



Waste Not: Why Reducing Waste Matters in Barrie

In 2025, the conversation around waste isn't just about keeping our streets clean—it's about safeguarding our environment, conserving resources, and ensuring a sustainable future for our community. For residents of Barrie, Ontario, understanding the impact of waste and taking steps to reduce it is more crucial than ever.

The Local Landscape: Barrie's Waste Challenges

Barrie's primary waste disposal site, the Sandy Hollow Landfill, has been operational since the early 1960s. Thanks to innovative projects, its capacity was extended by over 1 million cubic meters, pushing its expected closure date to around 2035. However, with the city's growing population and consumption patterns, this extension offers only a temporary reprieve.

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On a broader scale, Ontario's landfill capacity is projected to be exhausted by 2032 if current waste generation trends continue. This looming deadline underscores the urgency for communities like Barrie to adopt more sustainable waste management practices. [Barrie Today](#)

The Broader Impact: Waste and the Environment

Waste isn't just a local issue; it's a global environmental concern. Landfills emit methane, a potent greenhouse gas contributing to climate change. Leachate from waste can contaminate soil and water sources, affecting ecosystems and human health. Moreover, the production and disposal of goods consume vast amounts of energy and resources, leading to deforestation, water scarcity, and biodiversity loss.

Taking Action: Steps Toward Waste Reduction

Reducing waste is a collective effort that starts with individual actions. Here are some steps Barrie residents can take:

REFUSE: Say No to Waste Before It Starts

We're often told to reduce, reuse, and recycle—but what if we could avoid some of that waste altogether?

That's where **Refuse** comes in. It means *consciously choosing not to accept items* that will likely end up in the landfill—especially things with excessive or non-recyclable packaging, single-use plastics, or freebies we don't really need.

Refusing is about:

- Saying no to plastic cutlery or straws when you're ordering takeout.
- Politely declining freebies or promotional items you won't use.
- Choosing products with less or no packaging when possible.
- Letting your favourite stores or brands know you care about sustainable packaging.
- Supporting businesses that use refillable, compostable, or recyclable materials.

It's a small but powerful mindset shift—from reacting to waste to preventing it. When enough people make these conscious choices, it can influence what businesses offer and what our community prioritizes.

REDUCE: Be mindful of purchases. Opt for products with minimal packaging and consider the longevity of items before buying.

REUSE: Before discarding items, think about how they might be repurposed or donated.

FIX: Repair broken or damaged items whenever possible—whether it's mending clothes, gluing a chair, or updating electronics. [Repair Cafe](#) dates and locations are listed on [Living Green event page](#)

RECYCLE: Familiarize yourself with Barrie's recycling guidelines to ensure materials are correctly sorted and processed.

COMPOST: Utilize the city's organics collection program to divert food and yard waste from landfills. [City of Barrie](#)

BORROW: Instead of buying new, consider borrowing tools, décor, or specialty items from friends, neighbours, or local lending programs.

EDUCATE: Stay informed about waste reduction initiatives and share knowledge within your community.

Looking Ahead

Addressing waste challenges requires a multifaceted approach, combining individual responsibility with community initiatives. By understanding the implications of our waste and taking proactive steps, we can contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable Barrie.