

Do You Support Recycling?

By Norm Eisenmann

Do you support recycling? I don't mean do you toss a few items into your recycling bin when you get the urge to be nice to the environment, but do you really support recycling? If you want to help manufacturers 'see the light' and produce more products made from recycled material you need to look for products made from recycled material when you go shopping. We need to not only put every possible item that can be recycled in Chelmsford into your bin or bring to a drop-off, but we need you to seek out and buy the products made from recycled materials. Buying products made from recycled material encourages manufacturers to invest the money to make more products from recycled materials.

Take a trip through your local office supply store and you will be amazed at the items that are made from recycled material. When an item states that it is made from recycled material, many times there are two numbers on the packaging. For example on napkins it may state 100% recycled and 60% post consumer. That means that the product is NOT made from a tree that was cut down last week. It means that 40% was from the 'cuttings' on the factory floor and 60% from what you put into your bin a few months ago. Okay, may not your bin, but someone's bin. The higher the post consumer content the more your recycling helped to make the product.

Now that we understand the difference between '% recycled' and '% post consumer', let's look to see how many items we can find that are produced from recycled material. Walking down the first aisle we find recycled copy paper (30% post consumer), recycled lined pads of paper (100% recycled/40% post consumer), recycled envelopes, and recycled file folders. In another aisle we find recycled packing peanuts for when you want to send a gift to your favorite recycler, we also find recycled stackable plastic trays for your desk, recycled presentation covers for the awesome presentation that you just created, recycled Post-It Notes in pretty pastel colors, and recycled clipboards for recording how much you recycle at home. Continuing to walk through the store we find facial tissues made from recycled products, along with multi-fold paper towels, rolls of paper towels, and paper napkins. While you may have known of many of the items mentioned above, I'll bet that there are two more items that may surprise you. You can also get jumbo paper clips made from 100% recycled steel with 50% of it post consumer and you can get a steel check file box made from 30% post consumer materials.

If you walk down the aisle in another local store you will find storage boxes made from recycled material as well as adding machine tapes, plastic trash bags, vertical organizers for your desk, and 3-ring binders made from milk bottles.

Check out another local store and you will find swings made of recycled car and truck tires and you can find decking material made from recycled wood and plastic.

You can also buy carpet that is made from recycled soda bottles commonly referred to as PET plastic.

With a little imagination you can also find pens made from recycled material, as well as pencils, scissors, kitchen bags, and many more products.

Now that you know a few of the products out in the marketplace that are made of recycled materials you can go and look for and buy products made from recycled material. And don't forget to fill your recycling bin with the appropriate materials in order to give the manufacturers lots of recycled material.