



Pollution Prevention: The Basics

The environmental benefits of solid waste pollution prevention include less waste generation through material substitution, source reduction, better equipment maintenance and employee education. Solid wastes are unwanted materials, such as garbage, office paper, packaging and wood pallets.

What is pollution prevention?

Pollution prevention (P2) is the use of source reduction techniques to reduce risk to public health, safety, welfare and the environment and, as a second preference, the use of environmentally sound recycling to achieve these same goals. P2 addresses all types of waste and environmental releases to the air, water, and land.

Inventory Control Opportunities

Establish a just-in-time ordering system. This means that only the amount needed is on hand at any given time. Establishing a centralized purchasing system is also key, because if there is only one purchasing system, then quantities are much easier to track.

Good housekeeping practices also help control inventory and reduce solid waste generation. Inspect materials before accepting a shipment to verify the shipment is correct. Conduct frequent inventory checks. Properly label containers. Have a good inventory system to better manage materials and reduce solid waste.

If you manage chemicals, order them in exact amounts needed and rotate chemical stock. Encourage your chemical suppliers to become responsible partners (for example, accepting outdated supplies), or switch to a vendor that is willing to be a responsible partner.

Recycling and Other Opportunities to Reduce Waste

- Perform a dumpster dive or waste inventory.
- Identify outlets for recyclable wastes.
- Purchase reusable products rather than disposable ones.
- Purchase products made from recycled materials.
- Select quantity and package types that minimize packing waste.
- Set up staffed control points to dispense materials/chemicals and collect wastes.
- Explore other uses for off-spec material that would have otherwise been disposed.
- Change to reusable shipping containers or use containers that can be rinsed or recycled.
- Consider pallet leasing services.
- Recycle wooden pallets.
- When making copies, make them double-sided or use both sides of the paper for draft documents.
- Use email whenever possible.
- Issue newsletters and memos via email rather than paper.
- Establish material use guidelines to help reduce excess waste.
- Offer unwanted office supplies, furniture, or equipment to employees, charity services, etc., instead of taking these items to a landfill.
- Form a P2 or green team to identify waste reduction opportunities.
- Give employees input in the P2 process and provide rewards for any ideas that result in waste reduction.
- Take advantage of materials exchanges, like the [Ohio Materials Marketplace](#).

Solid Waste Pollution Prevention

Benefits

Economic benefits of inventory control include reducing disposal costs of unused materials, saving money on analytical tests to determine how unknown materials should be disposed and reducing money tied up in unused inventory. If materials are recycled or reused, then economic benefits include reduced disposal costs. Recycling facilities may pay a small amount for some recycled materials such as aluminum cans.

The environmental benefits of solid waste P2 include the generation of less waste through material substitution, source reduction, better equipment maintenance and employee education. Internal scrap reduction and recycling programs also help to reduce waste.

Need more help?

Contact the Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention at (800) 329-7518 for more information or check the Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance website at epa.ohio.gov/defa. For information about the ways other Ohio companies may be implementing pollution prevention, and possible ideas for your facility, please refer to our [*Encouraging Environmental Excellence \(E3\) webpage*](#).