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Solid Waste Management

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. We've all heard this before, but it is such a broad topic that you might not know where to start. There are innumerable possibilities regarding ways to reduce our waste. You don't have to go out and replace all of your family's cars with expensive hybrid cars. However, you can make simple adjustments in your everyday life that will drastically decrease waste in our world.

Right now, there are about 46,000 pieces of plastic floating in every square mile of the oceans. We can significantly reduce this amount by finding substitutes for plastic. For example, stop using plastic containers in your fridge and pantry. Instead, replace them with a set of glass tupperware that can be used again and again. The next time you go to the grocery store, pick up recyclable bags and bring them every time you go food shopping. Instead of buying cases of plastic water bottles, invest in a water filter and reusable water bottles.

Paper is another resource that we must start conserving. 71 million tons of paper products are used in the United States alone each year. You can reduce your personal paper consumption at home and in the office. At home, try to shy away from using paper towels, paper cups, and paper plates as much as possible. You can use cloth napkins or rags and regular plates on a daily basis instead. Save the post it notes and use a whiteboard to jot down any lists, notes, and reminders you might have. Make use of paperless bills and online receipts. Unsubscribe to as much junk mail as you can. All of these tactics will help you save money and save trees around the world.

In your office, electronics are on your side to help reduce paper waste. One way to do so is to use programs like Google Docs or Microsoft Word for collaboration. Send more emails instead of regular paper mail. Use the double-sided printing feature to save two times the amount of paper. When we cut back on our paper usage, we prevent that paper from ending up in a landfill and give each other peace of mind.

When you go shopping, look for ways to reduce waste. Look for an all purpose household cleaner rather than multiple different ones. Try buying in bulk for items that you use quite frequently. Buy products that can be reused. This way, you prevent the amount of goods that end up in the trash. Items like glass jars can go a long way in your home. Each time you use one of these methods, you are saving the Earth, one small step at a time.