



Recycling and Waste Reduction a Guide for Schools



Schools accumulate tons of waste, from paper and computers to food and books. By learning how to handle these wastes as a resource, school officials have an opportunity to save on costs and positively influence the future of their school, district, and students, while preserving the environment.

Why Recycle and Reduce Waste?

To protect the environment: Reducing waste, reusing materials, recycling, and buying recycled products lessens a school or school district's impact on the environment by:

- Saving energy
- Cutting greenhouse gas emissions
- Diminishing the need for raw products to make new materials
- Decreasing the amount of materials put into landfills

To reduce costs and make money: Like other businesses, schools pay for waste disposal. In many cases, recycling services cost less than trash disposal. Schools and districts that make an effort to recycle can see significant savings in trash disposal costs. In some cases, recycling may even allow your school to raise revenue through the sale of recyclables. Decreasing the use of materials such as office paper also reduces purchasing, handling, and storage costs.

To educate tomorrow's citizens:

Opportunities for Environmental Education—

By implementing recycling programs in schools or districts, teachers and administrators demonstrate environmental responsibility and good decision making. School recycling programs also offer hands-on, real-life project-based learning opportunities to teach students about sustainability. Environmental education provides an integrating base to learn about economics, current events, and environmental policy and laws.

Opportunities for Service Learning—

School recycling programs also allow for service-learning by offering hands-on experiences that go beyond classroom learning. For example, students might participate in community waste collection days or share recycling tips with neighbors. Service learning provides students with valuable experience volunteering in the community and teaches new skills such as communications, team-building, critical thinking, and decision-making.

