

A call to action

adapted from *The Charlatan*

You are probably overwhelmed with information about the destruction of our environment. Perhaps you are wondering what you, as a lowly powerless student, could possibly do.

Though most pollution is caused by industry, a small percentage is directly caused by individuals. Our consumption and demand for cheap, convenient products makes us ultimately responsible for any pollution that results from our wasteful lifestyle.

Here are some suggestions for reducing your personal contribution to pollution.

1. Follow the three Rs of waste reduction: reduce, reuse, and recycle everything.

- Reduce your consumption of overpackaged products. Buy in bulk.

- When shopping, use paper, not plastic, bags. Save and reuse both types of bags for shopping, garbage, and food storage.

- Bring your own coffee mug to the cafeteria, or buy a snazzy Dal Recycles mug (available from CEAG, or at the cafeteria).

- Students use a lot of paper. Cut down by saving old essay drafts and using the back of them as scrap. When both sides are used up, have the paper recycled. Buy recycled paper products if you can.

When buying ice cream or frozen yogurt, ask for a biodegradable, edible cone rather than a foam cup. When buying take-out food, ask for paper bags, not plastic containers — and tell the server why.

- Reuse such items as glass jars, yogurt containers, wrapping paper, sandwich bags and plastic shopping bags. Pass your newspapers along to a friend.

- Shop at garage sales and second-hand store whenever you can. Hold your own street sale for those old clothes and creaky furniture you might have, or donate them to charity.

- Start a compost heap for all your biodegradable garbage such as eggshells, banana peels, hedge



trimmings and annoying roommates.

2. Conserve water by turning off the tap while you shave off those whiskers or brush your teeth. Put a brick or a stone in the toilet tank to reduce the water used every time you flush.

- Turn down the temperature on your hot water heater, and ensure that it is properly insulated. Get in the habit of turning down the hot water if the temperature is too hot, rather than adding cold.

3. To help protect the ozone layer, avoid buying foam egg cartons,

meat trays, cups, and other such products whenever possible. Many of these foam products are produced with chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that damage the ozone layer.

- Refrigerators and air conditioners also use CFCs. If a repair-person cleans these machines in your home, make sure the chemicals are properly drained and stored (or recycled), not released into the air.

4. Though the government isn't doing much to halt global warming, caused by the accumulation of certain gases in the atmosphere, you can do your part by not burning fossil fuels whenever possible. The best thing you can do is to buy and drive a



fuel-efficient car. Try to walk, bicycle, or use public transportation more often. When travelling long distances, take Via Rail — trains are cleaner and more efficient than buses or cars. They make environmental sense.

- Conserve energy around the house. Turn off lights not being used, hang clothes out on the line to dry, and use less hot water. While there may not be an energy shortage now, increasing demands for energy could lead to the construction of yet more power stations that burn fossil fuels and harm the environment.

5. On your travels, help protect endangered species around the world by not purchasing products made from such animals as wildcats, elephants, rhinos, and crocodiles. Remember, it is illegal to import many of these products into Canada without a permit.

6. Don't be misled by so-called "green" products — not all of them are environmentally friendly. Safe bets are baking soda for cleaning, phosphate-free laundry detergent, and Ecover household cleanser, which is

made from chalk. "Green" foam plates may not contain CFCs, but they still end up as non-biodegradable garbage, clogging up landfill sites and releasing harmful fumes when incinerated.

7. If you're a gardener, you might want to look into using alternatives to toxic pesticides and herbicides. Avoid any weed killer containing 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T. Both chemicals were used in Agent Orange to defoliate vegetation during the Vietnam War. They have been linked to cancer in recent studies on Canadian farmers.

- A good natural and biodegradable pesticide is pyrethrum, made from chrysanthemums.

- Another option involves a process known as "companion planting". You plant flowers insects find offensive near your vegetables. Certain bugs, for example, hate marigolds and chrysanthemums.

- Use safe products on household pests, instead of dangerous chemical pesticides. A product called Diatomaceous Earth, available at garden centres, will effectively get rid of most pests (including cockroaches!).



8. Start to "think globally and act locally". There are actions which start on a local level, yet can have an impact on a wide scale.

- After last April's Alaskan oil spill, for example, over nineteen thousand people returned their Exxon credit cards.

9. Get involved! Volunteer at the Ecology Action Centre; join CEAG, Dal PIRG, or any of the national environmental groups. Write letters to the prime minister, and to the minister for the environment. Follow the handy hints listed here. Remember, it all starts with you!

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Recycle and rot

Paper

Scotia Recycling, 41 Borden Ave., Dartmouth, 463-2855. Paper must be dry and separated into different grades: newsprint, cardboard and bond. No glossy or carbon paper.

Twin City Bottle and Metal Exchange, 3559 Dutch Village Rd., 443-3737. Put in cardboard boxes

Newspapers should be dry, bundled, and tied. Do not include glossy flyers, magazines or cardboard.



Organic matter



One-third of household garbage, food and yard waste, may be composted if you have a yard area. To build a compost heap simply pile vegetables and yard waste (not meat scraps) along with nitrogen-rich animal waste like manure or dried blood, in a bin or heap. Keep adding materials and make sure the pile stays moist and gets air. Turn occasionally and in a couple of months (if you work at it) or a year (if you don't), you'll have dark, rich compost for your soil.

Glass

Dartmouth Metal and Bottles Ltd., 14 Dawn Dr., Dartmouth, 469-4111. Refillable bottles only.

Archie's Bottle Exchange, 15 Sackville Cross, Sackville, 865-9010. All kinds of glass accepted. Remove labels and metal caps.

