

BUY RECYCLED PRODUCTS

The most important step in recycling, the one where Rutgers can really make a difference, is the purchase of new, recycled content products. Rutgers can “close the loop” by purchasing products manufactured from recycled or recovered material and by promoting the “buy recycled” message.

Rutgers’ green purchasing policy advocates the purchase of products with the highest percentage of “post-consumer” recycled content. Post-consumer refers to items that have been used by the consumer, separated for recycling and then made into new materials and products. While both pre- and post-consumer materials would otherwise be landfilled, post-consumer content is most important, because it creates a market for the items that we recycle at Rutgers and at home.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE PURCHASING A PRODUCT INCLUDE:

- Is the product less hazardous?
- Is it reusable, refillable or more durable?
- Is it made from recycled materials?
- What percentage post-consumer?
- What happens to the product at the end of its life? Can it be recycled? Will the manufacturer take the product back?
- Will it need special disposal?
- Does it conserve energy or water?
- Is it made from easily renewable raw materials?

ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO CONSERVE

SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT ZERO WASTE WITH YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND CO-WORKERS.

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ZERO WASTE.

THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE.
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY’S POLICY FOR REDUCING WASTE IS BASED ON ZERO WASTE. ZERO WASTE IS A DESIGN PRINCIPLE AND PLANNING APPROACH FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES. IT AIMS TO PREVENT WASTE BY DESIGN RATHER THAN MANAGE IT AFTER THE FACT. THE UNIVERSITY’S ZERO WASTE POLICY ADDRESSES NOT ONLY THE QUANTITY OF WASTE WE GENERATE, BUT ALSO ITS TOXICITY, ITS CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE, AND THE IMPORTANT LINKS BETWEEN WASTE REDUCTION AND CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY.



Did you know...

IN 2007 Rutgers University saved almost \$1 Million by recycling instead of sending all waste to the landfill.

<http://facilities.rutgers.edu/Energy/recycl%20year%20end%202007%20final.pdf>

RUTGERS FURNITURE purchases come wrapped in reusable moving blankets instead of cardboard, Styrofoam and plastic. This means less waste for the University to pay to remove and less climate impact from shipping and landfill gases.

THE RUTGERS DINING HALLS do not dispose of any food waste! All food waste from preparation and table scraps are pulverized and refrigerated. A local pig farmer collects the pulverized food scraps every day, pasteurizes it, and feeds it to his pigs. This process has won several accolades and awards from the USEPA and even RecycleMania!

THE AMIPP Advanced Polymer Center is a group of collaborative researchers and stakeholders dedicated to exploring immiscible polymer blends and the novel structures and materials obtained by processing such blends. Founded as a Research Excellence Center by the State of New Jersey and Rutgers University, the Center depends on an interactive relationship with industry, government, and other universities to generate a steady stream of new technologies, materials, and products in an environment focused on research, development, and commercialization. They patented the 100% recycled plastic lumber pictured below. <http://www.amipp.rutgers.edu/index.html>

ZERO WASTE PROCESS: Environmental management of materials and energy should adhere to this order of priority: first, **reduce** the use of materials and energy and the use of toxic substances to a minimum (through design for the environment); second, **repair** and **reuse**, extending the service life of materials and products; and third, **recycle**, conserving as much as possible of embodied value.

REDUCE the amount of waste that has to be managed. It should be given the highest priority because it emphasizes elimination or reduction of waste at the point of generation. Waste preventing products are durable, reusable, rechargeable and/or refillable. They achieve the same performance as their more wasteful counterparts, while reducing waste quantities and costs.

REUSE is another option. Buying reusable items (such as cloths or dishes) and rechargeable products (batteries, toner cartridges) reduces long-term purchasing costs and cuts down on product and packaging waste. Refillable containers also reduce the generation of packaging waste by eliminating discarded containers and the packaging associated with the purchase of the new containers. Note: all of these conditions currently exist at Rutgers.

The act of separating materials for recycling is not considered waste prevention because, although the separated materials will be used to make new products, waste was still generated. However, as the Rutgers Community will learn, buying products manufactured from recycled materials is an important part of a green purchasing program.

