

What Students Can Do To Help the Environment:

Have you ever looked in the garbage can and found something that could be reused, recycled, or donated? What we throw away has a huge impact on our environment and community. When we use more products, we deplete our natural resources, use more energy, create more pollution, and send more garbage to our landfills. We not only need to recycle; we need to cut down on the waste we create. Take a second look at the garbage can in your house or school. Is it possible to change the way you buy things so that you will throw away less? Here are some ideas on how you can make a difference.

Reduce

Less Packaging

Packaging is often needed to make products safe and longer-lasting, but sometimes there is too much. Look for products without excessive or unwanted wrappers and boxes.

Avoid Single-Use Items

While single-use items can be convenient, they create a lot of garbage. Single-use items usually cost more and create much more waste than reusable products.

Use Refillables

Look for pens and pencils that can be refilled.

Use Both Sides of Paper

You can reduce the amount of paper you use by writing on both sides and asking your teacher to make two-sided copies.

Reuse

Avoid Single-Use Lunch Wrappers

If you bring your lunch to school, you can save money and reduce trash by bringing your food in reusable containers, using washable utensils and a cloth napkin.

Bargain Shopping

Get some great deals and help the environment by doing some of your school shopping at used clothing stores or garage sales.

Donate Unwanted Items

Before you throw that old shirt or book away, think about giving it to a charity or thrift store.

Recycle

Recycling is Not Just For Cans

Many schools in the county recycle paper, plastic bottles, and cans. Look for the recycling bins in your classroom and hallways and encourage students and teachers to use them.

Buy Recycled

Recycling also means buying products made from recycled materials. Look for paper with post-consumer content, which means it contains paper that people or businesses have used and recycled.

Respond

Call Manufacturers

Don't like the packaging of a product? Call or write and let the manufacturer know what you think. Most manufacturers list toll-free numbers on their products.

Join or Form a Club

Get a group of your friends together to learn about waste issues and help fight environmental problems in your school, home, and community.

Get More Information

For additional information on problems in your town and ways you can help, contact the County Solid Waste Coordinator at 503.397.7263 or roy.weedman@co.columbia.or.us