



STUFF



WHY REDUCING THE WASTE YOU GENERATE IS IMPORTANT

The products we consume and the buildings we live in use a significant amount of the world's resources. The products we consume create waste. Each Australian household produces over one tonne of waste per year with about 70 per cent of this waste sent to landfill¹.

Supplying the basic materials to manufacture or build the products we consume releases a large amount of greenhouse gases. For example, making a kilogram of aluminium generates more than 15 kilograms of greenhouse gas. A kilogram of greenhouse gas is released for each three bricks manufactured². We can reduce the ecological footprint caused by the manufacture of new products by reducing our level of consumption, buying items with longer lives or that are recyclable, and by insisting on products with minimal packaging. Next time you go shopping, ask yourself, 'Do I really need to buy this?'

Products you do purchase should be recycled so that waste going to landfill is reduced and recycled material which has a lower environmental impact is available to manufacturers. For example, the recycling of aluminium products only emits five per cent of the greenhouse gas emitted in primary aluminium production³.

FIRST STEPS – WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

Avoid excess packaging. Refuse to purchase products using excessive packaging and materials. Packaging accounts for 170 kg of landfill a year and wastes valuable resources¹. For example, consuming bottled water instead of drinking tap water increases packaging waste and the transportation of bottled water increases the level of greenhouse gas emissions.

Use your own shopping bags. Put your shopping in reusable bags rather than plastic bags.

BIG OPPORTUNITIES – WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

Avoid buying things you don't need. Ask yourself whether you need the item – do you have enough? Will you use it? Can you borrow it? Is there a more environmentally friendly alternative?

Reduce – Reuse – Recycle. Recycle all material possible. Check with your local council or state environmental authority to find where you can recycle paper, glass plastics and other waste. Recycling paper and containers reduces waste to landfill by up to 27 per cent (ACF).

1 Australian Conservation Foundation

2 Department of Climate Change, previously Australian Greenhouse Office

3 www.world-aluminium.org/sustainability/recycling

FURTHER TIPS ON REDUCING YOUR FOOD FOOTPRINT – LONGER TERM

- **Put a 'No junk mail' sticker on your letterbox to reduce junk mail.**
- **Buy your books/CDs/DVDs/furniture second hand.**
- **Use rechargeable batteries rather than single use ones.**
- **Dispose of household products safely. Did you know over half of marine oil pollution globally comes from sources on land? A common source is sump oil from cars washed down drains ending up in the sea.**
- **Buy 'green' products.**
- **Consider giving services as presents, rather than products.**
- **Use high-quality materials and fittings that won't need replacing.**
- **Buy repairable products.**
- **Use natural cleaning products.**
- **Borrow household equipment. Save money by borrowing household tools from family, friends and neighbours.**
- **Recycle your old mobile phone: www.wwf.org.au/act/takeaction/recycle-your-mobile**