

# green team

## PAPER RECYCLING CAMPAIGN

### Did you know that 47% of school waste is recyclable paper?

It's not only easy to increase paper recycling at your school, it's important! Recycling paper saves resources. Each ton of paper recycled can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4,000 kilowatts of energy, 7,000 gallons of water and 60 pounds of air pollution. That's a lot of savings!

Saving trees also saves our air. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases responsible for pollution and global warming. Every 17 trees absorb approximately 250 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air each year

Each of us has a role to play in reducing our impact on the environment, and your choices matter. Through a school-wide paper recycling campaign, you can help protect habitat, conserve natural resources, reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and improve the overall recycling rate at your school.

Schools across King County have reduced their garbage volumes and increased recycling volumes by emphasizing paper recycling. For example, Evergreen High School in Seattle increased recycling by 20 percent through a variety of student projects, including posters, video announcements, new collection strategies and well-placed recycling bins.

These guidelines will help your environmental club or class to achieve similar results. Use these suggestions for setting goals, putting your plan into action, and measuring and sharing results.



# Green Team Paper Recycling Campaign

## Step-by-step guide

The Green Team Paper Recycling Campaign to increase awareness of and participation in your school's paper recycling program is easy to do!

### **1. Make sure that your school has a good recycling program in place before you start.**

Talk with the custodian to learn about the school's current recycling practices and to get his or her support. The custodian can tell you who is responsible for recycling. Ask the following questions:

- Does our school have an outdoor recycling container that is serviced regularly by a garbage/recycling hauler?
- Does every classroom and office space have a bin?
- Is every recycle bin next to a trash or garbage can?
- Do the recycle bins have labels that list what can and cannot be recycled?
- Are the recycle bins emptied regularly? (Overflowing recycle bins will discourage participation in the campaign.)

**2. Know which types of paper are recyclable and which belong in the garbage.** Most mixed paper, newspaper, and glossy paper can go in the recycle bin. Paper products that DO NOT belong in the bin include napkins, paper towels, tissues, and food soiled paper. Use "Your Guide to Curbside Recycling" as a resource. Find it and other information on recycling at [www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/garbage-recycling/recycling.asp](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/garbage-recycling/recycling.asp). Information relevant to your campaign should be posted around the school and listed on the side of the recycle bins.

**3. Calculate your school's weekly pre-campaign recycling volumes and the baseline recycling rate.** See the Calculate Your School's Recycling Rate worksheet.

### **4. Determine the size and reach of the campaign.**

- Consider whether you want every classroom in the school to participate or whether the campaign will be limited to selected classrooms.
- Decide on a recycling goal. Do you want to set a goal to double the amount of recycling in participating classrooms? Do you want to get 100 percent of the classroom to participate? Do you want to try to recycle 100 percent of your school's paper?
- Organize the campaign around a particular day, week or month, such as America Recycles Day (November 15), Arbor Day (second Wednesday in April), Earth day (April 22) or Earth Week.

### **5. Think about how you will judge the success of the campaign.**

If your goal is to reach a 100 percent rate of paper recycling by participating classrooms, designate volunteers to spot-check classroom garbage cans to ensure they contain no recyclable paper. If you want to actually measure improvements in your recycling rate, use the pre-campaign rate calculated in Step 3 as your baseline rate. Repeat the calculation once the campaign is over. Establish a consistent time and day for checking recycling bins or dumpsters to minimize the effects of normal daily fluctuations in recycling volumes.

### **6. Gather teacher and administrative support for the project.**

Talk with classroom teachers to see whether they would be willing to have their classrooms participate. Let them know that it will not mean extra work for them, but may involve a student announcement in class, a poster by the recycle bin or the door, and someone checking their bin periodically during the campaign. Inform the principal as well, so that he or she is aware of and can support the campaign.

If your school is interested in improving its overall waste reduction and recycling practices, get information about the King County Green Schools Program at [www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/greenschools/index.asp](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/greenschools/index.asp).

