



## You are about to embark on the Earth Day Action Quest in celebration of Earth Day.

Earth Day is a day for the global community to come together around our shared planet – together, we can change the world! Activities you find here will help you reduce your impact on the Earth and be a better steward of resources. Complete at least three activities to be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Visa Gift Card\*. The final day of the Earth Day Action Quest is April 30th. Happy trails!

### Reduce

#### Waste Audit

Do you know where your waste goes when it leaves your curb? If you live in Washington or Ramsey counties, your trash is brought to the **Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Center** (R&E Center) in Newport. The R&E Center is maximizing the recovery of resources and diverting as much as possible from landfills, but we can do more! Keep track of everything you throw in the trash today. At the end of the day, look at what you throw away most often. Could you make choices that would reduce how much you throw away?

#### Swap it out!

Make simple swaps for reusable items to reduce your waste. There are many easy swaps you can make to reduce trash (and save money!). Opt for items that can be reused rather than single-use options.

#### R&E Center and the Waste Hierarchy

Learn about the waste hierarchy and where your trash goes. Check out [this clip](#) about the R&E Center to learn what happens to your trash when you throw it away. What is something that surprised you? What is something you discard that could move up the waste hierarchy?

#### Express Thanks

Thank a favorite restaurant for its green practices, such as offering reusable dishes or using sustainable ingredients. This appreciation can be given in person or in an online review.

#### Repair

Instead of tossing out items if they break, challenge yourself to fix them instead! Check out [ifixit.com](#) for helpful tutorials on how to fix common items. You can also keep an eye out for Ramsey County Fix-it Clinics as well as Washington County Fix-it Clinics.

#### Product Reuse

Did you know both counties have spaces where you can get free products such as paints, stains, automotive fluids, and household cleaners? When people bring these items to household hazardous waste sites, products in good condition are made available for free to residents. Come browse the shelves and see what you find!

#### Buy Second Hand

Donating old items is great, but buying second-hand is important as it ensures that those items are used. Next time you need an item, look at your local thrift store, shop at a garage sale, or check online, such as on Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist or your local buy-nothing group.

#### Sort it Out

Recyclables are a commodity. Making sure we recycle only items that are accepted by your hauler reduces contamination and increases the value of these materials. Test your knowledge by playing the Know What to Throw game!

#### Household Hazardous Waste

Household hazardous waste (HHW) includes household cleaners, paints, paint thinners, batteries, motor oils and pesticides. Spend 15 minutes finding HHW in your house and plan how to properly dispose of them at your nearest HHW drop-off location.

#### What's an MRF?

What did you just say? MRF stands for "materials recovery facility," where the items in your recycling bin go to be sorted for recycling. Check out what happens at Shakopee's Dem-Con MRF, or search for examples of other MRFs in action and prepare to be amazed.

#### Tour the R&E Center

Did you know that all trash generated by residents and businesses in Ramsey and Washington counties is delivered to the Recycling & Energy Center in Newport, where it is processed to recover value? Learn more about where things go when you throw them away by taking a tour of the R&E Center. Click to watch a virtual tour or sign up for an in-person tour.

#### Parks, Parks, Parks!

Explore one of the 24 regional and county parks in your own backyard! Click to find info on Ramsey County parks and Washington County parks.

#### Take the Lead Out

Do you love to fish? Fishing tackle made from lead can poison loons, eagles and other wildlife if they ingest it. Exchange your lead tackle for non-lead tackle at a Ramsey County or Washington County Environmental Center. It's free! Not sure if your tackle is made of lead? Try rubbing the tackle on a piece of paper. If it leaves a streak, then it's likely lead.

#### Food: Too Good to Waste

Food waste is a big challenge in our country, with 40% of all food being wasted. When we throw away food, we waste money and all the resources it takes to grow, ship, and keep it fresh. What's the last food item you threw away because it went bad? Check out the tips from [savethefood.org](#) for ideas on how to better store your food, try new recipes, and eat up those leftovers!

#### Shop Low Waste

Reduce waste while grocery shopping. Practice one of the shopping methods below to reduce food and packaging waste next time you go shopping!

**Buy produce in bulk.** Buying loose produce means you can choose exactly how much you want and are less likely to waste food.

**Use reusable produce bags.** Skip the flimsy plastic and bring your own reusable bags for your bulk produce!

**Shop the bulk bins.** Choose exactly how much you want and bring your own container to save on packaging waste.

#### Donate

Donating to and buying from thrift stores is a great way to reduce waste. Donating your time by volunteering at a food shelf or by cleaning up a natural area near you are great ways to support your community and protect your local environment. Find a way to donate this month. The opportunities are endless!

#### Furniture Forever

Do you have gently used furniture that could go to a new home? Many thrift stores or similar organizations will happily take your household furniture, and many even pick up your furniture for free! If furniture just needs a little love, consider giving it some new life by fixing it up. And finally, if it is beyond repair and time for it to go, check with your local hauler to arrange for a bulky waste pickup!

#### Be a Battery Hero!

If it lights up, makes noise or moves without a plug, it has a battery. Batteries can cause fires when they end up in the trash or recycling cart. Be a Battery Hero! Bring your used batteries to a Ramsey County collection site or the Washington County Environmental Center.

#### Food Scraps

Start collecting food scraps so that they can be recycled. You can compost food scraps in your yard or drop them off at a county collection site. The food scraps are then turned back into nutrient-rich soil!

#### Find it at Your Local Library

Read a book from home or borrow one for free through your public library. Visit the Ramsey County library or Washington County library websites for library locations.

#### Medicine Drop Box

Bring them to a safe drop box instead of throwing them in the garbage or flushing them down the toilet. You will help prevent crime, drug abuse and accidental poisoning and protect our environment. Find a free collection site near you in Ramsey County or Washington County.

Find more ways to get involved at [EarthDayActionQuest.com](#)

### Reuse

### Recycle

### Adventure

