



# Waste Reduction

## What is Waste Reduction?

Waste reduction is an effort to decrease the amount of waste generated. The best way to reduce waste is not to create it in the first place. If waste is prevented, there is no need or cost for collection, processing, and disposal. Reducing waste is important because doing so conserves valuable natural resources and protects the environment, benefiting us, our children, and future generations. Waste reduction is the preferred method of solid waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment. It is also important to reuse and recycle whenever possible in the workplace. The three R's of managing solid waste (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) all play a role in your business' efforts to save money by reducing purchasing costs, as well as costs associated with the collection and disposal of excess waste.

## It's Easy to Reduce Waste at Work!

Montgomery County residents and businesses generated over one million tons of waste last year. Since the most important step to reducing waste is being a thoughtful consumer, you can help to reduce the amount of waste generated in Montgomery County by changing your purchasing processes. Before purchasing an item for work, consider if the item can be reused or if there is a less wasteful alternative. Providing employees with greener options in the workplace can really make a difference and help the environment. In this brochure, you will find some simple ways to reduce the amount of waste generated in your place of business.

## Key to Waste Reduction Tips on the Cover



(clockwise)

1. **Reusable lunch bags** eliminate the use of plastic and paper bags.
2. **Emails** reduce paper use.
3. **Digital storage** saves paper.
4. Use **reusable folders** for files.
5. **Reusable bottles and mugs** eliminate disposable paper and Styrofoam® cups.



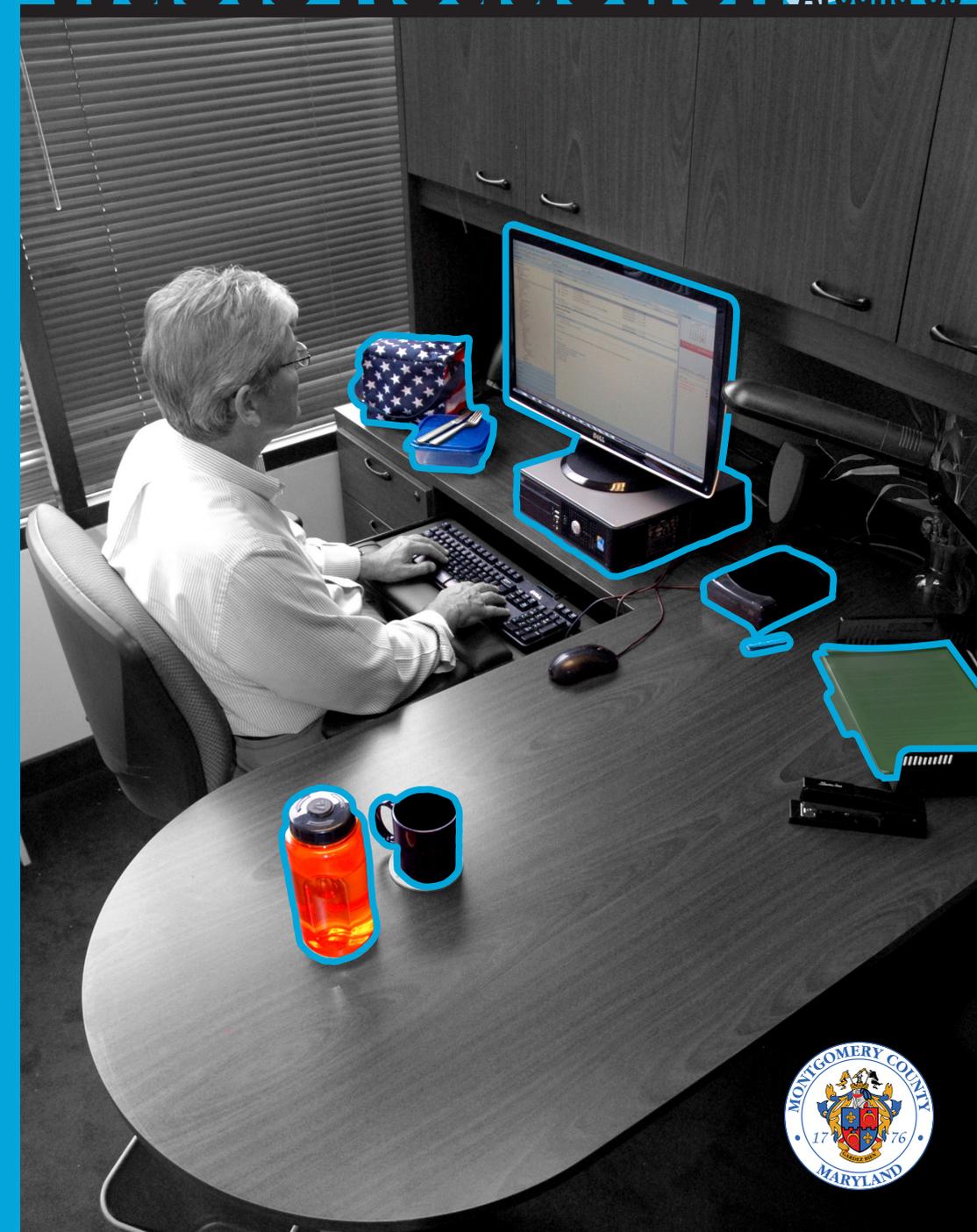
Montgomery County, Maryland  
Division of Solid Waste Services

Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling)  
Phone: 3-1-1 • TTY: 301-251-4850

This information is available in an alternate format  
by calling 240-777-6480.

Printed on recycled and recyclable paper.



## Reducing Paper Usage in Your Workplace

Saving paper goes a long way in reducing waste. Montgomery County's most recent waste composition study found that 17 percent of all waste disposed of in Montgomery County includes recyclable mixed paper. Here are some great ways to reduce paper use in the first place at your workplace, desk, or in your office.

- Send emails instead of printing memos for employees to read.
- Post notices in common areas instead of printing and distributing individual copies to employees.
- Use digital storage devices such as external hard drives and flash drives to reduce the need for printing and filing paper copies.
- Use electronic, web-based forms for timesheets and invoices.
- Use file sharing systems to transfer and share information.
- Buy supplies and office products in bulk to reduce packaging.
- Use reusable plastic file folders instead of disposable paper file folders.



## Reducing Waste at Meetings

You can also reduce the amount of waste generated during meetings and presentations. Reducing excess handouts and disposable food and drink items during meetings can have a significant impact on your waste reduction efforts.

- Hold conferences online or use projectors to reduce meeting handouts.
- Use dry-erase boards instead of paper easels.
- Use water filters, pitchers, and coolers instead of purchasing water in single-use plastic bottles for meetings.
- Provide reusable utensils and dishes for food served at meetings instead of disposable paper, plastic, or Styrofoam® plates, cups, and utensils.
- Distribute presentations and materials by disk or email, and use laptops or tablets to take notes.

## Minimize Kitchen Waste at Work

By providing employees with reusable options in the kitchen, you can reduce the amount of waste generated at work even more. This simple action can drastically reduce disposal costs and create a cleaner working and eating space for you and your coworkers.

- Provide employees with ceramic mugs for their beverages to reduce the use of paper and Styrofoam® cups at work.
- Provide a water cooler to reduce individual single-use water bottles.
- Pack lunch in a reusable or insulated lunch bag.
- Bring food items in reusable containers that can be washed after use instead of using plastic bags or wrap.
- Use cloth napkins and hand towels instead of disposable paper products.



For more information on how to reduce waste in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling).

