



Supplemental Project List Land & Waste Topics



Chicago Conservation Corps (C3) Student Clubs

If your Club has additional time while you wait for various components of your project to fall into place (or if you finish early!), your members will need ways to stay active during your weekly meetings. In this situation, Clubs are encouraged to select items from this supplemental project list, or to come up with additional projects on their own!

- **Give presentations to classrooms about worm composting and the importance of waste reduction.** These presentations could be PowerPoint presentations, short skits, or even “trainings” where you invite people to learn more about how they can create similar composting systems at home.
- **Take a field trip!** Chicago’s going green – there are plenty of places to visit where you can learn more about land and waste management issues! Try the Chicago Center for Green Technology (CCGT), Lincoln Park Zoo, the Shedd Aquarium, Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Garfield Park Conservatory, and many others!
- **Participate in a blog about worm composting,** or start your own! What do YOU think people should know? What might have helped you when you were just getting started? What might persuade people to give it a try? Now YOU can share your knowledge and experience.
- **Ask students to carry reusable school supplies** like refillable pens and pencils, a durable backpack, and a lunchbox and water bottle.
- **Paper or plastic?** A decision most consumers have had to make at one time or another is whether to use paper or plastic bags to carry home groceries. Now cities like San Francisco are banning plastic bags and some stores are no longer offering them. Have students investigate the environmental impact of paper and plastic bags including the energy used and pollution released to make and recycle each type of bag; the amount of space they take up in landfills; and how reusable each bag is. Create posters or presentations about student findings and give away or sell reusable cloth bags as a good solution to the problem.
- **Investigate the “lifecycle” of some commonly used items.** The “lifecycle” of a product begins when the materials to make it are harvested or extracted, and it ends with the disposal of the product after it has been used. At each step along the way there are impacts on the environment. Have student explore the “lifecycles” of some items they use every day such as paper, pencils, and pens. Then have them create posters to educate the rest of the school community about the impacts of these products.



- **Learn to think about waste before you buy a product.** Investigate the amount and type of packaging used for some of the products students use every day. Is the amount of packaging reasonable for the size of the product or is there a lot of empty space or extra coverings? Is the packaging made out of recycled materials? Is the packaging recyclable? Once you have led your own investigation, educate the rest of the school community about how to choose products with less packaging in order to reduce waste.
- **Hold a household hazardous waste awareness campaign.** Many household items that make their way into the trash are actually considered household hazardous waste, and should be disposed of properly to prevent harm to sanitation workers and the environment. These items include: paint, some oils, cleaning chemicals, nail polish, pesticides, and batteries (<http://earth911.org/household-items/how-to-monitor-hazardous-products/> for more details). Create an awareness campaign to let everyone know not to throw these items away, and where the nearest household hazardous waste recycling and disposal facility is located.
- **Help the school's community find places to recycle different kinds of materials in the neighborhood.** Assemble a directory of recycling and reuse centers and experts to distribute to students, teachers, and administrators by checking the internet (search by zip code at www.earth911.org, and check the National Recycling Coalition and the Illinois Recycling Association), the phone book (look under recycling and recycling coordinators), and by asking City officials.
- **Organize a waste reduction fundraiser!** Some communities charge residents according to the amount they throw away (called Pay-As-You-Throw programs). Organize a fundraiser by asking for pledges from neighborhood businesses for competing classrooms. The businesses can pledge a certain amount for every pound of trash your classroom reduces, reuses, recycles, or composts over a week or a month. Compete with other classrooms to see which one can keep the most trash out of landfills!
- **Encourage teachers, administrators, staff, and students to use double-sided printing** to reduce paper consumption.
- **Ask the administration to circulate memos via routing slips or email instead of sending out paper copies.**
- **Ask administrators and teachers to reduce paper usage during meetings by using overheads, marker boards, blackboards, or PowerPoints.**
- **Encourage teachers and the school office to reuse cardboard boxes, file folders, and envelopes for internal mailings.**

