

# Waste reduction, prevention, and reuse

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# Who we are

*Member-based network of reuse businesses, supporters, and advocates*

Founded in 2012

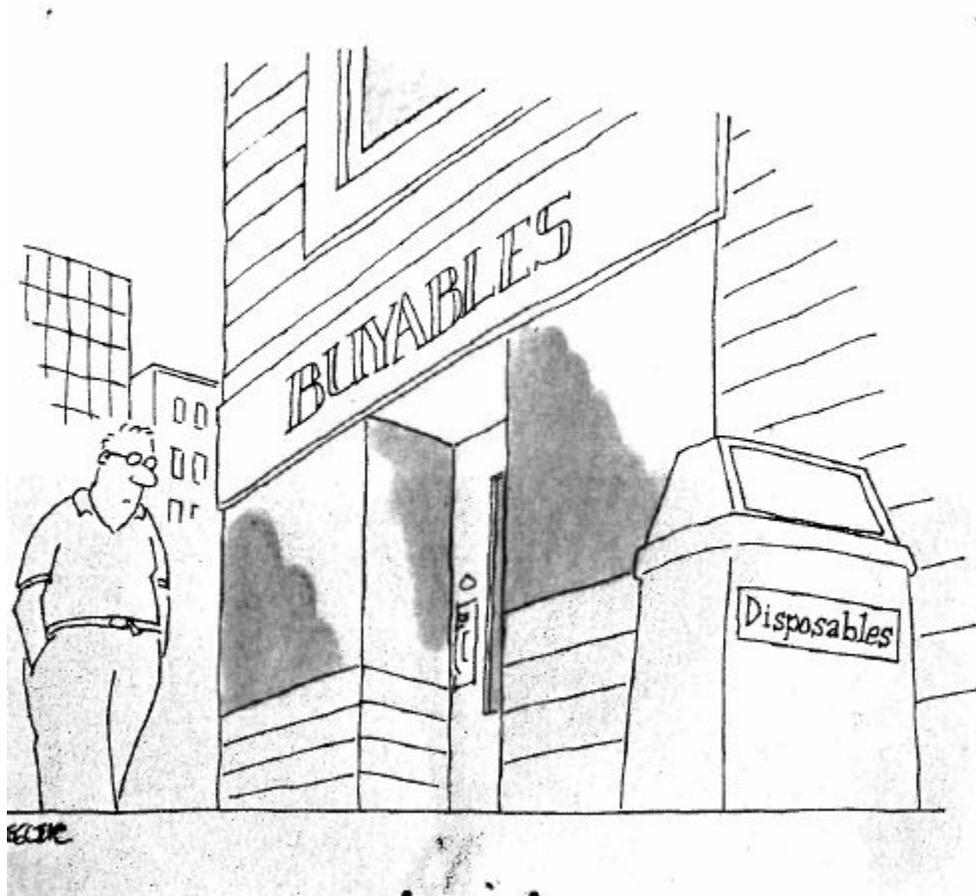
**PURPOSE:** To lead a movement grounded in the principles of reuse, which extends the life of resources and decreases the demand for new production.

**MISSION:** Build partnerships and support a vibrant network of reuse practitioners through education, promotion, and advocacy.

**VISION:** Regenerative, reuse-centered communities that protect the environment and value the well-being of future generations.