## If You Can't Reduce, Be Sure to Recycle

Of course, not every item you buy can be reused. It's important to look for products that are recyclable or have a type of packaging that can be recycled in Montgomery County. Here are some common workplace and office items that are recyclable:

- Corrugated cardboard and paperboard boxes
- Computer and office paper, including white, colored, and shredded paper
- Magazines and catalogs, newspapers and inserts
- Envelopes with or without plastic windows
- Coated paper, including milk/juice cartons, drink boxes, and produce and frozen food boxes
- Bi-metal (steel/tin) and aluminum cans and foil products
- Empty, non-hazardous aerosol cans
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastics including bottles, pails, jars, tubs, containers, lids, caps, and #1 PET thermoform packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, domes, and cups
- Plastic durable/reusable containers and lids
- Christmas trees, grass, leaves, garden trimmings, and brush
- Scrap metal items
- Ink and toner cartridges (look for toner cartridge recycling companies that will take empty ink and toner cartridges for recycling)



*Tip: Use shredded paper for packaging materials and reusable totes for storage.*



# Waste Reduction Is All Around Us

## What is Waste Reduction?

Waste reduction is an effort to decrease the amount of waste generated. The best way to reduce waste is not to create it in the first place. If waste is prevented, there is no need or cost for collection, processing, and disposal. Reducing waste is important because doing so conserves valuable natural resources and protects the environment, benefiting us, our children, and future generations. Children in your home will also learn from your example and carry your important waste reduction habits with them into their own homes. Waste reduction is the preferred method of solid waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment. It is also important to reuse and recycle whenever possible at home. The three R's of managing solid waste (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) all play a role in helping you save money at home while protecting the environment.

## It's Easy to Reduce Waste at Home!

Montgomery County residents and businesses generated over one million tons of waste last year. You can help to reduce the amount of waste generated in Montgomery County by reusing and recycling certain items around your house. Perhaps the most important step to reducing waste is being a thoughtful consumer. Before purchasing an item at the store, consider if the item can be reused or if there is a less wasteful alternative. Purchasing greener options for your home can really make a difference and help the environment. It is also important to reuse items whenever possible. In this brochure, you will find some simple ways to reduce the amount of waste generated in your home.

## Key to Waste Reduction Tips on the Cover



(clockwise)

1. **Reusable plates, containers, and utensils** reduce waste.
2. Use **refillable pitchers** instead of buying bottled water.
3. **Buy in bulk** to reduce packaging.
4. Use **cloth napkins** instead of disposable paper products.
5. **Reusable bags** eliminate the need for paper and plastic bags.



### Montgomery County, Maryland Division of Solid Waste Services

#### Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling)

Phone: 3-1-1 • TTY: 301-251-4850

This information is available in an alternate format  
by calling 240-777-6480.

Printed on recycled and recyclable paper.



## Shopping Tips

Waste reduction starts at the store. Learning how to be a thoughtful consumer will help reduce the amount of waste you produce at home significantly.

- Buy in bulk or concentrated forms of products such as detergent and liquid soap to reduce packaging.
- Avoid purchasing individually wrapped products such as sliced cheese.
- Use water filters and refillable pitchers instead of purchasing bottled water.
- Use cloth and reusable shopping bags to reduce paper and plastic bags. Plastic bags can be recycled at most local grocery stores. Paper bags can be recycled along with other mixed paper.
- Buy durable and reusable products instead of disposable items whenever possible.
- Choose rechargeable batteries instead of single-use disposable batteries.



## Minimize Kitchen Waste at Home

By using reusable containers, you can reduce the amount of waste generated in your home substantially. This simple action can drastically reduce disposal costs, saving you money.

- Use ceramic mugs for your beverages.
- Use refillable pitchers instead of buying bottled water.
- Pack lunch in a reusable or insulated lunch bag.
- Store food items in reusable containers that can be washed and reused.
- Use cloth napkins and hand towels instead of disposable paper products.
- Use silverware and reusable utensils.

## General Tips for Home

Whether you are performing routine maintenance and upkeep or planning a substantial home improvement, there are many ways to reduce waste throughout the entire process.