### **7. Consider how to encourage classroom participation.**

If the environmental club is in charge of the campaign, club members can become classroom “team leaders” and work with their teachers to support the campaign. Students may choose to work with one teacher or with all of their classroom teachers. If there is more than one club member in a classroom, they can work together to generate support from the rest of the class. Or you may want to expand team leaders beyond your class or club – consider trying to get at least one student from every classroom involved.

### **8. Create a sign-up sheet with a pledge.**

This is a good strategy if you choose to open the campaign leadership to students beyond your club or class. Here’s an example of a pledge:

“In order to save trees, reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and send less material to the landfill, I agree to become a classroom team leader and encourage paper recycling in my class(es).”

Incorporate the pledge and sign-up sheet (see sample) into a large poster or have a few students circulate at lunchtime with a sign-up sheet on a clipboard. You could also have a club representative visit each classroom to recruit campaign leaders.

### **9. Publicize the campaign.**

- When promoting the campaign, make morning announcements (see sample announcements) to generate interest and encourage participation. Include facts about why recycling paper is important. The facts in this packet could be shared on morning announcements, posted on the school website, listed on a sign-up poster, or be printed on the back of the recycling rate calculation sheet.
- Include an announcement and information on the school website, in the daily bulletins, and in the school newsletter. Remind students that this is a class effort - they will need to work with their classmates and teachers to successfully reach their goal.
- Send out email reminders to team leaders to generate support in their classrooms.
- See the Communicate the How and Why of Your Recycling Program sheet for suggestions on how to promote your recycling program.

### **10. Determine the new recycling rate after the campaign to judge its impact.**

- Use the calculation you used to get the baseline recycling rate. Compare the two rates. How much did your school’s recycling rate improve as a result of the campaign?
- Publicize the effects of the campaign. This could be shared in the form of morning announcements, school-wide posters, a write-up in the school paper, or an article on the school website.

### **11. Report your results to the larger community.**

Send the announcement to the school board, your local paper, and to the King County Green Team program. Student groups that complete waste reduction and recycling projects are recognized by King County Solid Waste Division each year. Send project information to [greenteam@triangleassociates.com](mailto:greenteam@triangleassociates.com).

## Facts about the environmental benefits of paper recycling

A piece of paper can be recycled up to seven times before the fibers get too short for making paper. After that, it becomes toilet paper, tissue paper or paper toweling.

- *Washington State Recycling Association*

Recyclable paper makes up 16 percent of the waste thrown away each year at the landfill. Forty-seven percent of school waste is recyclable paper.

- *King County Solid Waste Division*

Approximately one billion trees worth of paper are thrown away in the United States every year.

- *recycling-revolution.com/recycling-facts.html*

Trees absorb carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. Every 17 trees absorb approximately 250 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air each year.

- *Environmental Protection Agency*

Each ton of paper recycled can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4,000 kilowatts of energy, 7,000 gallons of water and 60 pounds of air pollution.

- *Environmental Protection Agency*

The United States produces and uses a third of the world's paper. Forests in the southeastern U.S. now supply a quarter of the global total.

- *Worldwatch Institute*

The average U.S. citizen uses more than 660 pounds of paper annually, and the average Japanese uses 500 pounds. People in developing countries, in contrast, use only 40 pounds of paper a year on average—in India, the figure is 8.8 pounds, while in 20 countries in Africa, it's less than 2 pounds. (The United Nations estimates that 66-88 pounds is the minimum needed to meet basic literacy and communication needs.)

