

## “What Being Green Means to Me?”

I am the “green” man. Being the “green” man, my goal is to do things that will protect and save the environment. My job really involves finding ways to live with creating as little waste as possible, use much less energy and protect our natural resources for future generations. As the “green” man, I want to get everybody to do whatever possible to help me out. We all can do some things to help our environment. You can help by learning about and PRACTICING the three R's of waste management: Recycle, reduce, and reuse! Everyday, I focus on these three R's: recycle, reduce, and reuse. This helps me to do my job and reach my goal as the “green man”. However, I can't do alone, I need your help!

First of all, recycling is nothing new. I just need everybody to do their part. Recycling is the processes of collecting, processing, remanufacturing, and reusing materials instead of discarding them. This helps conserve raw materials and energy that manufacturers would otherwise use in producing new products. Recycling also reduces the amount of material going into landfills. We close a filled landfill almost every day in this nation. We have to continue to build bigger landfills and many locations are running out of room to do that. Recycling can double the life of a landfill. Recycling also helps lessen the pollution that may result from waste disposal. Examples of things that are often recycled are glass, plastic, newspapers, aluminum cans, used motor oil, and batteries. There are many different places that take recycled items everywhere. Did you know that making new goods out of recycled material saves energy? Making new aluminum cans from recycled cans uses 20 times less energy than making cans from the raw material. One recycled glass bottle would save enough energy to power a computer for 25 minutes.

And one recycled plastic bottle would save enough energy to power a 30-watt light bulb for 6 hours. Also, 70% less energy is required to recycle paper compared with making it from raw materials and think about all the trees that would stay alive. Recycling helps to protect the environment. Recycling helps to protect all of us! So please take the time out and help out the "green" man.

Another way to help out the environment is to reduce. All it really means is to make something smaller or use less, resulting in a smaller amount of waste. It is reducing waste before you purchase it, or by purchasing products that are not wasteful in their packaging or use. First and foremost, buy and use less! If all the other people on the Earth used as much "stuff" as we do in the United States, there would need to be three to five times more space just to hold and sustain everybody ... WOW! So buy only what you need and use all of what you buy. Or make sure that when you are through with something, you pass it along to other people who can continue to put it to good use. This is especially important when it comes to items where disposal is difficult or could be particularly dangerous to our environment, such as paint and chemicals.

Finally, you can "reuse" materials in their original form instead of throwing them away, or pass those materials on to others who could use them too! Remember, one man's trash is another man's treasure! Reusing keeps new resources from being used for a while longer, and old resources from entering the waste stream. Before you recycle or dispose of anything, consider whether it has life left in it. A jam jar can store leftovers. Food scraps can become compost. An old shirt can become a pajama top. An opened envelope can become a shopping list. A magazine can be shared. DVDs can be traded. A

dishwasher can be repaired. A computer can be upgraded. A car can be resold. A cell phone can be donated. Returnable bottles can be, well... returned.

So please everyone help me, the “green” man save and protect our environment and our future by recycling, reducing, and reusing.