- Reuse glass jars or use plastic containers to store nails, screws, craft supplies, and other small items to reduce waste.
- Use the back side of paper when taking notes and making To-Do lists.
- Rent, share, or borrow infrequently used items instead of purchasing them.
- Don't buy excessive amounts of paint. Buying the right amount of paint for the job reduces waste.
- Grasscycle (leave grass clippings on the lawn when you mow) or compost yard trim materials in your backyard. Finished compost can be used instead of purchasing commercial lawn products.
- Reduce unwanted mail by removing your name from mailing lists.



For more information on how to reduce waste in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling).

## If You Can't Reduce, Be Sure to Recycle

Of course, not every item you buy can be reused. It's important to look for products that are recyclable or have a type of packaging that can be recycled in Montgomery County. Here are some common items in your home that are recyclable:

- Corrugated cardboard and paperboard boxes
- White, colored, and shredded paper
- Paperback, hardcover, and telephone books
- Magazines and catalogs, newspapers and inserts
- Unwanted mail and envelopes with or without plastic windows
- Coated paper, including milk/juice cartons, drink boxes, and produce and frozen food boxes
- Bi-metal (steel/tin) and aluminum cans and foil products
- Empty, non-hazardous aerosol cans
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastics including bottles, pails, jars, tubs, containers, lids, caps, and #1 PET thermoform packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, domes, and cups
- Plastic durable/reusable containers and lids
- Christmas trees, grass, leaves, garden trimmings, and brush
- Scrap metal items





# Waste Reduction Is All Around Us

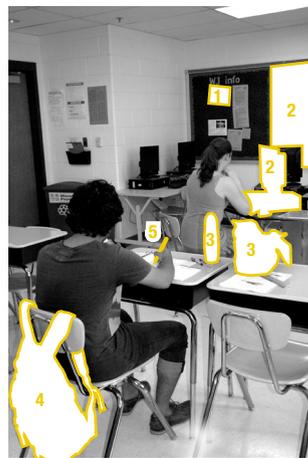
## What is Waste Reduction?

Waste reduction is an effort to decrease the amount of waste generated. The best way to reduce waste is not to create it in the first place. If waste is prevented, there is no need or cost for collection, processing, and disposal. Reducing waste is important because doing so conserves valuable natural resources and protects the environment, benefiting us, our children, and future generations. Waste reduction is the preferred method of solid waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment. It is also important to reuse and recycle whenever possible at school. The three R's of managing solid waste (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) all play a role in protecting the environment while you're providing or receiving a great education.

## It's Easy to Reduce Waste at School!

Montgomery County residents and businesses generated over one million tons of waste last year. Since the most important step to reducing waste is being a thoughtful consumer, you can help to reduce the amount of waste generated in Montgomery County by changing your purchasing processes. Before buying school supplies or other items, consider if the item can be reused or if there is a less wasteful alternative. Purchasing greener options for school can really help make a difference and help the environment. In this brochure, you will find some simple ways for teachers, students, and staff to reduce the amount of waste generated at school.

## Key to Waste Reduction Tips on the Cover



(clockwise)

1. Use **bulletin boards** to post announcements to reduce handouts.
2. **Computers and projectors** save on printing and paper.
3. **Reusable lunch containers and water bottles** reduce waste.
4. **Sturdy backpacks** last longer and save money.
5. **Mechanical pencils** save trees.



### Montgomery County, Maryland Division of Solid Waste Services

#### Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling)  
Phone: 3-1-1 • TTY: 301-251-4850

This information is available in an alternate format by calling 240-777-6480.

Printed on recycled and recyclable paper.



## Reducing Paper Use in the Classroom

Saving paper goes a long way in reducing waste. Montgomery County's most recent waste composition study found that 17 percent of all waste disposed of in Montgomery County includes recyclable mixed paper. Here are some great ways for students, faculty, and staff to help minimize waste by reducing paper use at school.

