

**SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
OUTREACH  
PROGRAMME**

**BARBADOS**

**LET'S REDUCE OUR  
WASTE**



**Sewerage and Solid Waste Project Unit  
Ministry of Health**

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Reuse:** The use of a waste material or product more than once.

**Waste Minimization/Reduction:** Practices which reduce the quantity of waste that must be disposed of.

**Recycling:** The collection, transportation, processing and ultimate manufacturing of products separated from the municipal solid waste stream which are no longer useful in their present form and the use of their material content in the manufacture and sale of new products.

**Composting:** The aerobic biological decomposition of organic materials under controlled circumstances to a condition sufficiently stable for nuisance free storage and for safe use in land application.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 1993, waste reduction and recycling were identified as integral components of the Comprehensive Integrated Solid Waste Management Programme for Barbados. The source reduction programme recommended by consultants in 1995 estimates that there is the potential to reduce the amount of waste being generated in Barbados by 3% per year. Nevertheless, to date waste reduction efforts in Barbados have had only a small impact on the island's solid waste stream.

Generally, recycling is done for two major reasons: as a means of saving virgin resources and as a solid waste management option. However, for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like Barbados, recycling is considered to be even more important. For SIDS the disposal of waste is a serious constraint to sustainable development. The limited land area and resources for safe disposal, growing population and increasing imports of hazardous substances combine to make pollution prevention and the management of waste critical issues for SIDS. Given that long-term disposal options are limited and will constrain sustainable development, small island developing states will need to look for ways of minimizing waste and / or converting wastes into a resource (e.g. soil conditioner for agriculture). This will include actions ranging from limiting imports of non-biodegradable and hazardous substances to changing community attitudes to the disposal.

This brochure provides ways by which each Barbadian can contribute to the overall national effort of addressing the growing challenge of reducing the volume of waste that we produce. Individual consumers can help to alleviate this problem by making environmentally conscious decisions about everyday activities such as shopping and day to day household chores.

**MAKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION!!!**



## **Reduce the amount of unnecessary packaging**

- When choosing between two similar products select the one with the least unnecessary packaging.
- Recognize and support store managers when they stock products with no packaging or reduced packaging.
- Let clerks know when it's not necessary to wrap or bag a purchase.
- It is important to choose food servings that are appropriate to your needs. One alternative to single food servings is to choose the next largest serving and store any left-overs in a reusable container.
- Encourage customers to bring bags when shopping.
- Consider large or economy-size items for household products that are used frequently, such as laundry soap, etc. These sizes usually have less packaging per unit of product. For food items, choose the largest size that can be used before spoiling.
- Consider whether concentrated products are appropriate for your needs. They often require less packaging and less energy to transport and to store saving money as well as natural resources.
- Whenever possible, select grocery, hardware, and household items that are available in bulk. Bulk merchandise may also be shared with friends or neighbours.



## Consider reusable products

- Cloth-napkins, sponges or dishcloths can be used around the house. These can be washed and re-used over and over again.
- Look for items that are available in refillable containers. For example, some bottles and jugs for beverages and detergents are made to be refilled and reused, either by the consumer or the manufacturer.
- When possible, use rechargeable batteries to help reduce garbage and to keep toxic metals found in some batteries out of the waste stream. Another alternative is to look for batteries with reduced toxic content.
- When using single items, remember to take only what is needed. For example, take only one napkin or ketchup packet if more are not needed.
- Remember, if your goal is to reduce solid waste, think about reusables.

### Local Waste Reduction Initiatives

- **Dice-A-Bed** shreds, dices and compacts newsprint for bedding by the local and regional horse and poultry industries.
- **Grorganic Soil Conditioner** recovers used shredded newsprint from the horse and poultry industries to make organic fertilizers.

