



Government
of South Australia

Clothing, furniture and household goods

Zero Waste SA

‘Retail therapy’—the phrase has entered the language and the practice is decidedly popular. In fact it’s a certified recreational activity. We in Australia are great consumers.

But this therapy has a nasty side effect—waste—and we know we have to reduce waste. Planet Art estimates that on average each Australian household throws out 17.7 kilos of waste every week. So let’s think more carefully about the way we get our retail therapy.

We can all minimise waste and save precious resources by following the 3Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle.

reduce
reuse
recycle



Reduce

Be a careful consumer and help the environment by:

- buying fewer, well-chosen goods
- buying durable items
- avoiding disposable products
- choosing recycled or recyclable products
- taking reusable shopping bags on a spree and refusing shop bags
- choosing products with minimal packaging
- sharing items, such as lawn mowers and trailers, with friends or neighbours
- making your own gifts and clothes
- hiring or borrowing occasionally used items, such as extra glasses for parties.

Reuse

Furniture, clothing and other goods can be repaired and rejuvenated, and reused:

- swap clothes with friends and relatives, or give them away
- give them to a charity to resell
- take a course in home maintenance and renovate items yourself
- learn sewing to repair your own clothes
- sell and buy clothes at commercial secondhand clothing or designer recycling shops
- buy household goods from secondhand shops
- place clothing in charity bins (see box) or donate items to charities or Rotary or Lions Club groups.

There's money to be made in the secondhand market. Sell household goods, furniture, clothes, books and tools at:

- garage sales (join with the neighbours for a monster one)
- trash and treasure markets
- secondhand furniture shops
- general auctions
- online selling sites.

Recycle

In South Australia we can:

- put out materials for collection in kerbside recycling schemes run by local councils
- take recyclable materials to collection depots located across the state.

Clothing bins

- Most mainstream charities have clothing recycle bins. The Salvation Army, for example, has been recycling household goods and clothing for over 100 years.
- Charity clothing bins can be found throughout the suburbs, in shopping centres, service stations and church grounds. They supply clothes for Salvation Army, Goodwill and St Vincent de Paul charity shops that sell secondhand clothes at low prices.
- **Place clean clothing only in the bins.**
- Never dump materials, broken items or rubbish around the collection bins. Some recyclers have been forced to remove bins because of the cost of removing unsuitable materials (and then disposing of them) and complaints about unsightly materials dumped around bins.
- If items aren't appropriate for the bins, take them to one of the secondhand shops run by charities. Some charities will pick up large loads.

Further information

- Use Zero Waste's Recycling Information Directory www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au/rid.php to find information about recycling services in your area.
- Look for recycling services, secondhand shops, auctions and antique shops in newspapers and the Yellow Pages www.yellowpages.com.au

Zero Waste SA - The goal of Zero Waste SA is to eliminate waste or its disposal in landfill by encouraging South Australians to:

- reduce their consumption of resources
- reuse and recycle materials.
- Visit Zero Waste SA's website at www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au

For more information about strategies and tips for managing waste in South Australia check the other fact sheets in this series at www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au/factsheets.php

Sources - Planet Ark recycling report 2002 at www.planetark.org/recycling/index.cfm Total Environment Centre. Toxic product fact sheet, 2003.