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Waste Reduction Week | October 21-27, 2013 | Tip of the Day

# Why Reduce Waste?

B.C. has made great progress in our zero waste efforts. From organics diversion, environmental education programs and over 15 provincially regulated recycling programs in place, we're making great strides. But, there's always room for improvement; in a lifetime, the average North American will throw away 600 times their adult weight in garbage (a 68 kg adult will leave a legacy of 40,825 kg of trash). Why do we aim to be better, why reduce our waste?

## COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Methane is a greenhouse gas (GHG) twenty times more potent than carbon dioxide and is considered a key contributor to [climate change](#). Landfills are responsible for 20% of Canada's methane emissions. By reducing the amount of material you send to landfill, you reduce harmful methane emissions and help combat climate change.

## PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES

By reducing and recycling, the need to extract raw materials is lessened and delayed. Did you know that each tonne of recycled paper saves 17 trees from being cut down? This helps conserve the Earth's scarce natural resources for future generations.

Reducing waste helps maximize the lifespan of existing landfills and minimize the need for new facilities.

## CONSERVE ENERGY

The extraction of raw materials and the manufacture of new products are energy intensive processes. Recycling materials and using recycled content in the production of goods requires less energy and lowers GHG emission. Just how much? [Energy savings](#) when using recycled materials can be up to 90%!

## SAVE MONEY

Reducing your waste isn't just about being green—it could also save you money! Here are just a few ways you could save:

- Cheaper products—Products made from recycled material are often less expensive than those made with virgin materials.
- Lower garbage and recycling fees—Garbage disposal isn't free. With less being disposed of, your fees could decrease.
- Tackle food waste—It's estimated that in the average Canadian household one in four produce items gets thrown in the garbage (approx. \$600 value!). Planning can help you avoid throwing away both food and money.

re-think & reduce