

RIVER FOREST REDUCES WASTE at HOME

Waste – especially [food waste](#) – contributes to [greenhouse gas emissions](#) from the [resource-intensive processes](#) needed to make and transport food and goods to consumers and eventually, to landfills. Waste prevention and reduction is critical in the fight to [slow climate change](#), and is an area where consumers can make quick and positive changes.

Included in this resource document are Quick Tips for composting, recycling, and waste diversion, in addition to reading links and ideas for waste reduction and conscious buying. Celebrate Earth Day, every day!

Quick Tips

Divert food waste:

- Compost at home - here are some [tips](#) and [types](#) for getting started
- Join the RF's [Curbside Composting](#) program (see the [list of compostable items](#))
 - Consider splitting the cost and sharing the bin with a neighbor(s)
 - Compost is cool! Here are some [benefits of compost](#)

Recycle properly:

- [Refer to Roy Strom's Material List](#) – rinse items and locate the plastic number
 - Plastic #'s 1-5 & 7 are accepted (find the # in a triangle, usually on the container's base)
- Watch this [video about aluminum versus plastic](#) and view this [FAQ for biodegradable & compostable plastics](#) or the [Smart Plastics Guide](#) to learn more about current packaging

Prevent and reduce waste beyond food waste:

1. Use what you have - i.e. upcycling, repairing, getting full use before buying
2. Swap with others or buy used items
 - [OPRF Mom Mail](#) or search for local groups/virtual garage sales on Facebook
3. Buy consciously
 - Think about: how and where it's made, packaging materials, company ethics, and the product's life-span – where you spend your money matters!
 - Beware of *greenwashing*! Here's some [recent discussion](#) about it
 - Consider this [guide to eco-friendly seals and logos](#)

If you are looking to reduce waste in your...

KITCHEN & LAUNDRY

- Here are [17 Zero Waste Cooking Ideas](#)
 - [Tip: Save Vegetable Scraps for Stock](#) – Here's [how to make it](#)
- [Food expired? Don't be so quick to toss it](#) - here's clarification around expiry dates
- When possible, try buying in bulk – [Where to Buy Bulk Food in Illinois](#)
- Try reusing glass jars/plastic containers for food and other storage
 - Support local restaurants while minimizing food/packaging waste by bringing your own containers for leftovers
- Here are some [ideas](#) and [brands](#) for paper towel alternatives
- Dish soap alternatives – [8 Eco-Friendly Dish Soaps](#), [4 Natural, Biodegradable & Non-toxic Brands](#)
- Search with the [EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning](#) for kitchen, laundry, bathroom, and other cleaning product ratings with a variety of types and packaging options
- Consider making your own cleaning supplies out of common household products – blog and [website posts](#) can serve as a starting point

BATHROOM

- Here are [sustainability scorecards for toilet paper, paper towel, and tissue brands](#)
 - Consider toilet paper from recycled content or a [bidet/bidet attachment](#)
- [Alternatives to plastic toothbrushes](#) and [ways to reuse old toothbrushes](#)
- These posts discuss [Plastic free toothpaste alternatives](#) and [Eco-Friendly Toothpaste](#)
 - Get the most out of your toothpaste tube with [these tricks](#), like using scissors
- [Plastic free shampoo and conditioner options](#) – think bars, refills, bulk, or DIY

CLOSET

- Check out these articles about [sustainability](#) and [the impacts of fast fashion](#)
- Consider [buying/selling used clothing online](#) or in-person
 - Try keeping shipping materials to send future packages with!
 - A critical opinion piece – [The Gentrification of Thrifting: Is Thrifting + Reselling Ethical?](#)
 - Looking to minimize your wardrobe? Here's [11 Ways to Get Rid of Old Clothes Responsibly](#)
- Search with [Good On You](#) for sustainability ratings for thousands of brands

Additional Resources - Climate Action and Reducing Waste

- To Watch
 - Explore environmental documentaries with [Kanopy](#) (available via [the RFPL](#))
 - Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell’s [Science and other stuff explained](#) Youtube playlist for short educational climate related videos
 - [5 Powerful Documentaries To Stream About Climate Change \(& 5 TV Shows\)](#)
 - [TV climate change resources & 5 Climate Justice-Related Shows to Watch](#)
- To Listen
 - [Green Dreamer podcast](#) for holistic discussions on environmental topics
 - Podcast clips - [Women Leading the Fight Against Climate Change](#)
 - [RFPL Digital Library](#) for audiobooks (and ebooks) on environmental topics
- To Read
 - [9 Tricks That Save Tons of Water](#)
 - [Essential Reading for Understanding the Food System](#)
 - [10 Books To Inspire Your Zero Waste Home and Lifestyle](#)
 - [Books About Environmental Racism — Fight Climate and Racial Injustice](#)
 - [16 Books About Environmental Justice, Racism and Activism](#)
- To Eat
 - Hungry? [Max La Manna](#) has low to zero waste, plant-based recipes!
 - [Cookbooks to Fight Food Waste](#) (try supporting local bookstores, or *Waste Free Kitchen Handbook* + *Cooking with Scraps* as eBooks are free on [Hoopla](#))
 - [What is a plant-based diet and why should you try it? - Harvard Health Blog](#)

Thank you for taking the time to look through this document! While this is not an exhaustive resource list, hopefully it serves as a starting point to invite further reading, research, and action. Being a “perfect” environmentalist is not attainable (neither are “perfect” solutions), and it will take both personal and [systemic social, political and economic change](#) to tackle the climate crisis. However, making an effort to learn about current issues and to recognize and/or change habits in one or more of these areas makes a difference!

Looking for more information about local initiatives? Check out the village’s guide to [sustainability programs](#).