



Solid
Waste
Management
Coordinating
Board

Paper Recycling

Prepared for 2009 Community POWER Grantees. Visit RethinkRecycling.com for more information on this and other waste related topics. This information has been approved by county staff and may be reproduced using the credit line below. Be sure to have your county staff contact review any changes made to this document before publishing.

This information has been provided by the Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board through a Community POWER (Partners on Waste Education and Reduction) Grant. Visit RethinkRecycling.com your go-to-guide for waste and recycling in the Twin Cities.

Tool-Kit

The information provided below is an excerpt of information found in the Rethink Recycling Paper toolkit. For additional resources on paper recycling including customizable ads, templates, facts, images, paper recycling charts and fact sheets visit the Rethink Recycling Campaign Toolkit at: www.swmcb.org/rethink_recycling_toolkit. Items available include:

- 11 Articles
 - General article on paper recycling
 - Demand for paper
 - Environmental Benefits of paper recycling
 - Where does paper go?
 - Recycling beyond the kitchen
 - Cupboard vs. freezer
 - Newspaper
 - Magazine and catalogs
 - Helping mitigation global warming
 - Home and office paper
 - Article for website
- 8 Fact Sheets
- 7 Ad Templates
- 13 Images

Introduction

It's time to rethink recycling. You can recycle more kinds of paper than you think. Approximately 21% of household garbage in the Twin Cities metro area is recyclable paper. This includes items such as unwanted junk mail, office and school paper, phone books, magazines, catalogs, cardboard and other boxes, and newspapers.



Informational Article

Why does paper recycling matter?

The demand for recyclable paper is greater than the supply. Recyclers and manufacturers in Minnesota and the Midwest are looking for more paper, because they can't get enough of it!

Demand for recycled paper is high for several reasons:

- We're using more paper than ever. Global paper use is more than six times greater than what it was in 1950.
- Paper mills need recycled paper to produce new products. Recycled paper supplies more than 37% of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the U.S.
- Paper is a valuable export. In 2003, more than 25% of U.S. recycled paper was exported, much of it to China and sold overseas. It is expected that by 2007 one-third of recycled paper will be exported.

So why can't supply keep up? Recycling collection rates in the Twin Cities metro area have been at a stand-still since 1998. Many factors contribute to this, but one of the main reasons is that many people are uncertain about what items are recyclable, particularly what types of paper products.

Visit RethinkRecycling.com to find paper recycling tips and more information on waste reduction.

Paper Recycling Guide: Can I Recycle It?

Yes

- Mail, office and school papers
- Magazines and catalogs
- Newspapers and inserts
- Phone books
- Shredded paper in closed paper bags
- Cardboard boxes
- Cereal boxes, cracker boxes, pasta boxes, cake mix boxes
- Shoe boxes, gift boxes & electronics boxes
- Boxes from toothpaste, medications and other toiletries

No

- Pizza boxes, egg cartons or boxes soiled with food
- Paper towels, napkins, cups and plates
- Gift wrap

Food Box Guideline: Boxes from items meant to go in your cupboard (cereal, pasta, etc.) are generally recyclable. Packages for refrigerated and microwaveable products such as frozen entrees are usually coated in ways that make them unacceptable for recycling.



Top Ten Paper Recycling Facts

- 1.** About 21 percent of Minnesota's household garbage is recyclable paper. Don't forget to recycle your mail, office and school paper, magazines and catalogs, cardboard and other boxes, like cereal boxes, shoe boxes and toothpaste boxes.
- 2.** 186,400 tons of recyclable paper is thrown away each year by residents in the Twin Cities metro area.
- 3.** Twin Cities metro area residents recycle almost 1 million pounds of paper every single day.
- 4.** Recycled paper supplies more than 37% of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the U.S. There is an ever growing demand, so every bit counts.
- 5.** Recycling paper doesn't just save trees! Production of recycled paper uses 80 percent less water, 65 percent less energy and produces 95 percent less air pollution than paper production using raw materials.
- 6.** The average American household receives more than 500 pieces of advertising mail each year. Be sure to recycle your unwanted mail, including glossy and colored papers. You can also recycle envelopes with windows.
- 7.** Some people don't recycle their mail because they are concerned about protecting their identity. However, mail and other papers are no safer in the trash. If you shred your paper, you can still recycle it. Place it in a closed paper bag and label it "shredded paper."
- 8.** Trying to figure out which boxes from the kitchen can be recycled can be confusing. A quick tip: if the product can be stored in the cupboard it's recyclable. If it goes in the fridge, freezer or microwave it shouldn't be recycled.
- 9.** A newspaper is recycled and back in circulation in less than four weeks. Don't forget that you can recycle the inserts along with the newspaper!
- 10.** Recycled cardboard is used to make new boxes, cereal boxes and other paper packaging. It can even be used to make paper backing for shingles. It's a bit more work to break those boxes down to fit in the bin, but it's worth it.

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Statistics & Facts

- A 2000 study showed that 21 percent of Minnesota's household garbage is recyclable paper. - *"Statewide MSW Composition Study."* Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board, 2000
- Every hour Twin Cities metro area residents place over 21 tons of recyclable paper in the garbage. - *"Statewide MSW Composition Study."* Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board, 2000
- Minnesota has a particularly strong and active paper recovery business. - www.moea.state.mn.us/market/economic.cfm 4/12/2005
- Recycled paper supplies more than 37% of the raw materials used to make new paper products in the U.S. - *American Forest and Paper Association*
- The average American household receives more than 500 pieces of advertising mail each year. - *Minnesota Pollution Control Agency*
- Recycling one ton of paper saves 7,000 gallons of water. - *Environmental Protection Agency*
- A foot-tall stack of recycled newspapers saves enough energy for you to take a hot shower daily for a week. - *Star Tribune*
- A quick tip: if the product can be stored in the cupboard it's recyclable; if it goes in the fridge, freezer or microwave it shouldn't be recycled.

Resources

RethinkRecycling.com - Residents and businesses can learn how to create less waste, recycle more and properly dispose of hazardous items. RethinkRecycling.com is sponsored by the metro region's Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board (SWMCB), comprised of the six member counties, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

www.recycleminnesota.org - Recycling Association of Minnesota

www.mnwastewise.org - Minnesota Waste Wise (for business recycling)