



# **Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle**

## **Earth Day 2021- Senator Gianaris**

# How can you reimagine trash for a better future?

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## Introduction

Hi there, reader! The Earth is important because it is the right distance from the Sun, it is protected from harmful solar radiation by its magnetic field, it is kept warm by an insulating atmosphere, and it has the right chemical ingredients for life, including water and carbon. I've got a few questions to ask. Here are the questions: Do you like or dislike the Earth? Do you know what people do with trash that you threw out? Did you know that you can reuse trash for other things so you could be super neat? Do you recycle your trash?

# Support 1

Reduce means that you make something big to small. So many decisions we make in our everyday lives have a major impact on the planet. The average American produces about 4.4 pounds of trash per day. Learn how you can make small changes that are eco-friendly and will have a lasting effect.

## 1. Use a reusable bottle/cup for beverages on-the-go

You might already have a reusable water bottle, but do you use it all the time? You can put that reusable bottle to use, save money, and reduce waste. By taking your own water with you, you'll also reduce your chances of purchasing more expensive beverages on-the-go. This will eliminate the one-time use containers they come in. While most cans and bottles can be recycled, they require a lot of energy to be produced, shipped to the bottling facility and then to the store for purchase.

## 2. Use reusable grocery bags, and not just for groceries

Just like a reusable water bottle, you may already have a reusable grocery bag, though it's often forgotten at home. Try writing BAGS on the top of your grocery list to help you remember, or keep them in the back seat where they aren't as easy to forget. Many grocery stores will provide a 5 cent per bag refund so you'll save a few cents while reducing your usage of one-time-use plastic bags.

## 3. Purchase wisely and recycle

You can reduce the amount of waste you produce by purchasing products that come with less packaging and/or come in packaging that can be recycled. Not all plastics are recyclable in Delaware, so check labels before your buy. According to [Delaware's Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances website](#), "Containers labeled with a 1 or a 2 are almost always accepted because they are the highest value resins. Resins 4, 5 and 7 are now accepted in most programs in Delaware." Plastics labeled with a 3/PVC and 6/PS are generally not recyclable in Delaware. Learn more about recycling programs in Delaware at <http://www.recyclerightde.org>

## 4. Compost it!

Did you know as much as 25% of the items in your trash could potentially be removed from the waste stream and composted in your backyard? Your fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, coffee grounds, grass clippings, and leaves can all be composted. While composting requires more effort than the previously mentioned lifestyle changes, it will provide you with a beneficial return on your investment of time and effort. Depending on the conditions, you may have compost in 3 to 12 months to use in your garden. You'll save on fertilizers and if you grow your own vegetables, you'll likely see improved yields. The organic matter will also act as a sponge to absorb more water, meaning you might not need to water your plants as much, saving you money and time.

# Support 2

Turn trash into treasure!

Here are some fun and inspiring upcycling ideas on turning things you'd ordinarily toss in the trash into something useful! Saves money and the planet all at the same time! Many of these 16 ideas are easy to accomplish, too.

1. Upcycle shoe boxes for stylish storage.

Before tossing away a thick shoebox or greeting card box, consider using it for office or craft room storage. I covered these bulk greeting card boxes in **stylish shelf liner paper**, and I use them in my office area as pretty yet functional storage!

2. Make a mini first aid kit from a pill bottle.

Repurpose prescription pill bottles into mini first aid kits by including a few **bandages**, **antiseptic wipes**, and some allergy or pain relievers.

3. Organize household cords with toilet paper rolls.

Use toilet paper rolls to keep all your electrical cords labeled and organized. I embellished mine with **duct tape** and scrapbook paper.

4. Upcycle empty candle jars.

I added pretty knobs to the tops of these **Bath & Body Works** candle jars for easy and adorable bathroom storage! Check out these directions for **cleaning out candles** and *more* ideas for **repurposing candles**.

# Support 3

Residents, schools, institutions, and agencies must recycle with the Department of Sanitation in clearly labeled bins or clear bags. You must sort your recyclables following City rules. You can get a ticket for not recycling correctly.

Recyclable items include:

- Paper and cardboard
- Glass, metal, rigid plastic, and beverage cartons

You must place recyclables at the curb between 4PM and midnight on the evening before your scheduled recycling pickup day. If your normal collection day falls on a holiday, Sanitation will collect your recyclables the following week.

There is no limit to the amount of material or bags you can put out for collection.

# Conclusion

Now, do you see that people should clean their trash and respect the Earth WHOLE LOT more? Trash are **KILLING** animals, on the surface and in the ocean. Factories are polluting the air, wild fires start spreading ACROSS the globe, and people are just littering plastic and other things on the ground instead throwing them into the trash can. People think that they'll get away with doing these things to our planet, Earth, but unfortunately, that wouldn't happen. If they keep doing this, then where would we live if the Earth dies?

## Websites I used:

1. <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/delaware/stories-in-delaware/delaware-eight-ways-to-reduce-waste/>
2. <https://hip2save.com/tips/ways-to-repurpose-trash/>
3. <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02013>

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