

# It's Time to Think Outside the Trash Box When It Comes to What We Waste.

Before throwing away an item you think is broken, worn out, or is no longer wanted, ask yourself these questions:

*Can it be reused? Is it repairable? Is it recyclable?*

Choosing one of the above alternatives rather than trashing an item is the easiest and most convenient way we can

**DO SOMETHING GOOD.**



## REDUCE

**Stop waste in the first place by using less**

- Bring your own bag when you shop.
- Buy products with minimal packaging.
- Buy concentrates, economy-sized containers and products in bulk.
- Reach for a sponge or dishcloth instead of a paper towel.
- Use cloth napkins and towels instead of paper ones.
- Use washable mugs instead of disposable cups.
- Use rechargeable batteries and recycle them when they no longer work.
- Stop junk mail at [www.StopJunkMail.org](http://www.StopJunkMail.org).
- Use both sides of paper when printing.

## REUSE

**Find another use for your old items instead of throwing them in the trash**

- Use refillable containers, like water bottles and soap containers.
- Repair appliances and other products instead of buying new ones.
- Sell and donate clothes and items to charities and thrift stores.
- Use empty butter tubs and jars to store leftovers.
- Borrow books from the library instead of buying new ones.
- Try the [www.FreeCycle.com](http://www.FreeCycle.com) website to give away items in your area.

# RECYCLE

## Separate your recyclables from your trash

- Set up a home recycling center to separate paper, cardboard, plastic, metal, and glass from your garbage.
- Use your curbside recycling, if your neighborhood has it.
- If you can, recycle electronics (batteries, cell phones, etc.) and household hazardous waste (cleansers and chemicals).
- Find retailers that accept items like used batteries, antifreeze, motor oil, plastic bags, and cell phones, and give them your old products.
- Visita [www.RecycleInfo.org](http://www.RecycleInfo.org) para ver las horas de operación y los artículos aceptados.
- Encourage your place of work to set up a recycling program.

# REBUY

## Buy used products and those made from recycled materials

- Purchase products that contain recycled materials (read the label).
- Buy products that contain the words “postconsumer content.” This means that recycled materials were used to make the product.
- Shop at places like garage sales, thrift shops and consignment stores to save money.
- Encourage your place of work to buy products made with recycled materials.



Prepared in cooperation with the  
Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC)  
and the  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)