

Waste Prevention and Recycling Resources



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Recycling is great. But reducing your waste in the first place is an even better way to put the lid on your trash and conserve resources. By focusing on waste at home, work, or school, you help significantly lower carbon emissions and other environmental impacts associated with extracting virgin materials, manufacturing products, and waste disposal.

Find a printable list of waste prevention, composting, reuse, and recycling resources for Lake Oswego residents and businesses and other resources below.

What Is Waste Prevention?

Waste prevention is reducing the amount of solid waste we make that would need to be recycled or put into the garbage. Waste prevention means using fewer materials to do the same job, buying and using products containing recycled materials, reusing materials before they get recycled or thrown away, and purchasing products that use less materials and energy.

Here are some waste prevention ideas for your household or business:

- Buy in bulk or choose the larger size. Avoid purchasing items with excessive or hard-to-recycle packaging.
- Choose products and containers with recycled content. For paper products, choose those with the highest "post-consumer" recycled content.
- Carry a reusable cup or mug. At your business, provide durable dishware for customers and employees.
- Use cloth napkins, sponges, and dishcloths instead of the paper alternatives.
- Use cloth bags for shopping or reuse brown paper bags.
- Buy quality durable goods; they last longer.
- Borrow, rent, or share items used infrequently, like ladders, carpet cleaners, and roto-tillers.
- Take action to reduce unwanted mail. Follow the easy [Say No To Junk Mail steps](#) outlined by Metro to start on your path to a junk mail-free future.

[Find tips on how to green your holidays here!](#)

When It Comes to Drinking Water, 'Reduce First, Then Recycle'

If you think it makes more sense to drink tap water in reusable bottles rather than to keep buying bottled water and recycling the containers, you're absolutely right.

A DEQ analysis of drinking water delivery systems confirms that it's best to reduce or reuse first, then recycle. The [DEQ study](#) compared dozens of scenarios and examined a range of environmental effects across the entire life cycle of single-use, five-gallon reusable and tap water delivery methods. Among the conclusions:

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- Buying and then recycling a typical bottle of water reduces energy consumption by 24 percent and greenhouse gas emissions by 16 percent over the entire life cycle, compared to buying then throwing away the same water bottle.
- However, consuming the same quantity of water from the tap in a reusable bottle reduces energy consumption by 85 percent and greenhouse gases by 79 percent (compared to buying bottled water and disposing of each bottle).

"The most important message for consumers is: reduce first, then recycle," says DEQ solid waste policy analyst David Allaway. "Drinking tap water and recycling single-use bottles are equally effective ways of keeping waste out of landfills and incinerators, but DEQ's study shows that most effects on the environment from bottled water occur from manufacturing and transportation, not disposal ... If you have single-use water bottles, please recycle them. But it's better to avoid them in the first place."

Supporting Documents



[Reduce Reuse and Recycle Resources for Lake Oswego Residents and Businesses](#)



[Waste-Free Holiday Tips Handout](#)

Web Links

[Waste-Free Holidays Workshop](#)[DEQ Bottled Water Study](#)[Greening the Holidays - Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Tips](#)

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