

Which items you will "source separate" will depend on the decisions your community makes as to what it will recycle. You should store those items separately from the rest of your trash in the way you already do with beverage containers. Food and yard wastes can be composted—Nature's way of recycling!

Most homes have space somewhere that can be used to store recyclables. All you need is about a 3-foot by 3-foot area for boxes, bags, or plastic containers that will hold items to be recycled. (Some communities provide residents with containers for recyclables.) It's important to keep recyclables away from garbage to keep them clean and dry.

Fourth, **RECYCLE!**

This last step will depend on how your community decides to recycle. In some communities, recyclables are picked up at curbside; in others, residents are asked to bring them to a recycling center. Some towns have collection bins—such as those for newspapers—scattered throughout the community.

Find out if your community has a recycling program in place and how it works. Or ask what your community is planning to do about recycling. If recycling is still in the planning stage, your local government will appreciate your input in helping to develop a recycling program that will work for you and your neighbors.

THAT DOESN'T SOUND TOO DIFFICULT—MAYBE I'LL TRY IT.

Good! Because successful recycling depends on you—and on every one of us. Recycling won't work without individual participation.

WHAT IF I NEED HELP?

Help is available.

For more details on recycling, ask for these brochures:

HOUSEHOLDER'S GUIDE TO RECYCLING • EASY BACKYARD COMPOSTING • S.T.O.P. (SAVE THAT OFFICE PAPER)

For more information or to receive printed materials, write or call:

**Bureau of Waste Reduction and Recycling
Division of Solid Waste
NYS Department of
Environmental Conservation
50 Wolf Road Albany, NY 12233-4015
(518) 457-7337**

REDUCE • REUSE SEPARATE • RECYCLE

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REDUCE, REUSE, SEPARATE AND RECYCLE!



New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

MARIO M. CUOMO, Governor
THOMAS C. JORLING, Commissioner

GARBAGE IS A MIXED BAG

At home and at work, New Yorkers turn out a lot of trash—and it's a mixed bag. We're all in the habit of throwing trash into one receptacle with cans, bottles, paper, garbage, etc., mixed up together.

SO, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

First, we're throwing things away that can be used again, such as paper, glass, aluminum, metals and other useful materials. Second, we're making too much trash!

When we had plenty of landfills, more than 1600 in the 1960s, it was acceptable to toss all our waste items out in the trash and never give it another thought—out of sight, out of mind. Now, however, New York has only 250 landfills accepting waste across the entire state and these are filling up fast or closing because they can't meet permit requirements. New landfills must meet strict regulations—they're expensive to build and difficult to site. ("Not in my backyard!")

WELL, WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO WITH OUR TRASH?

In four words: **REDUCE, REUSE, SEPARATE, RECYCLE.**

THAT SOUNDS LIKE TOO MUCH TROUBLE!

Not really—just a matter of learning new habits. And those new habits will be well worth the time and effort it takes to learn them. Reducing, separating and recycling our solid waste will benefit our communities and the environment. Besides, soon it will be the law. By September 1, 1992, communities across our state will be required to have waste separation and recycling ordinances in place.

OKAY, HOW DO I GO ABOUT IT?

First, **REDUCE...**

Waste reduction requires a little forethought because the aim is to bring home less material that will wind up as trash and to reuse as many items as possible. Analyze your trash for a few days to get familiar with the stuff you throw out. (It might surprise you!) Then, decide how you might reduce your trash by changing some habits.

Here are some suggestions—you will think of more:

Reduce the amount of material that requires disposal:

- Buy bulk-packaged items to cut down on individual packaging.
- Buy products in recyclable or reusable containers.
- Don't buy disposable products when you can avoid them.
- Patronize restaurants and other businesses that use recyclable or biodegradable wrappings.
- Have your name removed from lists that send you unwanted mail. Several services are available to do that—here is one:

Mail Preference Service
Direct Marketing Association
P.O. Box 9008
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008

Second, **REUSE...**

- Reuse items as many times as possible.
- Give old magazines, books and catalogs to neighbors, hospitals and nursing homes.
- Give unwanted clothing and repairable appliances to others or donate them to charity. Many churches have annual rummage sales.
- Get together with neighbors, collect unwanted items and have a garage sale. Organize or suggest a community-wide garage sale and promote community spirit along with recycling.

Third, **SEPARATE...**

You'll be hearing the term "source separation" more and more frequently. That just means removing reusable and recyclable items before disposal at the place where the trash is generated—at home, at the office, on picnics, at campgrounds or wherever you make trash.

You're probably already "source separating" without realizing it. If you return beverage cans and bottles to the store to claim your deposit, you already are accustomed to setting them aside from the rest of your trash. Thanks the Returnable Beverage Container law, many New Yorkers already have started source separating.

Much of what you do use and eventually throw out can be recycled. New York State's goal is to recycle 40 to 42 percent of the solid waste stream by 1997.