

# Paper Recycling

Australian homes and offices use approximately 2.4 million tonnes of paper per year for printing, writing and reading uses alone<sup>1</sup>. Recycling all types of paper and purchasing recycled paper products reduces the use of energy, water and raw materials that go into paper production.

## Reducing paper waste

There are many ways to reduce your paper use. Think before printing - do as many things as you can on-screen, such as reviewing, editing and completing forms.

Use both sides of every sheet of paper. Set printers to default to double-sided and re-use the reverse side of single-printed pages. Used envelopes can also be written on as note-paper.

Avoid junk mail by using a 'No Junk Mail' sticker (available free from Distribution Standards Board) and the 'Do Not Mail' service (from the Australian Direct Marketing Association; ADMA). See More Information for contact details.

## Why recycle paper?

When paper breaks down in landfill it creates methane, a major greenhouse gas with the global warming capacity 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Manufacturing paper and cardboard products from recycled material not only conserves trees, it also uses up to 50% less energy and 90% less water than making them from raw materials. It is important not only to recycle your paper, but also to purchase recycled paper products. These days, good quality office and printing paper, as well as many other paper products are available with recycled paper content of up to 100%.

For every 100 reams of recycled office paper that is printed doubled sided, the savings are estimated at two trees, more than one tonne of greenhouse gases and almost a cubic



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## Factsheet



How do you recycle computers, corks, cartridges and cans?

For information on council services and drop-off locations in your area... visit



**RecyclingNearYou  
.com.au**

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or call



**RECYCLING HOTLINE  
1300 733 712**

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metre of landfill space, compared with using 100 reams of non-recycled paper or printing single-sided<sup>3</sup>.

## How to recycle paper

Most local councils collect household paper products for recycling in their kerbside collection. This includes writing paper, paper packaging, envelopes with and without plastic windows, telephone books, magazines and newspapers. To find drop-off locations to recycle paper, visit [RecyclingNearYou.com.au](http://RecyclingNearYou.com.au)

Keep paper free of food scraps and plastic, which can contaminate the process of recycling. Used tissues and paper that has been contaminated with food scraps can be recycled using a worm farm, bokashi bucket or compost heap.

Cardboard can also be recycled. See Planet Ark's Cardboard Factsheet.

## What happens to the paper?

Recycling paper begins by breaking down the product using either chemical or mechanical means to free the fibres and create pulp. The pulp is re-manufactured into paper products in a similar way to first production paper. The waste products left over from the recycling process (ink, short fibres and plastics) are collectively called "sludge" and are either sent into landfill, burnt for energy or used as fertilizer.

There are numerous companies in Australia that recycle and re-manufacture paper onshore. Paper can be recycled into many things including office paper, packaging, toilet paper, egg cartons, soundproofing, furniture and cardboard.

Paper can be recycled up to eight times. Once the paper has been recycled as many times as possible, it is turned into organic waste and breaks down.

## More information

Australian Plantation Products and Paper Industry Council<sup>1</sup> ([a3p.asn.au](http://a3p.asn.au))  
Sustainability Victoria<sup>2</sup> ([sustainability.vic.gov.au](http://sustainability.vic.gov.au))  
Recycle At Work WA ([recycleatwork.com.au](http://recycleatwork.com.au))  
Publishers National Environment Bureau ([pneb.com.au](http://pneb.com.au))  
ADMA ([adma.com.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=1999](http://adma.com.au/asp/index.asp?pgid=1999))  
Distribution Standards Board ([catalogue.asn.au/distribution](http://catalogue.asn.au/distribution))



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