

Waste Management Hierarchy

So, you have decided to help the waste problem by better managing your own garbage. Now comes the hard part, when do you start, where do you begin, and what do you do?

Start right away, today, but start small. A good example would be to concentrate on changing the waste generated in your kitchen. By beginning small, a person is not overwhelmed and will develop useful habits more readily.

The question of what to do is not all that difficult to answer. By following the steps of the waste management hierarchy (see Figure A-2) all the garbage and leftovers, person, business, industry or other waste producer makes, will be better handled. A hierarchy is an arrangement based on an ascending or descending order; it is similar to ranking a group by order of preference.

The best method of managing waste is to reduce it. This is the first step in the hierarchy and is also the most effective. Reduction is the process of decreasing the amount of waste generated at each step of a product or material's development or use. This includes diminishing hazards by replacing a substance with a safer one. We are able to save energy, resources and space by producing less waste. Reduction goes right to the heart of the matter by slowing or stopping the production of trash before it enters the waste stream.



Figure A-2