



Toronto
Green
Community

REDUCING YOUR WASTE

Waste fits into two broad categories: 1) **Inefficient use:** Resources that are not used to their full potential and 2) **Wasteful use:** Resources that are used unnecessarily. Creating waste without recycling or reusing the majority of it overwhelms the planet with stuff, a lot of which is **highly toxic** to people and environments. Producing and wasting things without concern for where they end up creates unnecessary waste, and turns potential resources into waste products.

WASTE BREAKDOWN

Residential 36%, Industrial and Commercial 54%, Construction and demolition 10%

Residential breakdown: paper 2% plastic 18% metal 3% glass 1% Household special waste 1% other 25%

REDUCING WASTE

- Buy only what you really need!
- Purchase durable products that can be used more than once. Avoid paper towels, lighters, disposable razors, diapers, plates, cutlery, & cups.
- Avoid buying items with heavy packaging: buy used & buy in bulk. Over-packaging wastes raw materials & multiplies the amount of plastic in our already overburdened landfills.

RECYCLE IT: ORANGE DROP, BLUE AND GREEN BIN PROGRAMS

One of the most successful waste reduction initiatives in the world, Toronto's *Blue Bin* program collects recyclables from 510,000 households and 5,000 apartment units.

90% of single-family homes in Toronto use the Green Bin system, which translates into half a million homes. 30% of waste that is picked up is “wet,” organic waste, which can divert more than 100,000 tonnes of waste from landfill annually in the city of Toronto and back into the earth!

Orange Drop locations are found at retail stores, pharmacies, municipal recycling depots and other convenient locations for the safe disposal of hazardous waste including paint, oil, anti-freeze, solvents, batteries, fertilizers, pesticides & their containers, to be recycled or reprocessed into new materials for manufacturing. For materials that can't be recycled, safe disposal is handled in the most environmentally friendly way.

COMPOSTING

- Start a backyard compost with your kitchen and yard waste. You will reduce your garbage by over one-third and will produce an excellent soil conditioner for your garden. In 6-12 months, you can turn your organic waste into compost for gardens, planters, and household plants.
- Each year, thousands of Toronto residents receive compost for household use through community distribution services.

Can't do backyard composting? Try other alternatives:

- Community composting
- Balcony or rooftop composting
- Vermicomposting

5 MINUTES OR 1000 YEARS

The average plastic bag is used for only 5 minutes to carry your purchases home, yet these single use plastic bags can take up to 1000 years to biodegrade. Take reusable bags to shop and reduce plastic waste.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

Replace Hazardous Products With Non-Toxic Alternatives:

Make your own environmentally-friendly cleaning products using effective household ingredients such as baking soda, lemon juice, cornstarch, table salt, pure soap, or vinegar.

When recycling is not an option...

A number of hazardous materials and substances such as electronics, hazardous chemicals, and batteries cannot be recycled using traditional methods and must be brought to designated recycling depots across the city. If you don't have a recycling depot nearby call 311 for free pick-up service of your hazardous waste.

HELP TORONTO STAY GREEN!

Since 2004, the city of Toronto has brought 5,300 recycling containers into parks and introduced recycling programs in more than 160 recreational centres across the city.

Clean-up days: make it a team effort!

Help to plan a "clean-up day" with your neighbours or community group – either seasonally or even monthly. Make it a fun, community-building event with incentives, prizes, and a community gathering.

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