

Rethink / Reuse / Recycle



In years gone by, all garbage generated was either buried or burned. Today, all Cape landfills are closed and trash is shipped off Cape, where it is incinerated to generate electricity.

Each year local residents produce tons of garbage.

As Cape residents, what can we do?

Let's start by reducing our trash and disposing of it properly. Recycling is taking the first step.

Chatham operates our Transfer Station facilities where trash and recyclables are collected. These are then transported off-Cape. Chatham's drop-off facility is set up for efficient collection of your glass, paper, cans, and plastic!

Paper and Cardboard account for one-third of our trash

Here is where we can make a big difference! The production of paper using recycled fibers reduces water pollution by roughly a third and air pollution by over half. Fortunately, newspaper, magazines, corrugated cardboard, junk mail/mixed paper and telephone books are now recyclable. Reduce the flow of paper coming into your household. Get on the "DO NOT MAIL" list, contact catalogue sources, and "opt out" of credit card offers, and you will see a dramatic drop in your direct mailings. For more information, see our Resources Chapter.



Plant Debris and Food Wastes

contribute some 20% of what we throw away

Consider composting in your own back yard or start a worm bin in your basement. See Chapter 8 on landscaping for guidelines to help you turn these wastes into food for your plants. Or bring plant debris to the Transfer Station compost collection site. Please omit any dairy products, meat, bones, and plant debris over a quarter inch thick.



Metals

contribute about 9% of our garbage

Making products from recycled metals uses far less water and energy, causing far less water and air pollution than the mining and processing of the raw materials. Ferrous metals (those containing iron) and nonferrous metals (like aluminum cans) are easily recycled at the Chatham Transfer Station. Clean “deposit” cans may be left at the Scouts’ drop-off shed also at the Transfer Station or redeemed at local stores. Other metals, like aluminum, copper and lead, are also recyclable.

Check out the Resources Chapter for more info on recycling.



Glass

contributes about 9% of our garbage

Glass food and beverage containers can be recycled; deposit bottles may be returned to stores or the Transfer Station. Glass should be rinsed and sorted by color. Ceramics, incandescent light bulbs, and mirror and window glass are not accepted but fluorescent bulbs that contain mercury are accepted.

Recycling these categories of waste will decrease your contribution to pollution and significantly benefit water quality.





...and last:

Reusable Goods

Find a home for your intact or repairable home appliances, household goods, clothing, building materials, or any other items that can be repaired or used again. Have a yard sale, advertise items for sale in your local papers, donate them to local church thrift shops, the American Red Cross, Salvation Army or local thrift stores such as the Lower Cape Outreach Council or bring to the Gift Shop at the Transfer Station.

Six Simple Actions

to help improve water quality by recycling and reusing...

1. Precycle

When you shop, look for products with limited or reusable packaging. Buy foods in recyclable containers or buy in bulk. Buy concentrates and items in refillable containers.



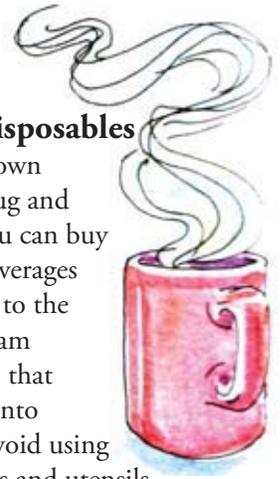
2. Use Cloth Diapers

The average baby uses nearly 4,500 diapers before being toilet trained. Unrinsed and improperly disposed of plastic diapers can contaminate our surface and ground waters. A week's worth of cloth diapers adds one or two extra loads of laundry a week.



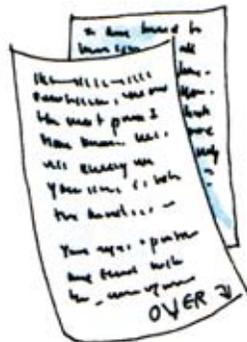
3. Avoid Disposables

By toting your own lidded travel mug and water bottle, you can buy hot and cold beverages without adding to the thousands of foam and plastic cups that find their way onto our beaches. Avoid using disposable plates and utensils.



4. Reuse Writing Paper

Use both sides of paper sheets, make two-sided copies, and use blank sides for scratch paper and rough drafts. Buy and use paper products made from recycled paper.



5. Tote Bags

Telling the clerk "I don't need a bag" is a better solution than "paper or plastic." Choose a size you can easily carry when full.



6. Buy Smart

Choose quality products that last a long time and don't have to be thrown out and replaced frequently.