



Make the Pittsburgh Region Even Cooler in July 2010: Reuse or Recycle Everything

Recycling not only saves materials from a lifetime in a landfill, but it also saves the energy and water required to create brand new products.

- **Recycle everything you can**

The three R's- reducing, reusing, and recycling- are ways that we can all live in "zero waste" households. Reduce the number of things you use, reuse what you can, and recycle everything; if it cannot be recycled, don't buy it. Buying in bulk and choosing products with minimal packaging are ways to cut down on excess materials. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, recycling half of your trash can save up to 509 pounds of heat-trapping gases from being released into the air each year.

The City of Pittsburgh has made curbside recycling available to every resident. Paper (newspapers, phone books, etc.), plastic bottles (numbers 1 to 5), and glass and metal containers (aluminum, tin, steel) can all be gathered in the same blue bag for curbside recycling.

Take hard-to-recycle objects to the Pennsylvania Resource Council's (PRC) event on July 17th, visit http://www.prc.org/community_collections.html#schedule for details. While you're there stop and chat with the Black and Gold City Goes Green representatives about recycling issues.

- **Compost at home**

Yard waste and kitchen scraps can be transformed into rich organic fertilizer that makes our gardens grow, not our landfills. Composting all your food and yard waste prevents about 660 pounds of heat-trapping gases from going into the air each year. This month, the PRC will teach a class on July 13th; visit http://www.prc.org/community_adultedu.html for future dates.

- **Choose cloth over disposable napkins and hand towels**

According to the American Forest and Paper Association, the average American uses one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree's worth of paper and wood products per year. Paper towels and napkins that are subjected to environmentally-harmful bleaching and are made from virgin fibers (non-recycled, raw materials) can be replaced with cloth towels and napkins.

Making your own napkins and towels can cut down on your environmental impact, save you money, and showcase your personal style. Countless websites provide easy how-to guides:

- More tips and a napkin-making video for sewing homemade napkins is here: <http://www.rodale.com/cloth-table-napkins>.

- **Track your progress**

Visit www.theblackandgoldcitygoesgreen.com and report your actions so we can measure how much we're all cutting our heat-trapping gases. No computer? No problem. Call us at 412-258-6680 or fill in one of the postcards available throughout the city.