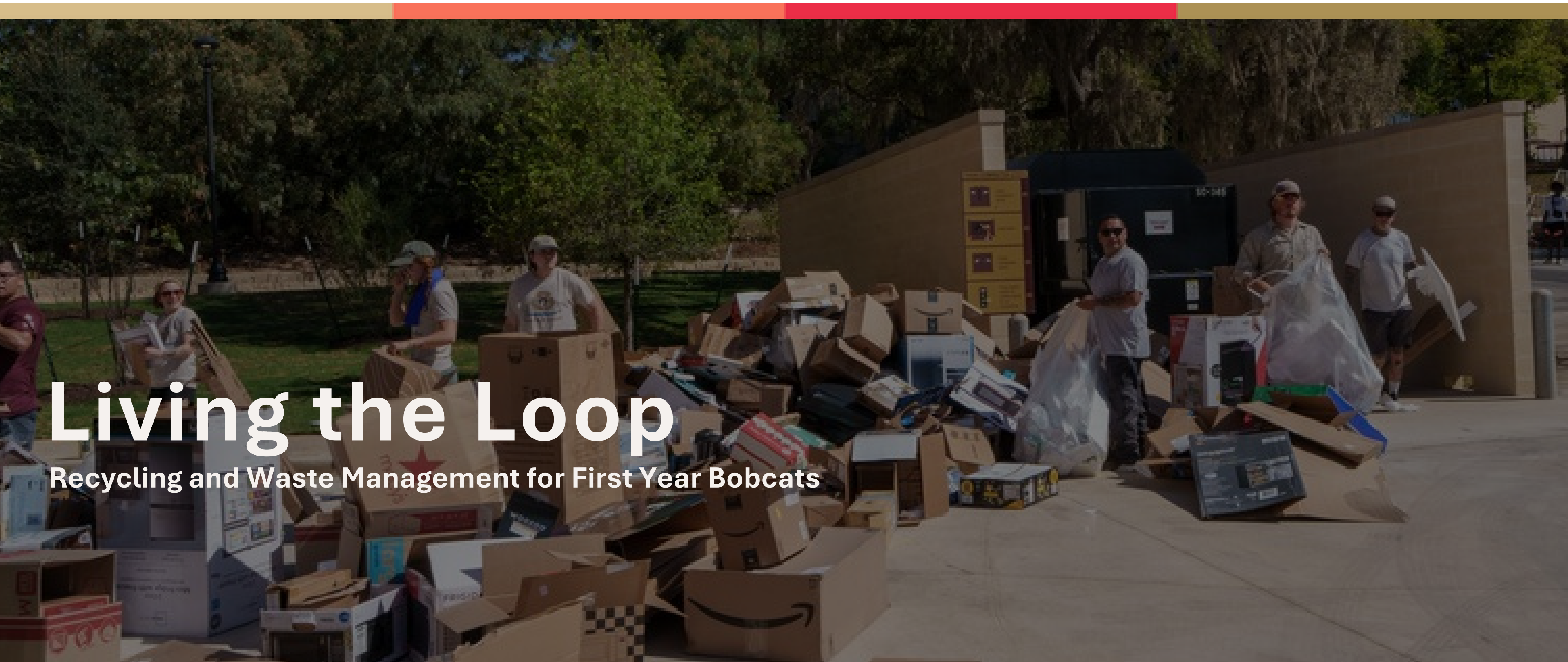


Living the Loop

Recycling and Waste Management for First Year Bobcats



The Trouble with Trash

For thousands of years, one of the most direct ways that humans have impacted their environment has been through the production and disposal of waste. Today, sustainable waste management is a top concern as communities across the world experience the effects of urbanization, population growth, and global climate trends.

In Texas, nearly half of all disposal facilities in the state are categorized as **municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills**, which are designed to accept household, commercial, and other nonhazardous waste. Because each landfill has a finite lifespan, it is important to help **divert** waste from these facilities by practicing different **waste reduction strategies**.

