

Think Green @ Work

Waste Reduction Week is a chance to focus on the benefits of reducing, reusing, recycling – and rethinking our waste! Waste Reduction Week provides a call to action: individuals, schools, municipalities and businesses can take this week to ‘rethink’ their behaviours and make positive changes to reduce waste for the benefit of our communities and the environment.

B.Y.O.B. Bring Your Own Bag!

By Carol Dobson
Special Features Writer



The ubiquitous plastic shopping bag is a staple of everyday life. Not only is it used for carting home groceries but it's also used as a shoe bag, in the kitchen garbage can, and for taking all sorts of items from one place to another.

While they often appear to multiply overnight, many consumers have recently been cutting down on their use of plastic bags by using reusable shopping bags. All of the major grocery chains – Sobeys, Superstore, and Costco – have them, as do a number of health food and other specialty stores.

“Reducing waste has always been a concern of the grocery industry,” Jeanne Cruikshank, of the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, says. “When it comes to boxes, they are returned to a company in Saint John, New Brunswick, so there is a closed loop system there.”

“These new re-usable bags have really been welcomed by the consumer,” she says. “Not only are they being used for groceries but they’re also being used in other parts of people’s lives. They are becoming a real fashion statement.”

She says members of her organization are working at their end on environmental issues. Staff members are encouraged to apply stickers or tape to heavier goods rather than using several bags to package them. They are also being trained in methods to efficiently pack both reusable and traditional plastic bags.

“Part of our planning includes increasing our customer’s awareness in making environmentally friendly choices when they are shopping,” she says. “We’ve been very willing to partner with them and so far, things are working quite well. It’s a real ‘feel good’ issue.”

Annapolis Valley Business Environmental Committee

By Carol Dobson
Special Features Writer



There is an old saying about wisdom coming from the mouths of babes and children and, like most maxims, there is a great deal of truth in those words.

Last February, Britteny Noseworthy, the daughter of the New Minas Walmart’s manager, Max Noseworthy, received an award from the Resource Recovery Fund Board’s “Nova Scotia Recycles Contest”. Britteny brought her father along to the awards dinner and the guest speaker that evening piqued his interest.

The keynote speaker used her time to talk about how many corporations were shirking their responsibility towards the environment.

“Max was horrified at how negative the guest speaker was,” Bonnie Clemens, of Valley Waste Resource Management in Kentville, says. “He thought that it was possible for people to think on a more positive note about businesses and the things they are doing to be good corporate citizens.”

That was the genesis of the Annapolis Valley Business Environment Committee (AVBEC). This is a group of local businesses, including many of the big box stores and fast food outlets, including McDonalds and Tim Horton’s working together with Valley Waste to improve recycling

in the community. The common denominator was the fact that all of these companies generated a great deal of waste that could be diverted from landfills.

“The companies represented employ approximately 1,000 people in this area,” Clemens says. “We believe that, if they are required to properly sort materials at work, then they would carry this knowledge home.”

One of the most important elements of this committee is the fact that they are committed to sitting down and sharing solutions to waste management and other environmental problems.



Bonnie and Paul Dixon of Staples with 14 shopping carts pulled out of the river.

“When you look at a company like McDonalds, having several green bins is not feasible so they have to try to come up with a more practical solution. We also had one company that, before this committee started, was really bad when it came to sorting their waste. Now, because of the education the AVBEC committee has been providing, this company has greatly increased the amount of waste that is being properly sorted.”



Does your business have a GREEN ATTITUDE?

You can create a more environmentally friendly workplace and reduce costs by:

- ✓ **USING LESS PAPER**
 - Select a printer that prints two-sided documents.
 - Photocopy on both sides of a sheet of paper.
 - Email, circulate or post memos rather than copying for everyone.
- ✓ **CONSERVING ENERGY AND WATER**
 - Turn lights off at the end of the day.
 - Turn off office equipment when not in use.
 - Close all water faucets tightly.
- ✓ **CHOOSING REUSABLES**
 - Carry your lunch in reusable containers.
 - Repair broken items before discarding.
 - Shred unrecycled paper for packaging.
- ✓ **HAVING A GREEN ATTITUDE**
 - Set up a reuse area in your workplace.
 - When you no longer have a use for items (i.e. binders, file folders, paper clips, etc.) place in Reuse area.
- ✓ **RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING**
 - Separate all recyclable materials (i.e. paper, containers, etc.)
 - Collect organic material for composting.



Lunch & Learn

Hungry for knowledge about saving the environment? Got an appetite for information on waste reduction? Why not have a “Lunch & Learn” at your workplace?

RRFB Nova Scotia has a network of community educators who are able to visit your office and talk to your employees over the lunch hour. These experts can help your staff better understand the importance of recycling and composting at your workplace. They can also tailor their talk to suit your needs – whether you want to talk composting, paper recycling, or focus on reducing waste at home.

Lunch & Learn sessions are guaranteed to be interactive and fun. And there is no doubt that everyone will learn something new!

If you would like to contact a waste reduction educator in your area, call RRFB Nova Scotia.

Reduce, Reuse & Recycle! Contest

Take your beverage containers or leftover paint back to an ENVIRO-DEPOT™ before October 20th for a chance to **WIN a family getaway to White Point Beach Resort** – or one of 80 environmentally friendly prize packages.

Nova Scotia Recycles Contest

Students in grades primary to twelve are invited to enter the Nova Scotia Recycles School Contest. Over \$55,000 in cash, prizes, and scholarships are available to be won! Visit www.rrfb.com for more information.

For more ideas, visit www.rrfb.com or call 1-877-313-RRFB (7732).

