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## Green Girl: Shorten the paper trail! Recycle and save trees

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A few minutes from now, you can do a huge favor for everyone on the planet. When you're done reading this newspaper, recycle it.

In this country, our paper trails are long. Each of us uses an astonishing 749 pounds of paper every year. More than 4 billion trees are cut down annually to create the paper products that make our lives easier, such as paper towels, toilet tissues, copy paper, tissues, paper bags, newspapers and paper plates. More than a third of all that paper ends up moldering in landfills, when it could be reused.



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Recycling newspapers and other paper products is one way to save trees. Another way is to simply use less.

Here are some tips to reduce your personal paper trail:

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- Instead of using paper towels for cleaning, use rags made from old T-shirts or towels.
- In the kitchen, dry hands on washable dish towels instead of paper towels.
- Rather than paper napkins, use washable (and far more elegant) cloth napkins.
- Eat on china or stoneware plates, never paper or Styrofoam.
- Recycle all paper products such as magazines, copy paper, mail (minus the little plastic window) and newspapers. We could save 500,000 trees every week if all of us did nothing more than just recycle our Sunday newspapers!
- Always pack groceries in reusable bags.

- Make scratch pads out of junk mail and other paper with one blank side. Simply cut the paper in quarters and staple together.
- Set your computer printer for double-sided prints.
- Avoid printing computer documents and e-mails unless absolutely necessary.

You'll save trees as you reduce your paper trail.

*Supplemented by Helen Beers and staff members of Pine Jog Environmental Education Center, West Palm Beach, in association with the College of Education, Florida Atlantic University. For more information, go to [www.pinejob.fau.edu](http://www.pinejob.fau.edu).*

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