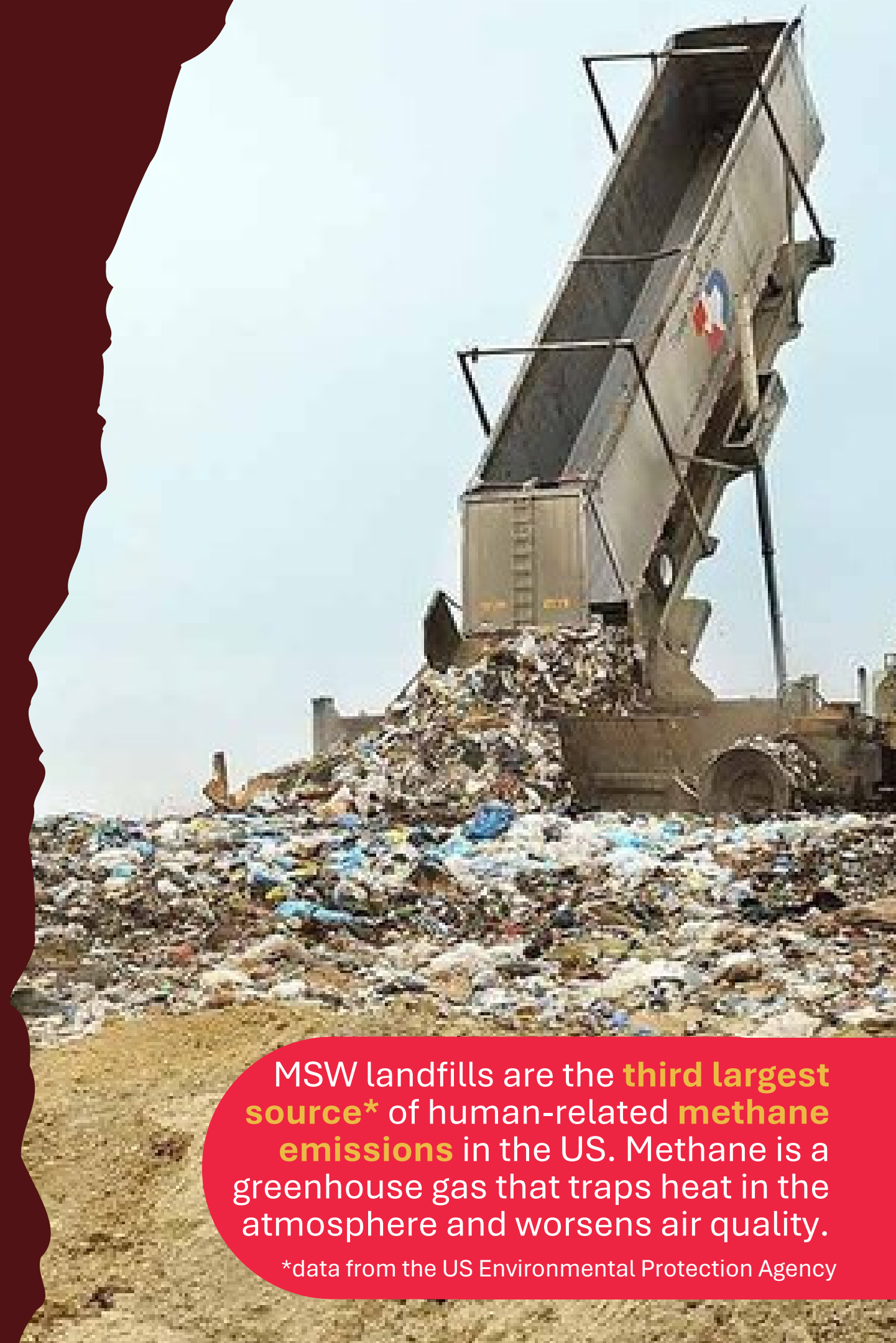


Did you know?

In 2024, Texans produced an average of **7.24 lbs** of trash per person per day, which is about **1.5 times the national average.***

This added up to a total of **41.3 million** tons of waste for the entire year- the same weight as roughly **10,300 single cab Ford F-150 trucks**.

*data from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality



MSW landfills are the **third largest source*** of human-related **methane emissions** in the US. Methane is a greenhouse gas that traps heat in the atmosphere and worsens air quality.

*data from the US Environmental Protection Agency

The State of Waste

Where is trash going at TXST?

Texas State is a fast growing university located in one of the fastest growing counties in the country. In regions facing rapid urbanization, sustainability becomes more important as available space in local waste management facilities decreases.

In 2025, **94%** of the waste produced on the TXST San Marcos campus went to a landfill. As enrollment grows, Bobcats living on campus have an opportunity to participate in all of the following three strategies for reducing the amount of waste that makes it to the dump:

- **Recycling**
- **Composting**
- **Source Reduction**



*data from TXST Recycling and Waste Management

Recycling on Campus

One of the easiest ways Bobcats can help divert material from landfills is by **recycling**. Recycling bins can be found on campus alongside most trash disposal sites and around outdoor common areas. Before throwing something away, always ask yourself...

Is it Recyclable?

