Green Michigan.org

Recycling & Reducing Waste
Statistics

• Americans use **500 million** drinking straws every day.
• The average American throws away approximately **185 pounds** of plastic per year.
• Americans throw away **35 billion** plastic water bottles every year.
• Americans represent **5%** of the world’s population, but generate **30%** of the world’s garbage.
Statistics

- In 2013, Americans generated about 254 million tons of trash and recycled and composted about 87 million tons of this material, equivalent to a 34.3 percent recycling rate. On average, we recycled and composted **1.51 pounds** of our individual waste generation of **4.40 pounds** per person per day.
How to be a Better Recycler

- Look at what your recyclers take
- Remember that recycling companies sell waste
- Keep it clean
- Adjust your purchasing habits
- Reach out to companies
Look at what your recyclers take

- https://www.recyclekent.org/
Remember that recycling companies sell waste

- The waste haulers who pick up trash and sorting stations are the ones to recycle your waste.
- A buyer needs to be at the end wanting to purchase and use what you throw away.
Keep it clean

- Recyclables should be gunk free
- Sometimes remove caps and labels

TIP
Wash recyclables after you hand wash dishes or in a sink of warm water. You will use less water.
Adjust your purchasing habits

• Look for items that have packaging that can be recycled
• Buy items with less packaging
• Avoid packaging that cannot be recycled
• Refuse items you do not need. ie. Straws, pizzas tents
Reach out to companies

• If a company is producing a product in a way you would like to be changed, do be afraid to reach out and offer suggestions.
Stop Mailings

- Phonebooks - https://www.yellowpagesoptout.com/
- Junk Mail - http://www.directmail.com/mail_preference/ - junkmail
  http://www.dmachoice.org - junkmail
  http://www.optoutprescreen.com/ - credit cards
Seek Out Alternative Recyclers

- Green Michigan.org
- Terracycle
- Comprenew
- Goodwill
Reduce Packaging

- Buy in bulk
- Do not buy single use
- Look for less packaging
- Bring Containers
- Make items yourself
Think Out of the Box

- https://wmeac.org/livegreen/greencleaningguide/
- Non traditional ways to avoid purchasing items.
- Purchase recycled items
Some of my favorite Items
Additional Habits

- Buy Used and Second Hand
- See if someone in your circle has something they no longer need - Barter
- Try to fix before replacing
- Upgrade less often
- Freecycle
- Upcycle

Path to Zero Waste

It is a lot easier than people think. These steps will get you there.

• Start by looking at your waste.
• Recycle better and through more outlets
• Compost – I love Organicycle
• Reduce waste that can not be recycled or composted
• Change your purchasing habits

It is as easy at that.