

ATHABASCA WASTE & RECYCLE NEWS

Prepared by: Athabasca Regional Waste Management Services Commission

Waste Management, Where on Earth do we Start?

REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE

The "**Three Rs**" are the primary methods of waste management. You have probably heard of them before, but did you know that they are listed in order of importance?

REDUCE: This is the main goal of waste management. We can directly reduce the waste we create - for instance, by not buying products or packaging that will become waste.

But what about the things we have to buy? We need food, clothing, shelter, tools, supplies, toys. And all of these come with parts and pieces that we will not use (like packaging) or that will wear out or outlive their usefulness.

This is where the other two "Rs" come in, in order of importance. Both **REUSE** and **RECYCLE** help to reduce waste.

ENVIRONMENTAL & ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF REUSE

When you reuse an item or product, you preserve not only the materials that product is made from, but you also:

- **Preserve** all the energy and raw materials (natural resources) that went into making that item or product in the first place.
- **Preserve** all the energy and raw materials (natural resources) that would be used to make a new or recycled replacement for that item or product.
- **Reduce** the waste and pollution created when resources are extracted from the earth and manufactured into products.
- **Prevent** the waste and pollution that are caused by recycling or throwing the item or product into the garbage.
- **Save Money** that would be spent to recycle, landfill or incinerate the item or product.
- **Help** stimulate the local economy and create jobs.
- **Save Money** at home and work.

WHAT YOU! DO MATTERS

About 50% of the waste (both garbage and recycling) in Canada comes right out of our homes. On average, every person in Alberta generates **750 kilograms** of waste every year.

Waste & Recycle Facts

- Paper is 38% of the waste stream.
- 40,000 trees are cut down each day to produce the newsprint for Canada's daily papers.
- For every ton of mixed waste paper that is recycled you save 17 trees.
- The energy saved by recycling one glass bottle will light a 100 watt bulb for four hours.
- Nature can reduce a tin can to dust in 100 years, an aluminum can in 500 years and a glass bottle in 1 million years.
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to light one 100 watt bulb for 20 hours.
- Compostable materials make up 40 - 60% of the waste stream.
- 54 million litres of used oil was recycled in Alberta last year.