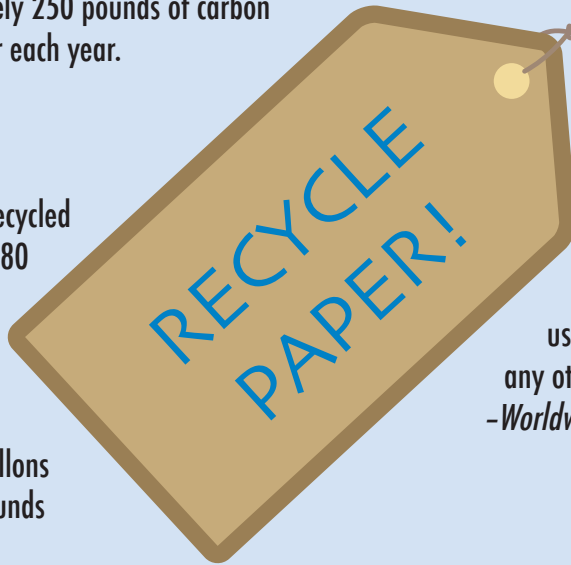
- *Worldwatch Institute*

Producing one ton of paper requires two to three times its weight in trees. Newly cut trees account for 55 percent of the global paper supply, while 38 percent is from recycled wood-based paper, and the remaining 7 percent comes from non-tree sources.

- *Worldwatch Institute*

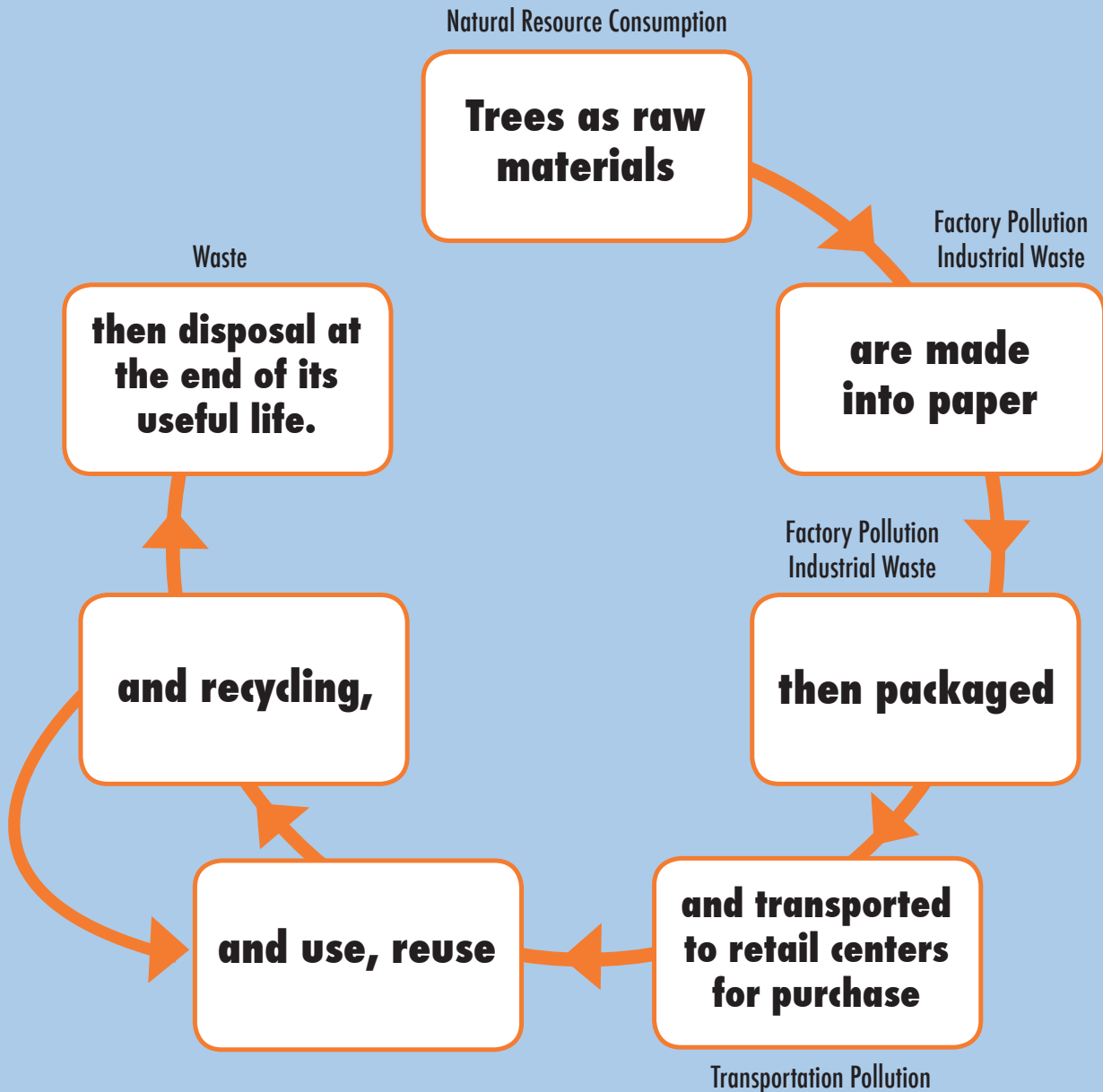
The pulp and paper industry is the world's fifth largest industrial consumer of energy and uses more water to produce a ton of product than any other industry.