YES*



GLASS



PAPER



PLASTIC



CARTONS



CANS

***All containers must be clean and rinsed**

NO



Plastic Bags or Wrap



Plastic Cutlery or Straws



Batteries, Vapes, or Flammables



Food or Food Wrappers



Styrofoam

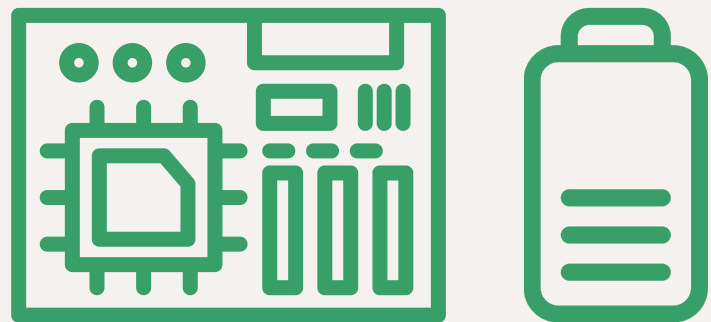


Greasy Pizza Boxes or Food Containers

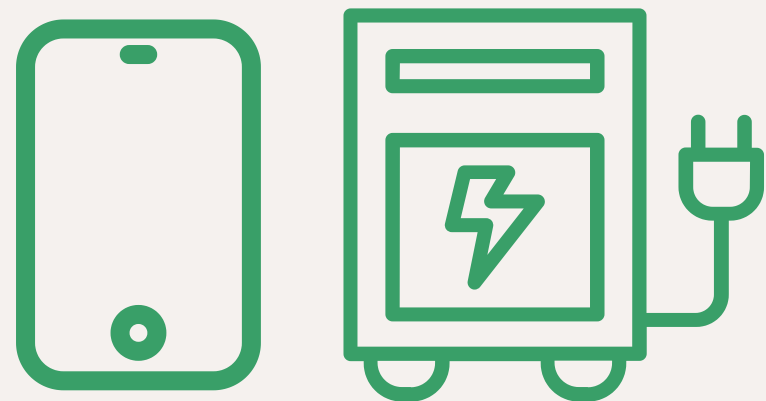
What About E-Waste?

Electronic waste, or **e-waste**, can be recycled on campus **ONLY** in official e-waste receptacles, which are emptied on a regular basis by TXST Environmental Health, Safety, Risk and Emergency Management. E-waste can become a **fire hazard** when disposed of improperly, so it is important to separate flammable items from other recyclable materials.

E-waste accepted by EHSREM includes batteries, cell phones, and rechargeable power banks. Lightbulbs should **not** be placed with batteries but can be picked up separately from other e-waste upon request by filling out a form.



For a full list of recyclable electronics and locations where you can find e-waste recycling bins, visit EHSREM's website or contact them at **512.245.3616**.



To recycle large appliances like mini fridges and televisions, contact Green Guy Recycling or visit their Drop-Off Center on 937 Texas 80 in San Marcos.



Look for green battery recycling bins like these located in academic buildings across campus!





City of San Marcos Resource Recovery

For Bobcats living off campus, waste disposal and recycling is managed by the City of San Marcos Resource Recovery division. Knowing who to contact for waste-related questions and what resources are available to San Marcos residents can help make your eventual transition to off-campus living easier and more efficient.

Got Hazardous Waste?

One of the services offered by the Resource Recovery division is disposal of **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)**, which can include items like cleaning products, automotive fluids, paints, adhesives, and more. San Marcos residents, including TXST students, can drop off HHW at the **San Marcos Reuse Warehouse** at 634 E Hopkins St, and pick up free supplies as well!



For questions about city garbage collection or recycling, or to view Reuse Warehouse hours of operation, visit the San Marcos Resource Recovery [webpage](#) or call **512.393.8412**.

Bobcat Blend

Often, waste that cannot be recycled can be composted. **Composting** is a technique by which food and garden waste is combined in a controlled environment to create a soil amendment that can be used as a natural fertilizer.

Food scraps from TXST Dining Halls are composted by **Bobcat Blend**, a faculty-managed, student run composting program at Texas State. Compost produced by Bobcat Blend is used in campus greenhouses, landscaping, and occasionally sold to the community.

Interested in Going Green?

To learn how to get involved with composting on campus, visit the Bobcat Blend [website](#) or contact Dr. Tina Cade in the Department of Agricultural Sciences.





An easy switch to reduce plastic waste is carrying a reusable water bottle!

Straight to the Source

Even more important than recycling and composting is **source reduction**, which prevents the creation of waste in the first place by changing how products are designed, manufactured, and purchased.

Bobcats living on campus can practice source reduction by remembering the three R's:



Refuse

Refrain from purchasing items that you don't need. Before buying something, ask yourself: How long will this last me? How often will I actually use it? Will I still like it after a few months? Cutting down on unnecessary purchases is friendly for the environment and your budget!



