



RAVEN RECYCLING

Our Commitment is the Environment

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WALKING THE WALK

What is often perceived as garbage is, in reality, a valuable resource that shouldn't be discarded.

To publicize this idea, back in mid October a cross-Canada celebration known as Waste Reduction Week happened.

Applying the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Composting to a persons waste is what Waste Reduction Week is all about.

Waste Reduction Week in Canada is organized by a coalition of non-government, not for profit environment groups from each of the thirteen provincial and territorial jurisdictions across Canada.

Since 2001, Waste Reduction Week in Canada has aimed to inform and engage Canadians through the theme Too Good to Waste.

In the Yukon, Raven Recycling challenged members of the public to be part of Waste Reduction Week.

A pledge form was printed in a fine local newspaper. This form offered eight Waste Reduction initiatives for individuals to check off and commit to.

By committing to these initiatives, they received a free cloth shopping bag from Raven Recycling.

Reusable shopping bags are good for the environment as they can be used over and over again.

Bags used once and chucked into the landfill get blown everywhere and end up strangling or entangling birds and other wildlife.

The initiatives that had to be committed to were varied. Some committed to many initiatives, some to just a few.

Reta Fisher pledged to partake in the City of Whitehorse compost collection program.

She also promised to recycle her milk jugs, magazines and newspaper. Finally, she committed to use cloth bags instead of plastic bags when she went shopping.



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Lyn Hartley went one better. Not only did she pledge to do all the things Reta did, Lyn promised to use a reusable mug whenever she got her morning java fix.

She also said she would walk, bus, bike or carpool throughout Waste Reduction Week. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, a rather nasty form of waste.

Dawne Mitchell from Dawson signed up to recycle milk jugs, magazines and newspapers. A commitment to use cloth reusable shopping bags was also made.

Finally, Dawne promised to use recycled paper in her home so as to create a demand for recycled material.

This last commitment is important in that it closes the product loop.

While most Yukoners recycle items such as office paper, that is not the end of the recycling loop.

Once the paper has been dropped off at a recycling center, it then gets shipped south to a mill.

There it is remade into 'new' paper.

This paper, with its recycled content, is then available for purchase.

Sometimes recycled paper is slightly more expensive than paper made from clear-cuts.

However, if consumers purchase recycled paper, it ensures a steady market for recycling centers to sell paper.

This allows for economic certainty, which in turn allows recycling centers to make long-term fiscal decisions.

These decisions can include getting involved in events such as Waste Reduction Week and offering cloth shopping bags to those who commit to reducing waste.

Raven Recycling would like to thank all those Yukoners who signed Waste Reduction Week pledge sheets.

If anyone would like more information on Waste Reduction Week visit www.wrwcanda.com.

For more information on reduce, reuse, recycle and compost operations in the Yukon visit www.ravenrecycling.org.

Lewis Rifkind is an employee of the Raven Recycling Society.