- *Worldwatch Institute*





# Life Cycle Stages of Paper



# Calculate Your School's Weekly Recycling Volume and Recycling Rate

**Below are easy steps to calculate your waste reduction from paper recycling.**

Use these calculations to establish baseline data that will enable you to later determine the impact of your paper recycling campaign. **IMPORTANT:** Try to gather data on the day before trash and recycling are collected by your waste hauler. That will give you the best sense of how much solid waste your school generates every week.

1. Determine your school's garbage volume. You will need to ask the custodian for his or her input. To calculate the fullness of the dumpster, ask the custodian how full it normally is on the day before pick-up. Is it half full? 25 percent full? 75 percent full? Or look inside the dumpster to make your own estimate. Be sure to make your estimates on the day before garbage pick-up.



Sample calculation: If your eight cubic-yard container is 75 percent full and is picked once a week, your weekly garbage volume is  $8 \text{ cubic yards} \times .75 \times 1 = 6 \text{ cubic yards}$ .

<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	=	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Size of garbage dumpster		Fullness of dumpster		Number of pick-ups per week		Weekly volume of garbage

2. Repeat step #1 for each garbage dumpster to get total amount of garbage discarded weekly.

3. Determine your school's recycling volume. You will need to ask the custodian for his or her input.

<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	=	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Size of recycling dumpster		Fullness of dumpster		Number of pick-ups per week		Weekly volume of recycling

4. Repeat step #1 for each recycling dumpster to get total amount of paper recycled weekly.

5. The recycling rate is the amount of material collected for recycling as a percentage of the total solid waste generated (recycling volume plus garbage volume).

<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	X	<b>100</b>	=	<input style="width: 100%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Weekly recycling volume		Weekly recycling volume plus weekly garbage volume				Recycling rate

6. Once the campaign is complete, it's time to recheck garbage and recycling volumes. Follow steps 1-5 to judge the campaign's impact.

# Sample Morning Announcements for Paper Recycling Campaign

## Monday

Did you know that 47 percent of school waste is paper that could be recycled?

Next week/month we will be starting a paper recycling campaign at school. Our goal will be to recycle as much paper as we can starting \_\_\_(date)\_\_\_.

If you're interested in becoming a classroom leader for this campaign (it's a lot of fun!), please sign up at the Recycle Club booth in the lunchroom today.

## Tuesday

Our paper recycling campaign begins \_\_\_(date)\_\_\_ . If you didn't have the chance to sign up as a classroom leader, there's still time. Look for the Recycle Club booth in the lunchroom.

Remember to use both sides of a sheet of paper before recycling it. Using both sides reduces paper use by half!

## Wednesday

Remember to recycle your paper! Recycling paper protects the environment. Did you know that trees absorb carbon dioxide, one of the greenhouse gases responsible for global warming? In fact, every 17 trees absorb approximately 250 pounds of carbon dioxide from the air each year.

## Thursday

Recycling paper is easy, and yet approximately one billion trees worth of paper are thrown away in the United States every year. If you're not sure what types of paper can be recycled, look for the sticker on your recycle bin.

## Friday

Don't forget to recycle your paper at school! Our goal for the paper recycling campaign is to have 100 percent classroom participation. Types of recyclable paper include white and colored paper, construction paper, newspaper, envelopes, copier ream wrappers, magazines, catalogs and phone books.



This notice will be provided in alternate formats upon request.



Department of  
Natural Resources and Parks  
Solid Waste Division

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