

21st Century Schools and the New 3 R's

Reduce, Reuse Recycle

A how-to workshop for schools committed to environmental stewardship was held at Westtown School on October 27, 2005

Schools create a staggering amount of waste – from paper to electronics to food waste. There are health, environmental, and social costs to this waste stream. We learned about product stewardship, where and how to purchase recycled paper and other products, how to get students involved, and challenge some of the most common myths - *does* recycled paper jam copy machines??? (The answer is NO!)

The workshop was part of a series of workshops supporting the Green Flag School program hosted by Westtown School as a member of the Friends Environmental Educators Network.

The following resources were distributed at the workshop:

Information on the **Green Flags** Recycling sequence can be found by going to their website at: www.greenflagschools.org and click first on *schools* and then on *green flag project areas* and then on *reduce, reuse, recycle*. Excellent resource list as well as how-to steps.

DOWNLOAD: Sample of a school survey adapted from the Green Flag format

Additional resources include:

1. Creating policies to reduce, re-use and recycle

- Villanova University has an excellent policy which can be viewed at: www.purchasing.villanova.edu/policy/Green_Purchasing.html See also their Villanova University Campus Environmental Sustainability Policy at their website: www.villanova.edu
- *Center for a New American Dream* www.newdream.org Great information on recycling and green purchasing. Also go to their Institutional Purchasing. See procurement policies.

2. Reducing waste by purchasing products with recycled materials

Yes! Literally thousands of products in every day use in schools exist and are sold by office supply stores made with recycled materials. It may take some perseverance, but you can find almost everything you want made with recycled content and thus reduce the use of new resources. Check out:

- www.ecocycle.org
- Reducing waste in food services see: <http://www.wastefreelunches.org/>
- **For companies to look for who manufacture a variety of paper products used in schools.** www.nrdc.org/land/forests/gstissue.asp
- **Center for a New American Dream** www.newdream.org Excellent resources on where to buy paper products from green office supply companies as well as what to look for at Office Basics, Office Max, Office Depot and Staples.

In Pennsylvania:

- www.dep.state.pa.us/wm_apps/recycledproducts/

3. General information on Recycling

DOWNLOAD [What is recycling?](#) A clear government guide to office related cycling programs.

- National resources on recycling www.earth911.org
- **Recycling Website** <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/muncpl/recycle.htm>
An overview of the recycling process, as well as tips on improving recycling programs for citizens, businesses, and local governments.
- **OFEE Web-Based Paper Calculator**
<http://www.ofee.gov/recycled/cal-index.htm>
The "Paper Calculator" calculates the U.S. average energy and wood consumption and environmental releases summed across the full "life cycle" of each of five major grades of paper and paperboard.
- **Natural Resources Defense Council**
<http://www.nrdc.org/cities/recycling/default.asp>
NRDC promotes increased recycling, while also seeking to expand the national market for recycled materials. NRDC was instrumental in persuading the Federal government to demand paper with at least 30 percent post consumer recycled content from its suppliers, a step that dramatically increased demand for recycled paper.
- **Keep America Beautiful, Inc.'s School Recycling Guide**
<http://www.kab.org/shopKAB1.cfm>
Keep America Beautiful, in cooperation with Dr. J. Winston Porter, prepared a new School Recycling Guide to help America's schools create or expand recycling programs. The guide is designed for students and educators in middle schools through junior colleges. It provides a series of fill-in-the-blank tables and instructions to allow schools to develop their own recycling programs. Topics include assessment of potential recyclables in the school, identification of local markets, design of the actual recycling operations, and development of educational programs to support recycling activities. The School Recycling Guide is available from Keep America Beautiful, Inc. for \$7.50. Orders may be placed

by phone at 203-323-8987, fax at 203-325-9199, or email at orders@kab.org.

Pennsylvania Specific

- www.dep.state.pa.us In addition, each county has a website and a recycling coordinator: Chester County -610-334-5940
- *PA Recycling Hotline* 1-800-346-4242 For information on recycling locations
- Pennsylvania Resources Council, www.prc.org (with a Newtown Square office 610-353-1555 x 232)
- Corri Gottesman of 3R Consulting assists schools in setting up recycling programs and reducing costs. 215-753-6553

4. Recycling specific products

The Sierra Club Magazine has excellent short articles on the hazards associated with certain products and how to safely use and dispose of them. See the Sierra Club web site and search for Hidden Life at: www.sierraclub.org

- **Batteries**
 - Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation
<http://www.rbcc.org/community/index.html>
RBRC's Charge Up to Recycle!® program is designed to keep rechargeable batteries out of the solid waste stream, adhering to the federal and state laws requiring the proper disposal of some types of used rechargeable batteries.
 - Sierra Club: The Hidden Life of Batteries www.sierraclub.org
- **Cans**
 - www.cancentral.com Can Central is the Web site of the Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI), the trade association for can manufacturers and has info on recycling.
- **Computers and electronics**
 - www.plugintoecycling.org
 - www.recyclewirelessphones.com
 - www.recyclingalliance.com
 - www.dell.com/recycling
 - See the Center for a New American Dream website.
www.newdream.org in the Back to School section Products list.
 - AAA Environmental Inc. recycles inkjet cartridges 847-429-9552
 - Recyclers USA pay for inkjet cartridges 877-782-3863
www.recyclersusa.com

- **CDS:** NESAR Systems 420 Ashwood Rd Darlington, PA 16115 724-827-8172 Or Plastic Recycling Inc. 2015 South Pennsylvania, Indianapolis, IN 46225 317-780-6100 Or Digital Audio Disk Corporation Att: Disc Recycling Program 1800 Fruitridge Ave. Terre Haute IN 47804-1788 812-462-8323

In Pennsylvania:

- Back Thru the Future Recycling, Inc. 973-823-9752 A program which buys back electronic equipment
- Scrounge Computer Recycling at www.psu.edu/spacegrant/scrouge.html
- Cell phone recycling at Next Generation Recycling www.nextgenerationrecycling.com They buy phones and inkjet cartridges.
- The Bureau of Waste Management in PA has an Electronics Waste Management Program www.depweb.state.pa.us/landrecwaste/

○ **Lighting**

- Association of Lighting and Mercury Recyclers <http://www.almr.org>
The Association of Lighting and Mercury Recyclers (ALMR) has partnered with the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association in an outreach program for businesses, which use 85 percent of the fluorescent lighting in the United States. A CD-ROM has been released -- available at no charge -- that gives businesses the resources and information they need to set up recycling programs. The CD can be obtained by contacting mail@almr.org or by calling (707) 942-2197.

○ **Paper and paper products**

- The National Resources Defense Fund has great resources on paper and paper products. www.nrdc.org
- See the Center for a New American Dream website. www.newdream.org See the sections on Institutional purchasing, Back to School, (great list of sources of paper, notebooks, pens and pencils) and I Buy Different (a youth site)
- www.conservatree.org

- The Chlorine Free Products Association has information on companies who sell paper made without chlorine at www.chlorinefreeproducts.org
- *Clean your desk campaign* Collect and donate used school supplies Quest for Peace/Quixote Center www.quixote.org
301-699-0042

5. Recycling Curriculum Resources can be found at:

- www.epa.gov/teachers/curric-waste.htm
- www.greenflagschools.org