- Use computers and projectors for assignments and notes instead of printing handouts to decrease paper purchased and used.
- Use digital storage devices such as external hard drives and flash drives to reduce the need for printing and filing paper copies.
- Use electronic forms for student permission slips and other information.
- Maintain electronic school records, and use online or electronic testing.
- Use file sharing systems to transfer and share information.
- Use dry-erase boards and bulletin boards to reduce printing paper handouts.
- Distribute assignments by disk or email, and use laptops or tablets to take notes.
- Use the front and back side of paper.
- Use reusable plastic folders instead of disposable paper folders.



## Minimizing Waste beyond the Classroom

By providing and encouraging students to use greener options in the cafeteria, library, and restrooms, you can reduce the amount of waste generated in school even more. Smart purchases can also save your school money by reducing collection and disposal costs for excess materials. Here are some tips for teachers, staff, and students to reduce waste throughout your school.

### Tips for Teachers and Staff:

- Buy school supplies in bulk to reduce packaging.
- Buy durable and reusable supplies instead of disposable items whenever possible.
- Invest in digital media in libraries, including purchasing online and e-books to reduce paper.
- Use reusable cafeteria trays, plates, glasses, flatware, and containers for school lunches whenever possible.
- Install energy-efficient hand driers to reduce the amount of paper hand towels purchased and eliminate waste in restrooms.

### Encourage Students to:

- Use a refillable water bottle and thermos for school instead of purchasing bottled water or beverages.
- Use a reusable or insulated lunch bag to pack lunch from home.
- Bring food items in reusable containers that can be washed and used again.
- Use cloth napkins instead of disposable paper products.
- Buy mechanical pencils, sturdy backpacks, and durable school supplies to reduce waste.
- Donate used school supplies to charitable organizations.



For more information on how to reduce waste in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling).

## If You Can't Reduce, Be Sure to Recycle

Of course, not every item we buy can be reused to reduce waste. It's important to look for products that are recyclable or have a type of packaging that can be recycled in Montgomery County. Here are some common items at school that are recyclable:

- Corrugated cardboard and paperboard boxes
- Computer and office paper, including white, colored, and shredded paper
- Magazines and catalogs, newspapers and inserts
- Envelopes with or without plastic windows
- Coated paper, including milk/juice cartons, drink boxes, and produce and frozen food boxes
- Bi-metal (steel/tin) and aluminum cans and foil products
- Empty, non-hazardous aerosol cans
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastics including bottles, pails, jars, tubs, containers, lids, caps, and #1 PET thermoform packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, domes, and cups
- Plastic durable/reusable containers and lids
- Christmas trees, grass, leaves, garden trimmings, and brush
- Scrap metal items
- Ink and toner cartridges (look for toner cartridge recycling companies that will take empty ink and toner cartridges for recycling)



# Waste Reduction Is All Around Us



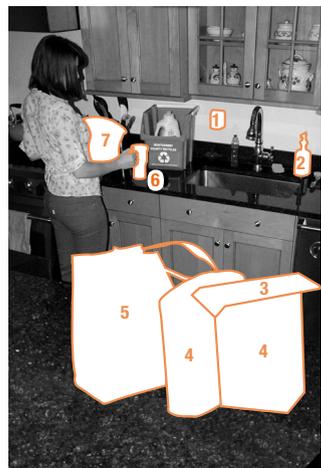
## What is Waste Reduction?

Waste reduction is an effort to decrease the amount of waste generated. The best way to reduce waste is not to create it in the first place. If waste is prevented, there is no need or cost for collection, processing, and disposal. Reducing waste is important because doing so conserves valuable natural resources and protects the environment, benefiting us, our children, and future generations. Waste reduction is the preferred method of solid waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment. It is also important to reuse and recycle whenever possible. The three R's of managing solid waste (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) all play a role in helping you save money while protecting the environment.

## It's Easy to Reduce Waste in Your Apartment!

Montgomery County residents and businesses generated over one million tons of waste last year. You can help to reduce the amount of waste generated in Montgomery County by reusing and recycling certain items around your apartment or condominium. Perhaps the most important step to reducing waste is being a thoughtful consumer. Before purchasing an item at the store, consider if the item can be reused or if there is a less wasteful alternative. Purchasing greener options for your apartment or condominium can really make a difference and help the environment. It is also important to reuse items whenever possible. In this brochure, you will find some simple ways for both residents, property managers, and staff to reduce the amount of waste generated at apartments and condominiums.