Reduce

When you do have to purchase something, try to opt for items that will produce less waste. Avoid disposable items and products with excessive packaging, and be sure to buy any perishable goods in quantities you know you will be able to use before their expiration date.



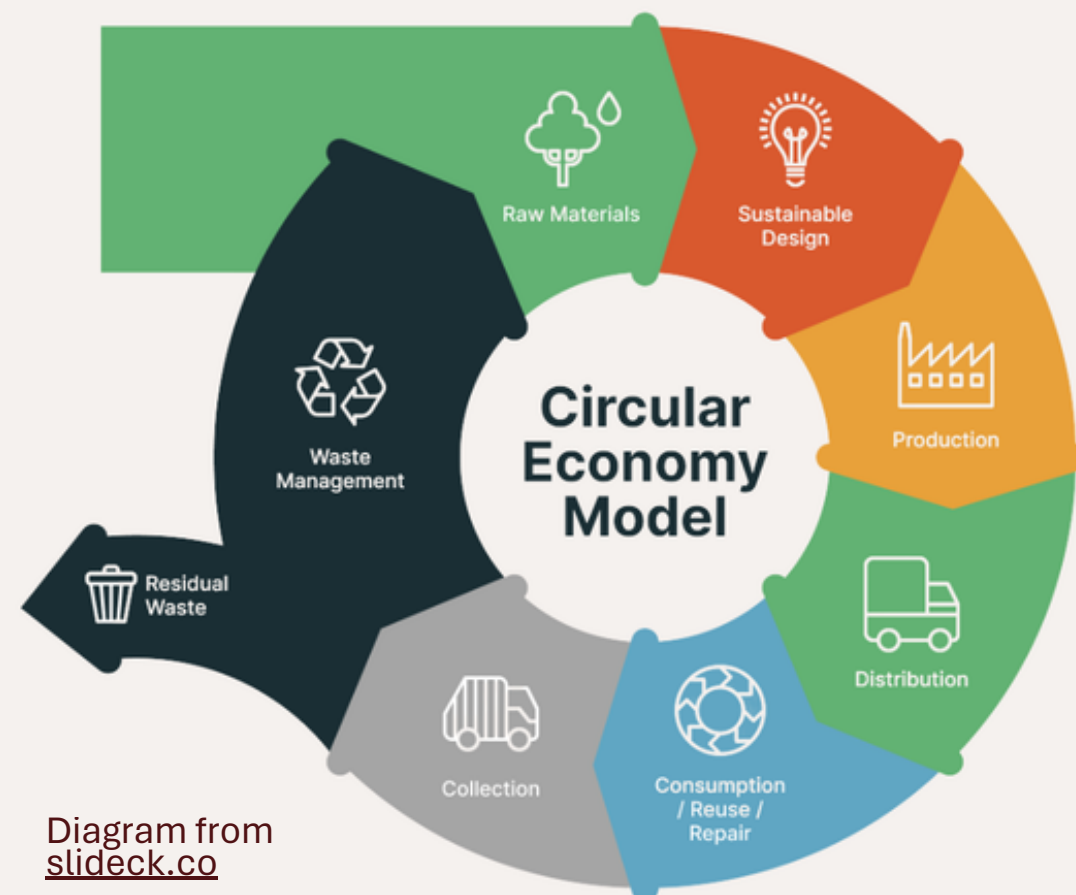
Reuse

Extend the life of your belongings by finding ways to reuse them before discarding. Many glass and plastic containers can be upcycled for storage and organization, and old textiles can be upcycled into new garments or as cleaning rags. Get creative- you may even discover a new hobby!

Going in Circles

Reducing waste in your daily activities on campus is a great way to promote the **circular economy**, which aims to keep materials in circulation as long as possible and maximize the **recapture** of waste for future use in new products.

In addition to protecting the environment, the circular economy also benefits both businesses and consumers by reducing production costs and ensuring the higher quality of items on the market. Compared to a linear take-make-throw-away model, materials moving through a circular economy continually maintain their **value**.



To learn more about the circular economy and its role in a sustainable future, visit the Environmental Protection Agency [website](https://www.epa.gov/circular-economy) for a breakdown of how it works and the different international agencies working towards this model.



A student looks through clothes at Open Closet, an annual Office of Sustainability free thrift market that keeps donated clothes out of the landfill.

Living the Loop

What may seem like one small decision to reuse a container, refuse a plastic grocery bag, or upcycle an old t-shirt is actually an investment in a **zero-waste** future.

The actions of one person alone cannot solve all problems related to waste management, but the actions of many combined can make sustainable materials stewardship a reality. Together, Bobcats can make choices that are easier on our pockets and on the planet!

