

# Waste Reduction

*The most effective way to reduce waste is to not produce it in the first place*

**Source reduction**, also known as waste prevention, means reducing waste at the source. It can take many different forms:

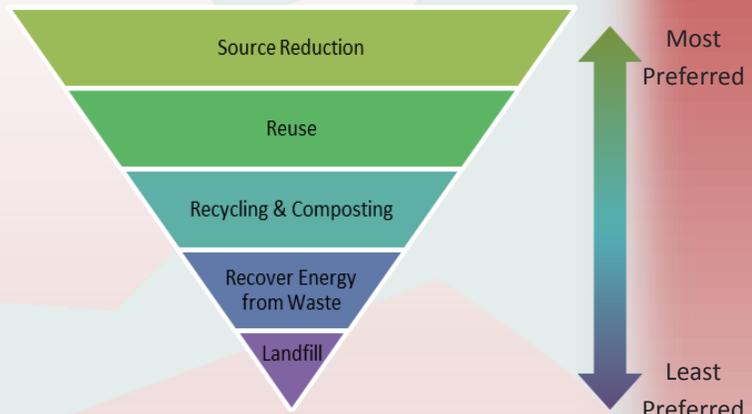
- ◇ buying in bulk
- ◇ reducing packaging
- ◇ reusing or donating items
- ◇ redesigning products to reduce toxicity.

Source reduction is also important in manufacturing. Using lighter weight packaging, reuse, and remanufacturing are all becoming more popular business trends. When businesses manufacture products with less packaging, they are buying fewer raw materials, which means fewer "upstream" resources are used to recover, transport and process those materials. A decrease in manufacturing costs can mean a larger profit margin, with savings that can be passed on to the consumer.

**Source reduction can:**

- ◇ Save natural resources
- ◇ Conserve energy
- ◇ Reduce pollution
- ◇ Reduce the toxicity of our waste
- ◇ Save money for consumers and businesses alike.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



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## LOOK AT WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING...

**Kitsap County, WA**, piloted a junk mail and fax waste reduction program in its Public Works Department, eliminating more than 1,200 pieces of junk mail and 1,000 junk faxes in 2005.

Source: U.S. EPA



**Washington Elementary, Auburn, WA**, began milk carton recycling, started a new compost program, replaced disposable trays and utensils with washable options, and switched from small condiment packets to bulk dispensers. These efforts resulted in a 50% reduction in waste headed to the landfill, saving the school approximately \$1000 per year.

Source: Washington Green Schools

The **National Association for PET Container Resources, NAPCOR**, reports that since 1978, manufacturers have reduced the weight of a 2 liter bottle by about 29%, from 68 grams to 48 grams.

Source: U.S. EPA

## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- ◆ Avoid items in single serving packaging like pudding, applesauce and Jell-O. Buy in bulk!
- ◆ Avoid single use, disposable items like diapers, napkins, sponges, and paper towels. Use cloth instead!
- ◆ Bring your own reusable coffee mug and shopping bag.
- ◆ Reuse plastic bags, water bottles, paper, and glass jars.
- ◆ Organize your shopping and plan your meals to prevent wasted food.