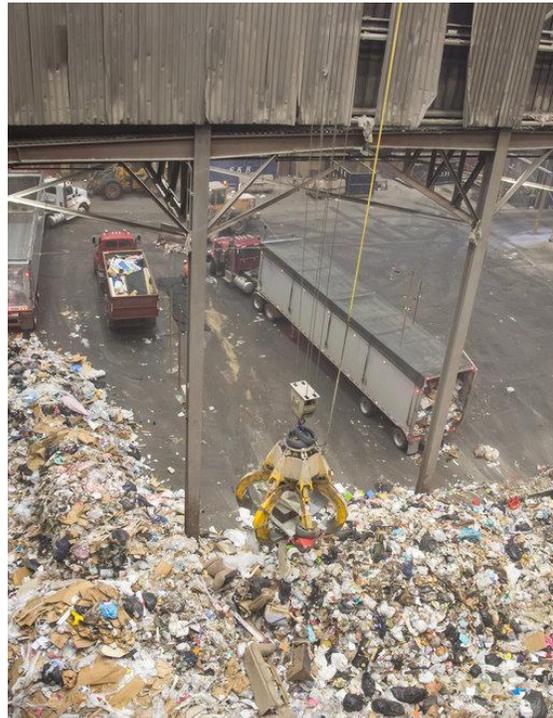
# Why we are here



# Waste prevention and reuse are NOT



Landfilling



Waste to energy



Recycling



Composting

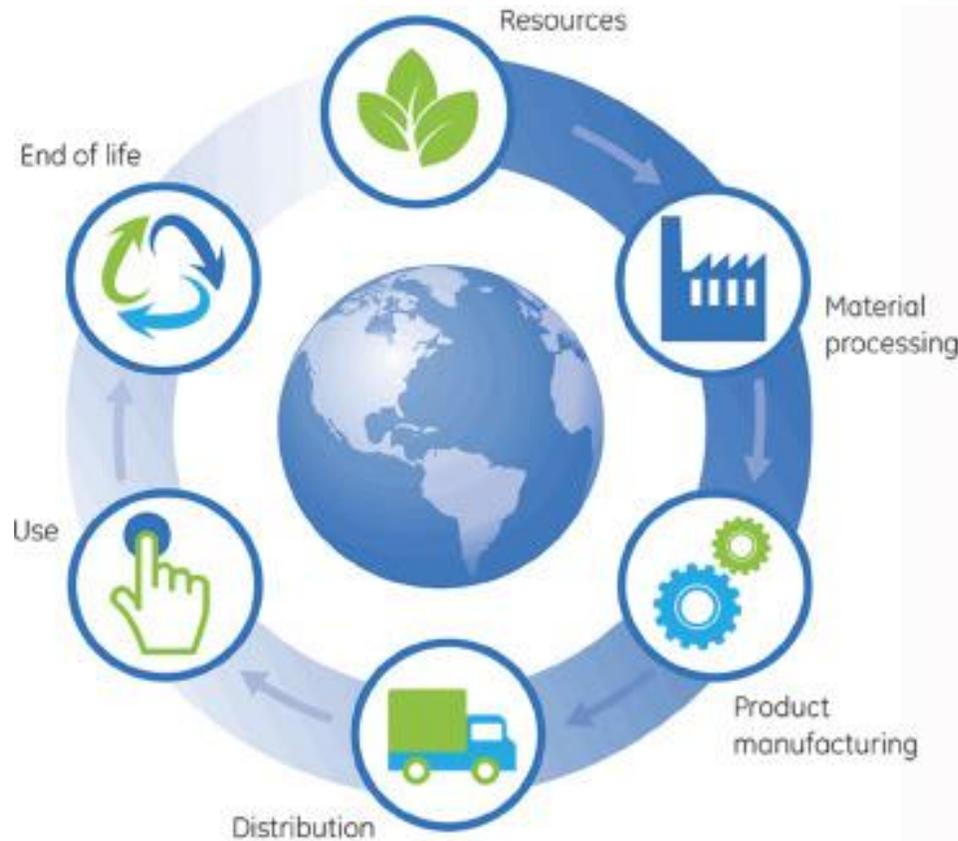
# Waste prevention and reuse ARE

**Waste prevention/reduction** – Avoidance or decrease in the amount of materials used

**Reuse** – Using items and materials multiple times for their original or repurposing for a new use

*Often a fundamental shift in (mainstream) way of thinking that frequently requires an adjustment in behavior.*