**ADDRESS: #8 GIBBONS, CHRIST CHURCH,  
BARBADOS, WEST INDIES**

**TEL. NO: (246) 428-6874**



## **Reuse bags, containers and other items**

- Reuse paper and plastic bags and twist ties. If it's practical, keep a supply of bags on hand to use on the next shopping trip, or take a string mesh, or canvas tote bag to the store. When a reusable bag is not on hand and only one or two items are being purchased, consider whether you need a bag at all.
- Reuse scrap paper and envelopes. Use both sides of a piece of paper for writing notes before recycling it. Save and reuse gift boxes, ribbons and larger pieces of wrapping and tissue paper. Save packaging, coloured paper, egg cartons and other items for reuse or for art and craft projects at day care facilities, schools, youth facilities and senior citizens centers. Find other uses or homes for old draperies, bedding, clothing, towels and cotton diapers. Then cut up what's left for use as patchwork, rags, doll clothes, rag rugs, or other projects.
- Reuse newspaper and boxes for packaging. Brown paper bags are excellent for wrapping parcels.
- Wash and reuse empty glass and plastic jars, milk jars, coffee cans, dairy tubs, and other similar containers that otherwise get thrown out. These containers can be used to store leftovers as well as buttons, nails and thumbtacks. An empty coffee can makes a fine flower pot.
- Turn used lumber into birdhouses, mailboxes, compost bins, or other woodwork projects.





## **Borrow, rent, or share items used infrequently**

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- Before discarding old tools, camera equipment, or other goods, ask friends, relatives, neighbours or community groups if they can use them.
- Share newspapers and magazines with others to extend the lives of these items and reduce the generation of waste paper.



## **Sell or donate good items instead of throwing them out**

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- Donate or resell items to thrift stores or other organizations in need. Donors sometimes receive tax deductions or even cash. These organizations typically take everything from clothing and textiles to appliances and furniture. All should be clean and of respectable quality.
- Sell second-hand items at fairs, bazaars, swap meets, and garage sales.
- Give hand-me-down clothes to family members, neighbouring families, or the needy. Consider acquiring used clothing at thrift or consignment shops. The condition of used clothing in these stores is screened: clothes are typically laundered and do not have tears or stains.
- Consider conducting a food or clothing drive to help others. Where appropriate, encourage area merchants to donate damaged goods or food items that are still edible to food banks, shelters and other groups that care for the needy.



## Choose recyclable products and containers and recycle them

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- Consider products made of materials that are collected for recycling locally; in many communities, this includes glass, aluminum, steel, some paper and cardboard, and certain plastics. Check with appropriate community officials, volunteer groups, or recycling businesses to determine what materials are collected for recycling. If a system is not in place to return a certain type of material, that material may not be easily "recyclable".
- Participate in community recycling drives, curbside programmes, and drop-off collections. Call community officials, the local recycling center, or a nearby recycling business to find out if and how materials should be separated.
- If a recycling program does not exist in your community, participate in establishing one.
- Take used car batteries ("lead-acid batteries"), and motor oil (saved in clean non-breakable containers) to participating automobile service centers and other places that collect these items for recycling.
- Consider writing to companies to encourage them to reduce unnecessary packaging and the use of hazardous components in products. In addition, let companies know when they've made positive changes.

### Local Waste Reduction Initiatives

- **Recycling Preparation Inc. (RPI)** receives non-ferrous metals except for lead. All materials recovered by RPI are exported.

**ADDRESS: WARRENS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,  
ST. MICHAEL, BARBADOS  
WEST INDIES**

**TEL. NO: (246) 425-2541**



**Educate others on source reduction and recycling practices. Make your preferences known to manufacturers, merchants and community leaders.**

- Encourage source reduction, recycling, and composting programmes for yard trimmings in the community.
- Where appropriate, encourage the use of reusable, recycled and recyclable materials in the workplace.
- Encourage the use of efficient, long-lasting equipment.
- Urge schools to provide environmental education and to teach about source reduction, recycling and composting.
- Support an environmentally sound waste management programme in your community that starts with source reduction. Your community also needs access to adequate and safe solid waste facilities such as recycling and composting centers and landfills.

