

Five R's of Responsible Waste Management - REDUCE, REPAIR, REUSE, RECYCLE, AND ROT.

If you commit to these five actions, there is little that must be thrown away. Choosing to follow the Five R's ensures that resources are saved and/or reused, and the volume of waste is reduced. By keeping these actions in mind when purchasing, using, and disposing of materials, you will have done more than your share to keep our community clean and beautiful.

Reduce

- Purchase items in refillable containers and buy in bulk whenever possible.
- Buy products in concentrated form, such as cleaners, juices, and drink mixes.
- Use a cloth bag when you go shopping for groceries. Think of all the plastic bags you won't need over a years' worth of shopping!
- Avoid disposable or single use products such as batteries, razors, cameras, eating utensils, plates, and cups.
- Rent items that you rarely use, such as power tools and lawn equipment. Many hardware stores rent these items inexpensively.
- Stop junk mail at the source!

Repair

- Many items that we would normally throw out can be repaired, upgraded, or reused. This is usually cheaper than buying a new one and saves the space of disposing of the old one. These items include tires, shoes, home and office furniture and equipment, lighting fixtures, lawnmowers, electronics, clothes, and automotive parts.
- Consider reupholstering, refinishing, or donating old furniture to be used again.
- Have large appliances repaired instead of buying new ones.

Reuse

- Shop at and donate items to thrift stores or consider having a yard sale for unwanted household items.
- Print on both sides of paper or re-use as scratch paper.
- When buying a new product, take into consideration its potential life span. Will it last a long time, and is it able to be repaired if broken?
- Reuse food containers and buy durable storage containers to store leftovers instead of using foil, plastic bags or wrap.
- Purchase products in attractive bottles, jars, and boxes that you can use again.

Recycle

- Prepare your recyclables according to the directions given by your recycling provider. This will make it easier and less costly for them to continue providing these services.

Rot

- Set up a compost pile to compost yard trimmings.
- Attend a free workshop on composting. See additional information at <http://www.rivcowm.org/opencms/recycling/composting.html>
- Set up a worm composter to recycle your fruit and vegetable scraps into a rich, valuable plant food