

Household waste

is an increasing problem in today's "throw-away" culture. From single serving food containers to junk mail, household waste is abundant. When trash is discarded, it can wash into the stormwater system which impacts water quality. The EPA suggests the following 12 ways to reduce solid waste:

1. *Reduce the amount of packaging*
2. *Reduce waste toxicity*
3. *Consider reusable products*
4. *Maintain and repair products*
5. *Reuse bags, containers, water bottles and other items.*
6. *Borrow, rent or share items that are used infrequently*
7. *Sell or donate goods instead of throwing them out*
8. *Choose recyclable products and containers, and recycle them.*
9. *Use products made from recycled materials*
10. *Compost yard waste and food scraps*
11. *Educate others and inform manufacturers and merchants*
12. *Reduce waste creatively!*

Additional Resources

Visit the **Green Country Stormwater Alliance (GCSA)** website listed below for more details about stormwater protection, including Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other pollution reduction strategies.



Green Country Stormwater Alliance
www.stormwaterok.net

Contact Information:

For information about Green Country Stormwater Alliance, contact INCOG at 918-584-7526 or by email at stormwater@incog.org. For local information, contact your city or county stormwater coordinator.

For more information about stormwater protection, contact the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Water Quality Division at 405-702-8100 or visit the DEQ web site at: <https://www.deq.ok.gov/water-quality-division/stormwater/>

For stormwater related complaints, call the DEQ statewide hotline at 1-800-522-0206. This number is answered 24-7. Citizens may fill out an online complaint form at the DEQ web site at <https://www.deq.ok.gov/environmental-complaints/> and submit it electronically to DEQ. The site also provides contact links to DEQ.

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A Homeowner's Guide to Recycling & Reuse



Green
Storm
Alliance



Get to know the Three R's:

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Reduce

Reduce the consumption of **little-used items**, such as power tools and party goods which can be rented or shared. The same holds true for newspapers, magazines, etc.

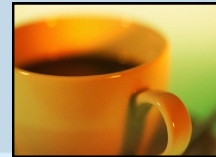
Other ways to reduce consumption:

- Purchase clothing at **resale shops** or hold clothing "swaps" with others at your school or community center.
- Purchase **energy efficient items** such as LED light bulbs, low flow faucets and toilets, and ENERGY STAR® products.
- **Borrow or stream** books, movies and music from the library or internet.
- Purchase products with **recycled content** or that are packaged in recycled materials.
- Use Mail Preference Service to be **removed from mailing lists**, which reduces the amount of delivery mail.
<http://www.dmaconsumers.org/offmailinglist.html>
- Ask yourself, "**Do I really need it?**" Often, the answer is "No"
- Check your **ecological footprint** (the amount of land and water it takes to support your lifestyle) at:
<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/>



Reuse

- Use **coffee mugs** instead of Styrofoam cups.
- Use **rechargeable** batteries.
- Use **cloth** napkins, sponges and dish-cloths.
- **Avoid single-use** items.
- Reuse **plastic containers and egg cartons** for crafts and garden use.
- Use a lawn **mulching mower**, and rake leaves as mulch around bedding plants.
- Reuse **gift and shopping bags**.
- **Avoid shopping bags** when possible.



Greenscaping:

- **Reuse yard waste** such as grass clippings to mulch bare spots to reduce soil erosion.
- **Compost** household waste, such as grass clippings, fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and newspapers.
- Use specialized **plants and beneficial insects** as alternatives to insecticides.

Home landscaping and yard waste is second only to paper in the municipal solid waste stream. Lawn and garden pesticides and fertilizers can threaten water quality.

Recycle

Recycling at home is not just for **aluminum cans** any more. Recycling can also include:

- **Plastic** containers and other plastic items.
- **Paper and cardboard**, such as newspapers, office paper, mail and phone books.
- Household, computer and car **batteries**.
- Oil-based **paint** and **chemicals**.
- **Electronic** products (see e-cycling below).

The EPA's WasteWise program helps organizations and businesses promote the use and reuse of materials more productively over their product life cycles. Visit their website at:

<https://www.epa.gov/smm/wastewise>

E-cycling:

The exponential growth in electronics has given rise to a new environmental challenge: the proper disposal of electronic waste. Many electronic devices have valuable materials including steel, aluminum, glass, plastic, and precious metals.

Types of e-cycled electronics include computers, TVs, cell phones, DVD players and more. Visit the Met website at www.metrecycle.com for local electronic recycling options.