## Key to Waste Reduction Tips on the Cover



(clockwise)

1. Use **rechargeable batteries** instead of single-use disposable batteries.
2. Buy liquid soap in larger containers and **refill smaller containers** around your home.
3. Use **reusable cloths** instead of disposable paper products.
4. **Buy in bulk** to reduce packaging.
5. **Reusable bags** reduce the need for paper and plastic bags.
6. **Reusable mugs** eliminate the use of disposable cups.
7. Use **refillable pitchers** instead of buying bottled water.



### Montgomery County, Maryland Division of Solid Waste Services

#### Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

101 Monroe Street, 6th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling)

Phone: 3-1-1 • TTY: 301-251-4850

This information is available in an alternate format  
by calling 240-777-6480.

Printed on recycled and recyclable paper.



## For Multi-Family Residents:

### Shopping Tips

Waste reduction starts at the store. Learning how to be a thoughtful consumer will help reduce the amount of waste you produce significantly.

- Buy in bulk or concentrated forms of products such as detergent and liquid soap to reduce packaging.
- Avoid purchasing individually wrapped products such as sliced cheese.
- Use water filters and refillable pitchers instead of purchasing bottled water.
- Use cloth and reusable shopping bags to reduce paper and plastic bags. Plastic bags can be recycled at most local grocery stores. Paper bags can be recycled along with other mixed paper.
- Buy durable and reusable products instead of disposable items whenever possible.
- Choose rechargeable batteries instead of single-use disposable batteries.

### Minimize Kitchen Waste in Your Apartment

By using reusable containers, you can reduce the amount of waste generated in your apartment or condominium substantially. This simple action can drastically reduce disposal costs, saving you money.

- Use ceramic mugs for your beverages.
- Use refillable pitchers instead of buying bottled water.
- Pack lunch in a reusable or insulated lunch bag.
- Store food items in reusable containers that can be washed and reused.
- Use cloth napkins and hand towels instead of disposable paper products.
- Use silverware and reusable utensils.

## For Multi-Family Property Managers:

### Reducing Waste in Your Community

Saving paper goes a long way in reducing waste. Montgomery County's most recent waste composition study found that 17 percent of all waste disposed of in Montgomery County includes recyclable mixed paper. Be sure mixed paper and cardboard is being recycled in your community. Here are some great ways to reduce paper use in your community.

- Post notices in common areas or on a community website, or send emails instead of distributing individual copies to residents.
- Use digital storage devices such as external hard drives and flash drives to reduce the need for printing and filing paper copies.
- Use file sharing systems to transfer and share information.
- Use electronic forms for resident information and rental paperwork.
- Purchase office and cleaning supplies in bulk to reduce packaging.



For more information on how to reduce waste in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling).

## If You Can't Reduce, Be Sure to Recycle

Of course, not every item you buy can be reused. It's important to look for products that are recyclable or have a type of packaging that can be recycled in Montgomery County.

Here are some common items that are recyclable:

- Corrugated cardboard and paperboard boxes
- White, colored, and shredded paper
- Paperback, hardcover, and telephone books
- Magazines and catalogs, newspapers and inserts
- Unwanted mail and envelopes with or without plastic windows
- Coated paper, including milk/juice cartons, drink boxes, and produce and frozen food boxes
- Bi-metal (steel/tin) and aluminum cans and foil products
- Empty, non-hazardous aerosol cans
- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastics including bottles, pails, jars, tubs, containers, lids, caps, and #1 PET thermoform packaging such as plastic clamshell containers, trays, deli containers, lids, domes, and cups
- Plastic durable/reusable containers and lids
- Christmas trees, grass, leaves, garden trimmings, and brush
- Scrap metal items