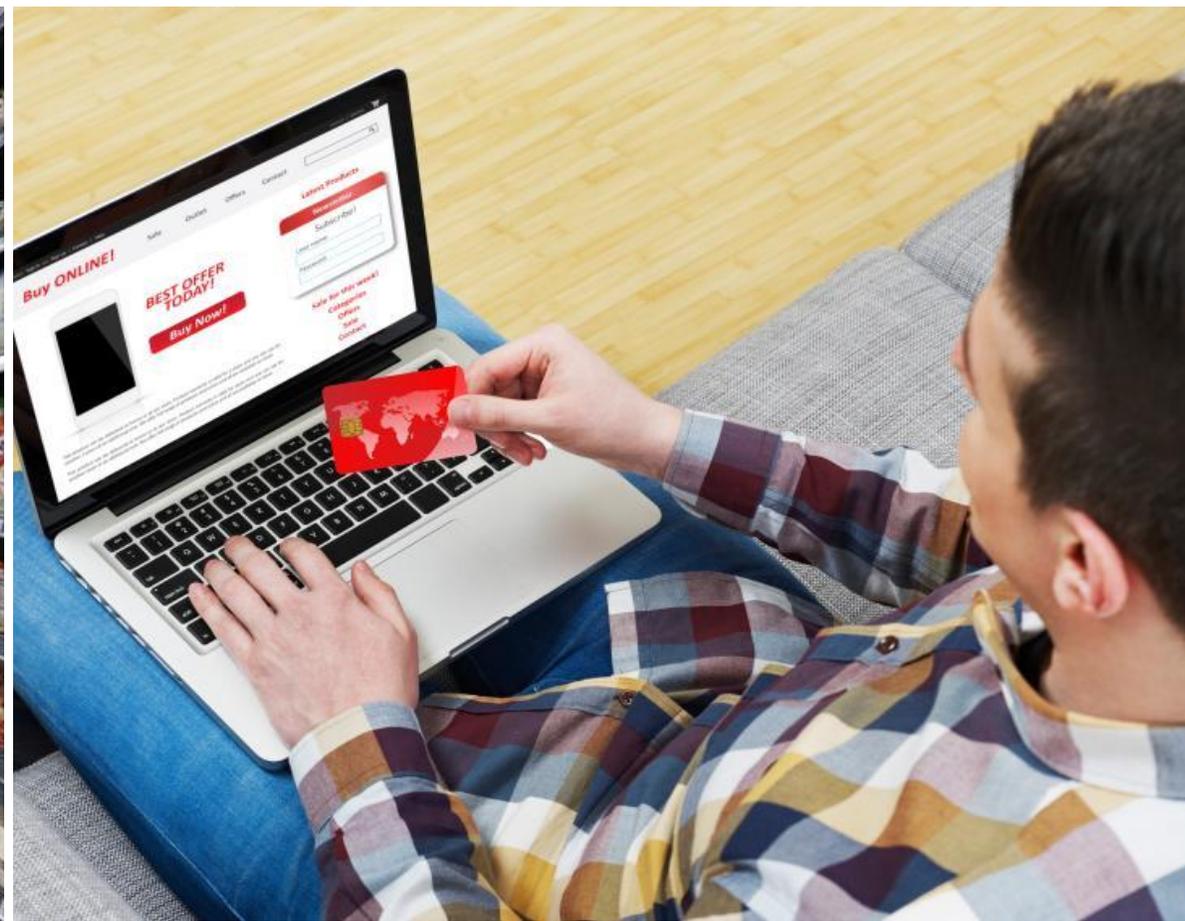
