

# 4 (or 7) R's - Methods of Waste Diversion

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RETHINK  
REDUCE  
REUSE  
RECYCLE  
REPAIR  
RECOVER  
REJECT

7

# Our History With Waste

- ▶ There was a time (not too long ago) when everything we threw away was bio-degradable
- ▶ We did not take more than we needed
- ▶ We kept items that served our purposes for a long time
- ▶ We found new ways to reuse items
- ▶ We repaired items when they needed fixing
- ▶ We gave away things we did not need
- ▶ Most importantly...we wasted very, very little of anything!

EVERY PERSON HAS THE POWER TO MAKE  
**REAL CHANGE.**

HOWEVER, WE MUST BE **STRATEGIC** IN  
ORDER TO MAKE THE GREATEST IMPACT.

WHICH IS WHY THE 7 R's ARE PLACED IN A  
**CERTAIN ORDER.**

# RETHINK #1

- ▶ **What we buy:**
  - will it pollute the land or water?
  - is there a better alternative?
- ▶ **Why we buy it:**
  - is it necessary?
  - is it good for me and my health?\*
- ▶ **How we dispose of it:**
  - can it be repurposed/composted/recycled?
  - how long will it take to break down in the land?

# REDUCE #2

- ▶ **Source Reduction:**

every time we buy something, we drive up the demand for that item - which means producers continue to make it for a profit. We have choice

- ▶ **What we buy:**

is the amount of packaging necessary?

is it harmful to the environment?

- ▶ **When we buy:**

will you use it often - if not can it be borrowed?

# REUSE #3

We can reduce the amount of products/materials we use by finding more sustainable options.

- ▶ **Use reusable everything:**

  - water bottles, bags, tupperware, utensils, etc.

- ▶ **Reuse items for other things/projects**

  - new containers, craft projects

# RECYCLE #4

Recycling is easy when you get the hang of it; however, the process of recycling uses a lot of resources

- ▶ **money:** machinery, operations and maintenance
- ▶ **labour:** for sorting, cleaning, operating machines
- ▶ **energy, power, resources:** as part of the process
- ▶ **space:** buildings need a physical space and land
- ▶ **availability:** China recently closed its doors on Canada's recycling; innovative ways are needed more than ever to deal with our waste



# REPAIR #5

## ► Fix:

how bad is the damage?

is it worth repairing or replacing?

can I fix this on my own?

if I need to, can I find someone who can fix it?

can I learn how to fix it on my own?

is there an alternative that breaks less or would last longer?

# RECOVER #6

- ▶ **New energies:** new technologies have enabled us to extract/use the energy that exists within waste.
  - incineration = electricity** (unsorted waste);
  - gasification = electricity, fuel, and chemical products** (organic or fossil-fuel based waste)
  - bio-mass fuel = fuel** (only biodegradable waste)
- ▶ **Recover + recycle:** literally recovering waste from a landfill to recycle the materials.

# REJECT #7

Much like Rethink and Reduce, Reject is all about “source-reduction”.

- ▶ There is always choice.
- ▶ Do not buy anything you don't really need.
- ▶ We can train ourselves so choices=habits=second nature
- ▶ Making sustainable choices may seem inconvenient at first, but the environmental trade-off is enormous!
- ▶ And you can feel good knowing you're doing your part to save the land and water + living in a way that aligns with our cultural values.

Thank you!



7Rs

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we hope this presentation  
inspires you to be the change!