#### **Local Waste Reduction Initiatives**

- **Envirotech Inc.:** Glass is the main commodity recycled by Envirotech. However, this company also collects PET plastics, cooking oil, batteries and a small quantity of paper. The glass, batteries and paper are exported while the cooking oil is sold to a local company for reuse. At present, PET plastics are stockpiled, awaiting an economically feasible market for export.

**ADDRESS: THE BELLE ESTATE,  
ST. MICHAEL, BARBADOS,  
WEST INDIES**

**TEL. NO: (246) 437-8188**





## Select products made from recycled materials

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- Look for items in packages and containers made of recycled materials. Many bottles, cans, paper wrappings, bags, cereal boxes and other cartons and packages are made from recycled materials.
- Use products with recycled content whenever you can. For instance, many paper, glass, metal and plastic products contain recovered materials. Some examples are stationery, wrapping paper, computer paper and many containers. Many of these items are available at grocery, drug and other retail stores.
- When checking products for recycled content, look for a statement that recycled materials were used and, if possible, choose the item with the largest percentage of recycled content, if known.
- Encourage government agencies, local businesses and others to purchase recycled products such as paper, refined oil, and retreaded tires.
- Turn a giant cardboard box into a child's playhouse.
- Transform a plastic ice cream tub into a flowerpot.
- Give pet hamsters or gerbils paper towel and toilet paper cardboard tubes with which to play. Use an egg carton to plant seedlings.
- Turn used tires (not steel belted) into children's swings or other playground equipment.

### Local Waste Reduction Initiatives

- **Tropical Batteries** exports spent lead acid batteries for recycling. They also reuse 2-litre PET bottles in which they supply deionized water to their clients.

**ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 602C, FONTABELLE  
BARBADOS, WEST INDIES**

**TEL. NO: (246) 430-5650**



## **Adopt practices that reduce waste toxicity**

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- Choose items containing non-hazardous or less hazardous components to accomplish the task at hand. Examples include choosing reduced mercury batteries, or planting marigolds or aloes in the garden to ward off certain pests rather than using pesticides. In some cases you may use less toxic chemicals to do a job and in others you may use some physical method, such as sandpaper, scouring pads, or just a little more elbow grease, to achieve the same results.
- For products containing hazardous components, read and follow all directions on product labels. Make sure the containers are always labelled properly and stored safely away from children and pets. When you are finished with containers that are partially full, follow local community policies for household hazardous waste disposal. If at any time you have questions about potentially hazardous ingredients in products and their impacts on human health, do not hesitate to call your local poison control center.
- If you must use products with hazardous components, use only the amounts needed. Leftover materials can be shared with neighbours or donated to a business or charity or you may visit your local libraries and bookstores for guidebooks on non-hazardous household practices.
- Be sure to label all left-over chemicals for future use or adequate disposal. You should put a date of first use on the label as well.



## **Be creative – find new ways to reduce waste quantity and toxicity**

- Select non-toxic inks and art supplies.
- Combine source reduction techniques. For example, try storing coffee bought in bulk in empty coffee cans.
- Choose beverages such as water and milk in reusable containers, where appropriate.
- Place an order through the mail with a group of people in order to save money and reduce packaging waste.
- Use e-mail in order to reduce the use of paper in the mail.

## **Think recycle**

### **– Please follow these simple steps**

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- Remove caps and lids from all glass and plastic items – put all caps with plastics and metal lids with metals.
- Rinse all cans, plastic containers, glass bottles and jars with cold water – rinse all milk containers and cooking oil containers with hot water.
- Labels can be left on all items.
- Separate and neatly organize, metal, glass, magazine and plastic.
- Keep all items separate.
- Flatten cardboard boxes and tie with string. Keep dry.
- Put your newspapers into an untied bag or cardboard box.
- Place plastic items into an untied bag.
- Take your recyclables to the nearest collection centre.

Tips found in this brochure were adapted from  
"The Consumer's Handbook for Reducing Solid Waste"  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
EPA530-K-92-003 August 1992

with contributions from other multiple sources.

For Further Information  
Call  
The Waste Management Information Center  
Tel. No. (246) 435-6244

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