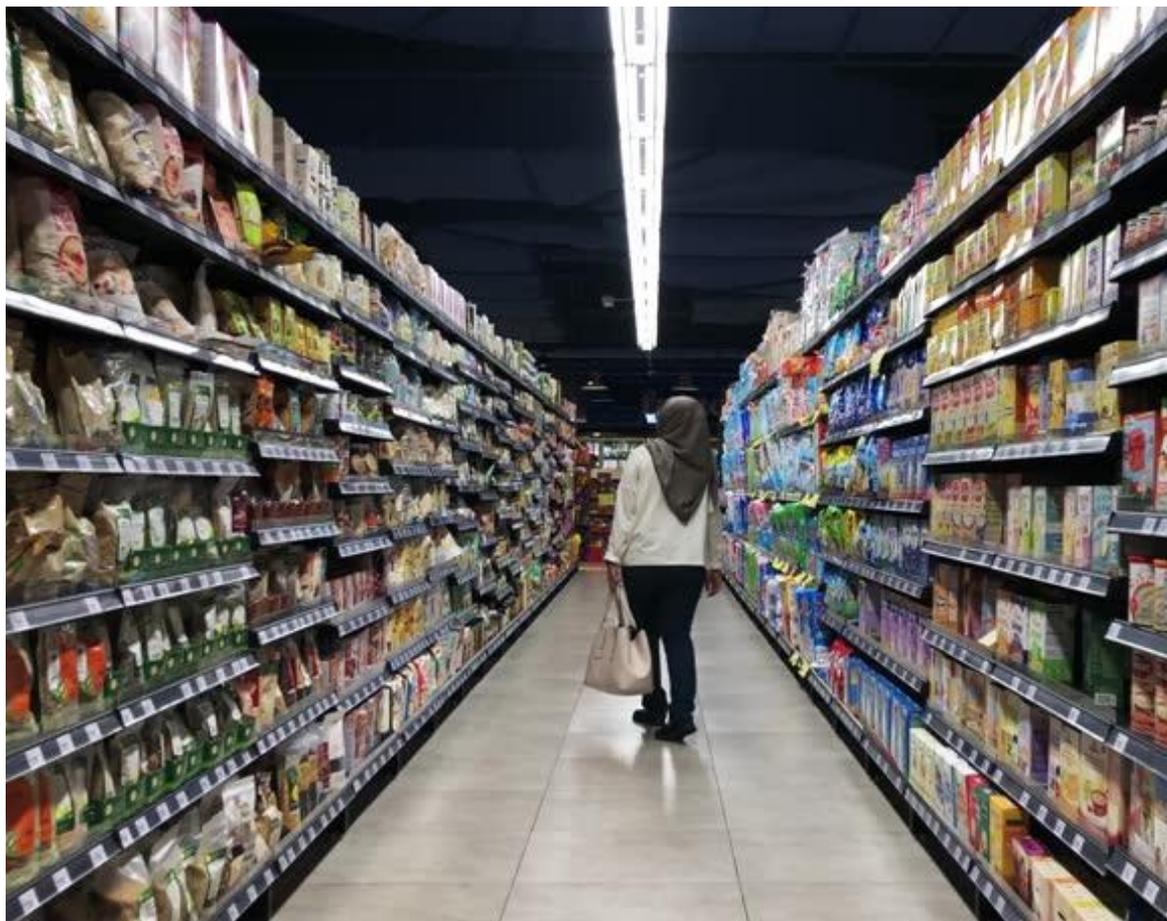
# Life cycle



