.ca

contact us at

Alberta Environment

Tel: 780.427.2700

www.environment.gov.ab.ca/contact

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Tel: 1-800-668-2642

www.cmhc.ca

City of Calgary

Tel: 403-268-2489

www.calgary.ca

Recycling Council of Alberta

Tel: 403-843-6563

www.recycle.ab.ca

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