

Seasonal Recycling Fun – Think it's trash? Think again!

The summer season offers many opportunities to embark on creative recycling adventures. Making new things with recycled materials is especially good to do with kids, as they learn to think before they toss useable items in the trash, and have fun while doing it.

What to make with a leaky hose:

- Soaker Hose - Cap off the end and drill more little holes in it.
- Bucket Handle - Slice through a short piece of hose lengthwise and fit it over a bucket handle for a comfier grip.
- Blade Guard - Slit sections of hose and slip them over ice skate blades, ax blades or saw blades.
- Sill Cock Extension – Leave the hose attached to the faucet and cut it to about 2 feet long to reduce splashing and make filling buckets easier.
- Garden Sculpture – Think balloon sculpture, but with hose parts. Attach to fence or plant support with wire coat hangers. Add other recycled things to your sculpture to make a scarecrow.
- Save any leftover hose in case you need tubing for your coy pond or an emergency gas siphon.

What to do with plastic berry baskets:

- Brush Cleaner – Set basket inside a clean plastic deli tub and fill with water. The grid at the bottom is a great way to clean paintbrushes.
- Soap Holder – Get a couple of those suction cups that have hooks on them; stick them to the shower wall, and hang the basket on the hooks. A great soap saver!
- Bubble wand – Fill a bucket with liquid soap and water, dip the basket in, and wave gently for lots of tiny bubbles.
- Organizer – Organize your small items such as packets, spices, and cosmetics in berry boxes. Stick one on your pegboard to hold screwdrivers.
- Bulb and Seedling Protectors – Plant bulbs inside them in the ground to keep them safe from squirrels and rodents. Place baskets over tender plants that need protection from varmints. Secure with pieces of bent wire or paperclips stuck in the ground.
- Give those boxes to a friend who grows berries.

Creative uses for plastic soda and water bottles:

- Ice Pack - For the cooler; fill with clean water, freeze, and drink when thawed.
- Ocean in a Bottle – Fill a clear bottle with half water and half vegetable oil; add food coloring and glitter to make a very cool toy. Use a little bottle for a baby toy.
- Substitute Funnel - Cut off the bottom of the plastic bottle. Turn the bottle upside down and *voila!* Very handy for putting oil in the car or filling jugs.
- Sand Bag Substitute – Using your funnel, pour dry sand in 2 liter bottles. These can be used for weight in the truck for winter, and if you get stuck, you just sprinkle some of the sand under your tires. Also makes a good doorstop. Decorate smaller ones for picnic table weights.

- Bath Toy Submarine - Cut three lines as a hatch (uncut side is hinge), and put your little action figures in for fun in the tub.

What to do with plastic flowerpots:

- Reuse them next spring.
- Bring them back to the nursery where you got them.
- Recycle them, rinsed and dry, with your plastics #1-7 at the transfer station.

Think green at the cookout. Use reusable dishes, not disposable. If you are using plastic utensils, wash them and use them at your next party. Better to use paper plates than disposable plastic ones. Throw them in the campfire or put them on your compost. These days you can buy cheap, colorful plastic dishes made from recycled plastic, and use them over and over again. Just say NO to Styrofoam, and have a wonderful green summer.

The Reusable News is a monthly column by the Selectmen's Recycling Advisory Committee. This article was written by committee member, Heidi Mayo.