

These eight tips can help make your back-to-school plans green

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 ing books is a growing option that helps reduce the amount of books being printed. According to the Environmental Paper Network, if the U.S. reduced its paper consumption by 10 percent annually, we could save enough energy to power 228,000 homes, the carbon emissions equivalent to removing 279,000 cars from the road and 11 billion gallons of water.

4. Swap and Sell. Every school year demands a new wardrobe, but this doesn't have to mean a shopping spree at the mall. Organize a clothing swap; pass on those tiny shorts

to another grateful parent; your child may end up with an I love Edward hoodie or a Transformers T-shirt. If your school requires uniforms, most parents will be happy to trade in "old" for "new." Same goes for flea markets, consignment shops and thrift stores. Someone's old skinny jeans could become your daughter's new favorite fashion statement. If buying new is a must, opt for some eco-friendly options (cotton; bamboo; etc.) and check out clothing from recycled goods.

5. The Wheels on the Bus...Do you drive your children to school every day? Do

you carpool? Or do they walk, ride their bikes or take the bus? To help reduce air pollution, investigate whether you are on or near a school bus route. If your child stays late for activities, set up a carpool with other parents, or arrange a "walkpool," chaperoning a group on foot. You'll save on gas, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and get some exercise.

6. Lunchtime! Lunch is a favorite subject. But a lot of trash results from a brown paper bag filled with baggies or pre-packaged snacks. Making lunches for school every day creates an average of 67 pounds of garbage per child – or more than 18,000 pounds per school – each year. Avoiding disposable packaging and single-serving items saves money along with reducing waste. Buy foods in bulk and portion them out, rather than prepackaged single servings. Invest in a lead-free lunch box and, if they don't come with it, reusable

plastic containers, cloth napkins and a thermos. Avoid throwing out a lunch bag every day, think of how many that adds up to nationwide. Plastic can leach toxins into your kids' drinks, so it's wise to use safe, reusable bottles like those from Sigg or Klean Kanteen. If you must buy plastic containers, look for safer plastics #1, 2, 4, and 5.

7. Do Your Part. Even if you've forgotten how to do long division, you can teach your kids to recycle when you're not around. Teach them that reusing is important. Have them figure out the amount of money that can be saved by re-using last year's supplies, and use some of that money for ice cream or another treat. If your school has a recycling program, explain to your children how to use it. If your school doesn't have a recycling program, ask if there are any plans to implement one, and if you could help make it happen.

8. Monitor Electronics. Computers, graphing calculators, printers – a lot of school supplies plug in or run on batteries. For the gadget-loving student, a solar-powered cell phone charger is a great back-to-school gift. Solar-powered chargers also work for iPods, game players, and digital cameras. Even if your child has mastered turning the lights out when they leave a room, there are two more ways to conserve energy, even when their gadgets are off. Purchase rechargeable batteries instead of new, and invest in a Smart Power Strip. At \$30 to \$40, it's a bit pricier than a typical power strip, but worth it. This strip stops drawing electricity from appliances that are turned off. Sounds like something that could be useful all over the house, doesn't it?

These tips were provided by Roy Weedman, Columbia County Solid Waste Coordinator.



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Council approves \$1.5 million LOCAP

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 should continue.

- Behrman Well #1 again experienced a fault in the automatic pump start/stop mechanism. The connections have

been cleaned and it is now operating correctly.

- Coordination difficulties have extended the railroad crossing detour by one week, to August 20. The Sellers Road Realignment project is on track for completion in mid-October.

- The city's is hoping to hold the first evidentiary hearing for the UGB expansion at the November 30 Planning Commission meeting.

Councilor Pete Edison requested that city staff analyze the cost of adding a Library Renovation Project, at an estimated cost of \$100,000 to the previously approved League of Oregon Cities Capital Access Program (LOCAP) funding list. City staff also refined calculations of the projected cost of a Public Works at \$250,000. Councilor Stewart advised that the design of the PWB build-out should include a sprinkler system for increased fire protection, which adds \$25,000 to the PWB build-out project.

After considering variations of debt service on the Water Fund and the General Fund, city staff recommended that council review their analysis and modify funding to \$1.565 million.

After lengthy discussions between council and city staff, council unanimously moved to modify the projects listed for LOCAP financing to a maximum of \$1.565 million, and authorized city staff to draft appropriate documentation for the change.

Council then approved the City Engineer's memorandum regarding the scope and fee for Water Capital Projects 1B, 3, and 4.

Council also accepted the CH2M Hill Traffic Analysis Report for the UGB Expansion Reanalysis Study.

The next city council meeting will be held September 14, starting at 7:30 p.m. in Banks City Hall.

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