

CLIMATE MASTERS™ OF NEW MEXICO

Shrinking your climate footprint and motivating others to do the same thing

CONSUMPTION AND WASTE RECOMMENDATIONS

As consumers in a fast-paced society, we use and dispose of many tons of material each year. Many of us don't consider the consequences of our daily routines of consumption. Much of this waste can be avoided by following our simple steps, outlined below.

Glossary of Terms

Recycled content = Items that have been manufactured from reused material. Postconsumer content refers to material that is being reused from items used by consumers once before, rather than materials left over from manufacturing processes.

Compost = Allowing microorganisms to aid in the decomposition of organic waste materials by mixing or layering food scraps, dried leaves, or newspapers and other organic materials in a pile. This disposes of waste naturally, rather than becoming part of our landfills. Once sufficiently processed, compost can be used as an effective fertilizer for gardens and flower beds.

Recommendations: Consumption and Waste Reduction

1. **Purchase second hand items**, including clothes, housewares, and building materials. Peruse thrift stores and garage sales for treasures and savings. St. Vincent de Paul, Goodwill and Adelante offer a large variety of used clothes and other household goods.
2. **Buy items with recycled content** to avoid emissions associated with gathering raw materials.
3. **Buy durable products.** Buy items made to last to reduce the emissions associated with production, transportation, and disposal. Items that can be repaired rather than tossed make a difference too. Avoid disposable items.
4. **Recycle everything you can.** Depending on how much you use, for a three person household:
 - **Recycling plastic** can cut 141 pounds of CO2 equivalent from your annual greenhouse-gas emissions. Many stores also take back or recycle plastic bags
 - **Recycling aluminum** and steel cans can cut 497 pounds of CO2 equivalent from your annual greenhouse-gas emissions
 - **Recycling paper** reduces your annual greenhouse-gas emissions by 553 pounds of CO2 equivalent
 - **Recycling glass** cuts 77 pounds of CO2 equivalent annually
 - **Recycle used computers**, cell phones, and other electronics to reduce the use of raw materials and keep the toxins out of landfills
 - **Recycle old building supplies** to give used building materials a second life

CLIMATE MASTERS™ OF NEW MEXICO

Shrinking your climate footprint and motivating others to do the same thing

- **Properly dispose of compact fluorescent lights** and other household chemicals. CFLs can be recycled at most hardware stores to avoid releasing mercury into landfills
- 5. **Compost or use worm bins** to reduce methane emissions. One-and-a-half pounds of CO₂ equivalent is saved for each pound of organic waste that is composted.
- 6. **Reuse containers.** Wash them out and reuse rather than disposing of them.
- 7. **Avoid packaged items.** The less packaging that you throw away, the less material you are wasting.
- 8. **Bring your own bags** when you shop. This will eliminate or reduce the need to take home plastic or paper bags from the store. Many stores also give a discount when you use your own bags.
- 9. **Reduce the number** of times per month that your trash is collected.

RESOURCES

U.S. EPA— Municipal Solid Waste, Source Reduction, and Reuse.
<http://www.epa.gov/msw/sourcred.htm>

Waste Management:
<http://www.wm.com>

Local / State / Regional:

New Mexico Recycling Coalition:

<http://www.nmrecycle.org>

New Mexico Environment Department -

Pollution Prevention program

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/P2>

Solid Waste Bureau:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWB>

New Mexico Clean & Beautiful—

a program of the NM Dept. of Tourism:

<http://www.nmcleanandbeautiful.org>

Keep NM Beautiful, Inc.—

clearinghouse for beautification and litter control in NM; grants, education, special events and recognition.

<http://www.knmb.org>

City of Albuquerque—Solid Waste Department

<http://www.cabq.gov/solidwaste>