**Impacts occur at all stages of the life cycle, not just disposal.**

- Recycling cuts out extraction
- Reuse cuts out processing, manufacturing, and often distribution

# Waste prevention starts with choices here

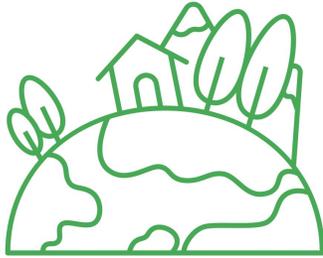


# Not here



Once a product is in your hand,  
it's too late to prevent waste.

# The value of reuse



## Environmental

500,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> avoided/YEAR

- 100,000 cars

24B liters of freshwater

- 50.4B bottles of water (16oz)



## Economic

~\$4B/year in MN

~45,000 jobs

- Repair creates the most



## Social

Reuse jobs → very local

Direct benefit to MN communities

# Reuse

## FASHION



Secondhand retail, clothing rental, tailoring, mending

## FURNISHING



Secondhand or antique retail, repair, reupholstery

## BUILDING



Salvaged material retail, deconstruction, preservation

## ELECTRONICS



Refurbished retail, electronics rental, repair

Extending the life of a product that is already available.

# Minnesota examples

## Electronics

- Buy refurbished smartphones or laptops from Repowered or Tech Fixers
- Attend county fix-it clinics to repair

## Building

- Take a home maintenance class with Rethos
- Visit Better Futures Minnesota, Birch Group, or LumberStash for reused building materials
- Get a MN Tool Library membership to borrow tools

## Furnishings and decor

- Purchase household items at Habitat ReStore
- Check out county reuse centers (Becker, Dodge, WLSDD)

## Clothing and textiles

- Get outdoor gear repaired with Repair Lair
- Updated your wardrobe at Old School thrift store, Arc's Value Village, Hidden Treasures
- Learn to repair or upcycle with RETHINK Tailoring
- Attend a city-sponsored swap and share event

# Before you buy



*Use it up,  
Wear it out,  
Make it do,  
Or do without!*

Is the item something you really need?

Can existing items be repaired?

Can another item serve the same purpose?

Can you borrow or rent the item?

# When you do buy



Consider used first

Buy durable, reusable items

Buy items with multiple purposes

Buy recycled content

# Refuse

Avoid the impulse to take “free” stuff you don’t need!



And don't give it out either!

# Activity: ReShop

Let's go "shopping"!



What are actions you already do?

Pick 3 actions you will try in the next 6 months.

# Shopping

*When shopping, it is easy to bring home as much, if not more, packaging than actual items.*

Reusable bags – not just for grocery!

*Bonus: Make one from an old t-shirt*

*Bonus: Reusable produce bags*

BYO containers/bags for buying bulk items.

*Bonus: Use containers you already have - glass jars or plastic containers you might otherwise recycle.*

Purchase refillable personal care items.

*Bonus: Razors or toothbrushes with replaceable heads*

*Bonus: Minimally packaged bar soap instead of liquid*

Choose items with less packaging.

Request e-receipts whenever possible.

# Party time!



*Make parties a time for celebrating, not making waste.*

Reusable plates, utensils, cups, cloth napkins

*Bonus:* Borrow or shop secondhand if needed.

Bulk treats/drinks instead of individual serving sizes

Reusable décor - tablecloths, centerpieces

*Bonus:* Borrow from friends, family, neighbors!

Give waste-free gifts

- Used or upcycled gifts
- Experiences instead of stuff
- Wrap in repurposed or reusable gift wrap

# Kid's play

*There are many ways to avoid waste when it comes to kids play.*

Buy and gift secondhand toys.

Join a toy library

Buy quality items that last so they can be passed on to other kids.

Make your own games and toys out of repurposed items.



# Eating out

*Reducing waste when eating out can be tricky, but with planning many single-use items can be avoided.*

Assemble a kit to keep in your car or bag.

*Bonus:* Use items you already have!

Include: Utensils (fork, spoon, knife, chopsticks), straw, cloth napkin, beverage container (for hot and cold drinks), to-go container for leftovers



*Did you know?*

MN law allows you to bring your own to-go container!

Restaurant staff cannot handle your container.

# Fashion and textiles

*Textiles have a large environmental footprint.*

Shop secondhand.

Attend or host clothing swaps.

Wash and dry your clothes less often.

Learn basic mending skills.

Make a mending kit ([video](#)).

Rent for one-time use.

When you do buy new, buy durable items.



# Pledge

**What did you choose?**

**What are excited to try?**

# Policy matters

Individual changes are important, but...

**Policy is required for systemic change**



# Policies

## Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Manufacturers have a stake after the sales

- Design for long-term (NOT obsolescence)
- Repair vs replace
- Longer repair windows (warranty)
- Takeback programs

## Right to Repair

- Law to allow consumers to repair their own stuff

### Minnesota's new 'right to repair' law is the broadest one yet

BY: ELAINE S. POVICH - MAY 30, 2023 7:24 AM



Photo illustration by Getty Images.

# Join us!

**Membership** – individuals, businesses, and organizations

**Volunteer** – ongoing opportunities and events

**Board** – elections in the fall

**Participate and advocate**

- Attend events ([reusemn.org/events](https://reusemn.org/events))
- Follow and support reuse legislation and encourage your community to adopt reuse policy
- Tell your family and friends what changes you are making
- Follow us on social media @reusemn



**THANK  
YOU!**



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