

## RETHINK RECYCLING

*Take action with new ideas to deal with “trash”, beyond recycling.*

**Rethink-** How can I make the **least impact** with my actions?

*Ask yourself, will this item live longer than me? Do I want this item to be part of my life's LEGACY?*



*Before you throw something in the trash can, could you use it again, or could someone else use it?*



*Choose biodegradable items vs. using a plastic item (ex. wooden, cardboard item)?*

*Before you buy something in a plastic container, is the plastic recyclable (#1 or 2)?*

*No? then is there a suitable replacement in a biodegradable package or recyclable plastic?*

*Can you cut down on the items you dispose of in your trash each week?*

*Many products have excess packaging, while others have less. Be thoughtful in your selection. Companies respond to customer purchasing habits.*

*Avoid single use items which go straight to the landfill. The US uses 300 million straws **per day** (nearly one for every citizen), do you really need that straw?*

**Refuse-** Do I actually NEED this item? Do I WANT this item?

*Refuse single use plastic bags for a purchase, including produce. Bring a reusable bag instead.*

*Refuse plastic trinkets at events or parties.*

**Reduce-** Can I reduce my waste?

*Eat leftovers instead of throwing food away.*

*Use a refillable spray bottle over and over and fill with simple cleaning products. (White vinegar is a great all-purpose cleaner that disinfects and is less toxic than most commercial cleaning products)*

**Reuse-** What are ways this item is still useful?

*Clean a jar/bag/box and use it to store other things. Carry a reusable bag in your car.*

*Be creative! Explore a new use.*

**Rehome-** Who else can use this item? Does it have a purpose for someone else?

*Donate magazines and books to a library or shelter.*

*Have a yard sale and sell items that are still useful. List items on EBay or online marketplaces.*

*Donate items to a local thrift store.*

**Repair-** What adjustment or improvement will make this item useful again?

*Fix broken items to extend their life.*

*Youtube has free videos which show how to repair almost anything!*

**Recover-** Can I salvage items from being discarded?

*Purchase used items from consignment shops or yard sales.*

*Reclaim useful items that would otherwise be discarded.*

**Repurpose-** Is there another creative use of this item/material?

*Use old maps as wrapping paper.*

*Use grocery store plastic bags as a trash can liner or to dispose of cat litter & dog waste.*

**Rot-** Is this item ready to decompose and produce nutrients as soil?

*Is this compostable? (Does it derive from plants?)*

*Composting allows nutrients to be restored to the soil. Begin a community composting program.*

*Note: Animal products require high heat composting to kill microorganisms. Papers coated with wax, or plastics, are not compostable.*

**Recycle-** Do I have an option to transform this item by industrial means into another functional product?

*What can I do to ensure that it is recycle-ready? Is it clean, free of food and liquid? Where in my community can this item be recycled? Is it free from plastic bags? (Plastic bags clog equipment.)*

**WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH MY USEFUL STUFF THAT I DON'T WANT ANYMORE?**

We all have STUFF that is no longer serving us but can be used by someone. What can you do? Here are some ideas...

- Ocean Pines has an on-line forum to resell used items, check to see whether similar items are listed before you discard something.
- Use eBay and Craig's list to resell used items.
- J Dog Junk Removal, a veteran owned business serving the Ocean City area, will pick up bulky items for a fee, or can be hired to clean up your junk piles. 410-881-5364. They recycle and repurpose 60-80% of what they pick up.

**Thrift Stores will accept your donated useful items!** Check with local thrift stores before discarding your items.

- Diakonia has "Restore" on Rt 611 in West Ocean City, Ocean Pines Community Church has the Shepard's Nook on Racetrack Road, Habitat for Humanity is located on Rt. 113 in Berlin
- Atlantic General Hospital, Coastal Hospice & The Church Mouse operate thrift stores in Berlin.
- Goodwill (S. Salisbury Blvd, Salisbury) recycles non-wearable textiles. Donate unmatched socks, torn shirts and other exhausted textiles to Goodwill for repurposing into a new textile product.

---

**Information from the Lower Eastern Shore Group of the MD Sierra Club - Zero Waste Team**

<https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/lower-eastern-shore-group>