

THINK GREEN NEWS

RECYCLE • REUSE • REDUCE • SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AT UPSTATE

UPSTATE
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THIS PUBLICATION IS A PRODUCT OF UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY FOR
COMMUNICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL, *THINK GREEN*, SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES.



For more information, visit: green.upstate.edu

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Paper, Paper, Paper, Paper, Paper, Paper, Paper, PAPER... TOO MUCH PAPER!

Over the next year, our Think Green News will focus heavily on paper-related matters. We hope by sharing staggering financial and environmental information about the impact of paper, we will encourage progress along the 'paperless' spectrum. In addition to information, we will focus on practical tips on how to EASILY reduce our individual and institutional use. We are interested in your suggestions, questions, and success stories – email green@upstate.edu.

PAPER CONSUMPTION – IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States and Canada are the world's largest producers of paper and paper products.

- 📄 In the last 20 years, paper product usage has increased from 92 million tons to 208 million, a 126% increase!
- 📄 Americans still consume more paper per capita than anyone else on earth.
- 📄 On average, a person in the United States uses more than 700 pounds of paper every year.
- 📄 Paper in the U.S. represents one of the biggest components of solid waste in landfills – 26 million tons (or 16% of landfill solid waste).
- 📄 The average person in the United States at the end of the last decade consumed as much paper as 6 people combined in Asia or more than 30 people in Africa.
- 📄 The U.S. uses approximately 68 million trees each year to produce paper and paper products.
- 📄 **The U.S. has less than 5% of the world's population yet consumes more than 30% of the world's paper!**

Sources: <http://www.thepaperlessproject.com/facts-about-paper-the-impact-of-consumption/>

PAPER CONSUMPTION – IN THE WORKPLACE

Lowering paper usage at the office can result in higher efficiency measures and increased productivity levels throughout an organization.

- 📄 The average office worker continues to use a staggering 10,000 sheets of copy paper every year.
- 📄 45% of the paper printed in offices ends up trashed by the end of the day – this daily lifespan occurs for over a trillion sheets of paper per year, worldwide.
- 📄 In the U.S., companies spend more than \$120 billion a year on printed forms, most of which outdate themselves within three months' time.
- 📄 The average document is copied 9 - 11 times. Every 12 filing cabinets require an additional employee to maintain.
- 📄 Each four-drawer file cabinet holds an average of 10,000 to 12,000 documents, takes up to 9 square feet of floor space and costs \$1,500 per year.
- 📄 Each misfiled document costs \$125 and each lost document costs \$350 to \$700 in employee time. Large organizations lose a document every 12 seconds.
- 📄 More than 70% of today's businesses would fail within three weeks if they suffered a catastrophic loss of paper-based records due to fire or flood.
- 📄 **Paper in the average business grows by 22% a year, meaning your paper usage will double in 3.3 years!**

PAPER CONSUMPTION – THE ENVIRONMENT

Recycling is important – however, while recycling does keep paper from the landfills, it does not necessarily save the environment. Paper cannot be recycled indefinitely. Seven to ten times is about the maximum before the fibers break down. There will always be a need for wood pulp to be added to the recycled product. Understanding the disastrous negative effects paper consumption has on our environment can help encourage the world to use less of it.

- 📄 Worldwide the pulp and paper industry is the 5th largest consumer of energy, accounting for 4% of the world’s energy use.
- 📄 Over 60% of the roughly 17 billion cubic feet of timber harvested worldwide each year is used for paper and pulp.
- 📄 The paper industry uses more water to produce a ton of product than any other industry.
- 📄 Discarded paper is a major component of many landfill sites, about 35% by weight of municipal solid waste.
- 📄 Pulp and paper is the third largest industrial polluter to air, water and land in both Canada and the United States, and releases well over 100 million kg of toxic pollution each year.
- 📄 40% of the world’s industrial logging goes into making paper, and is expected to reach 50% in the near future.
- 📄 Worldwide consumption of paper has risen by 400% in the last 40 years with 35% of harvested trees being used for paper manufacture.
- 📄 An estimated 18 million acres of forest are lost each year, equaling a loss of 20 football fields every minute.
- 📄 Loss of forests contributes between 12 - 17% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions.
- 📄 **If current rate of deforestation continues, it will take less than 100 years to destroy all rainforests on earth!**

The environmental impact of paper is largely significant. Due to our history of paper consumption, serious efforts are needed to ensure the environment is protected. With the use of modern technology such as document management software, electronic forms creators and mobile devices, we can drastically reduce our dependence on paper.

Sources: Forest Ethics: www.forestethics.org/paper-the-facts; Environmental Paper Network: www.environmentalpaper.org; World Resources Institute: www.wri.org

TEN EASY WAYS TO REDUCE PAPER USAGE

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| 1. Avoid printing emails and webpages |
| 2. Print and photocopy on both sides of the paper |
| 3. Use Email instead of Faxing |
| 4. Go Paperless with Electronic Bills and Statements |
| 5. Reuse old envelopes or paper for scrap |
| 6. Reduce Junk Mail |
| 7. Submit your Annual Income Tax Returns Online |
| 8. Read Newspapers and Magazines Online |
| 9. Avoid printing ATM receipts |
| 10. Use cloth for cleaning instead of paper towels |



A Chicago donut shop is printing Mitch Hedberg's "Receipt For Donut" routine on its receipts · Newswire · The A.V. Club



If you have suggestions or success stories on how to reduce paper usage, please email green@upstate.edu!

FUTURE INITIATIVES AT UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

Upstate will soon begin efforts to decrease paper/ink usage and costs by: 1) Reducing the use of personal printers in favor of network printers and 2) Eliminating the use of ink jet printers in favor of network printers. More to come!