



# RecycleSmart

January 2016

RECYCLESMART.INFO

The overall Michigan recycling rate has been calculated at 15%, the lowest of the Great Lakes States. It is estimated that we are burying \$435 million in value of reusable materials in our landfills each year.

The 2014 Grand Traverse County diversion rate was calculated to be 34% and our goal is 50%. What steps can YOU take this year to help our community achieve this target?

Step 1: **REDUCE** your overall consumption and accumulation of waste.

- Buy thoughtfully
- Buy only what you need (eg. Discarded food makes up 14% of the municipal waste stream)
- Reject excessive packaging
- Avoid single use items (eg. Bottled water, disposable serve ware, single-use plastic shopping bags)
- Think about the life cycle of each product you buy—what happens to the product when it is no longer useful to you?

Step 2: **REUSE** items through repurposing or donating/selling to someone else once an item is no longer used.

- Choose products that can be reused and/or can serve multiple purposes in your daily life
- Seek out durable, well made products that will maintain value to others once you no longer need the item
- Seek out durable, well made products
- Avoid cheaply made and flimsy products that contribute to our disposable culture—emulate the resourcefulness of previous generations (the wartime generation demonstrated nationwide resource recovery)

Step 3: **RECYCLE** more of the valuable material like metal, plastic and food scraps that Michigan households are still sending to Michigan landfills.

- Organize your in-home waste management to make separation of recycling and waste more effective: 80-90% of space for recycling, 10-20% of space for non-recyclable waste. Replace that small bin with a large recycling cart for your curbside pickup
- Keep up to date on what your recycling hauler will accept or what you can place in recycling drop-off bins—recycling businesses in Grand Traverse County tell us much more of our household waste could be recycled
- Outside of the home, encourage businesses you visit to provide recycling at their business, and ask your city or township to provide recycling in public spaces like parks
- **COMPOST** those food scraps! Composting is easy! A few generations back, everyone did it, and now there are many more convenient ways to keep valuable organic material out of our landfills
- If home composting is not feasible for you, hire a convenient composting service through Carter's Compost or Bay Area Recycling for Charities



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## Christmas Tree Chipping Drop-Off

The Parks & Recreation Division offers a Christmas Tree drop off site for City of Traverse City residents. The trees are chipped and used for trail surfacing for City parks and Brown Bridge Quiet Area, mulching materials and erosion control.

Trees can be brought to the boat launch parking lot at Hull Park at the west end of Hannah Street, just west of Woodmere Avenue between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., until Sunday, January 17, 2016. All decorations and tinsel must be removed.

There is no charge for this service.

Please do not leave trees in the alleys, streets or City parks. The City will not be collecting trees from alleys or streets.

Thank You.