You can assist your local glass recycler by sorting colours, rinsing, and removing labels, metal rings and caps from the containers.

Metal

(For aluminum, brass, copper, tin and car batteries)

Dartmouth Metal and Bottles, 14 Dawn Dr., Dartmouth, 469-4111.

Archie's Bottle Exchange, 15 Sackville Cross, Sackville, 865-9010.

Twin City Bottle and Metal Exchange, 3559 Dutch Village Rd., 443-3737.

Maritime Recycling, Pier 9A, Halifax, 454-7403.



Other items

Steel/tin cans should be thoroughly washed clean, ends removed and flattened.

Plastics: At present there are no opportunities to recycle plastic locally.

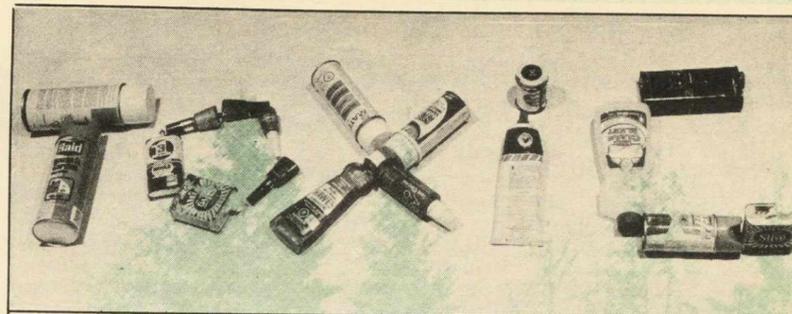
Magazines: Hospitals, senior citizen homes and group homes are often interested in discarded magazines.

Used clothing: The Salvation Army shelters for homeless men and women and for battered women and children. Try one of the many second hand clothing stores.

Furniture: St. Mark's Church, 5522 Russel St., Halifax runs a rehabilitation program where furniture is repaired and refinished. They don't buy but do accept donations. Call 454-6105.

Waste oil: Lubricating oil from crankcases can be refined and re-used. Your local gas station may or may not take your waste oil.

courtesy of the Ecology Action Centre.



Cleaning products	Disposal	Harmful effects	Non-toxic alternatives
Oven Cleaners	U	Toxic, corrosive	baking soda/water
Drain Cleaners	X	Toxic, corrosive	plunger, baking soda, vinegar, boiling water
Toilet Cleaners	X	Toxic, corrosive	borax
Chlorine Bleach	U	Toxic, corrosive	non-chlorinated bleach
Spot Remover	X	Toxic	sodium hexametaphosphate, glycerin, vinegar
Rug/Upholstery Cleaner	X	Toxic, corrosive	dry cornstarch, baking soda
Disinfectants	U	Toxic, corrosive	borax, Zephirin
Glass Cleaner	U	Toxic, corrosive	vinegar/water
Floor/Furniture Polish	X	Toxic, flammable	lemon juice, olive/mineral oil, beeswax
Silver/Metal Cleaners	X	Toxic, corrosive	baking soda, salt, aluminum foil
Mold/Mildew Cleaners	X	Toxic	borax, vinegar, Zephirin
Mothballs	U	Toxic, flammable	cedar chips, herb sachets
Fabric Dyes	X	Toxic	natural dyes
Nail Polish & Remover	X	Toxic	henna
Shoe Polish	X	Toxic	walnut, other nut oils
Aerosol Products	X	Toxic, reactive	non-aerosols
Laundry Concentrates	U	Toxic, corrosive	borax, baking soda, vinegar, natural soap and flakes

Workshop/Craft	D	HE	NTA
Enamel/oil based paint	X	Toxic, flammable	latex or water based paint
Latex/water based paint	U	Toxic	limestone-based whitewash, caesin-based paint
Thinners, turpentine	R	Toxic, flammable	use water with water-based paint
Glue: solvent based	X	Toxic, flammable	yellow/white glue
Permanent ink marker	X	Toxic	water-based pens
Typewriter white-out	U	Toxic, flammable	white-out tape, water-based fluid
Acids/solvents	X	Toxic, corrosive	see <i>The Safer Arts</i> , Health and Welfare Canada
Ceramic clay/glazes	X	Toxic	
Painting/print pigment	X	Toxic	
Photographic chemicals	X	Toxic, corrosive	
Rat/mouse poison	X	Toxic	live traps, remove food supplies
Flea collar or spray	U	Toxic	herbal collar, citronella, brewer's yeast in diet

Auto Products	D	HE	NTA
Gasoline	X, F.D.	Toxic, flammable	unknown
Motor oil	R	Toxic, flammable	unknown
Transmission/brake fluid	R	Toxic, flammable	unknown
Antifreeze	X	Toxic	unknown
Car batteries	R	Toxic, corrosive	unknown

Key:
X: Save for special collection day; do not dispose of in curbside garbage.
U: Use completely (or give it to someone who will); wrap or seal empty containers and put in garbage.
R: Recycle oil/fuel at some gas stations, save sludge for special collection; car batteries can be recycled at some recycling locations.
F: Call local fire department or save for special collection.
 * for recipes and other non-toxic alternatives, call or write EAC — 454-7828.

-courtesy of EAC

He's the hero — that's right, the hero!!



THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

Saturday, Oct. 28th
 7 pm
 McInnes Rm., Dal SUB
 Admission \$4.00

What's PIRGolating at Dalhousie?

We would like to introduce the Dalhousie community to the Dalhousie Public Interest Research Group (Dal-PIRG) Organizing Club at Dal.

We have recently received B-Society status and are entering our campaign to establish a Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) on campus.

PIRGs are student-funded, student-directed groups emphasizing research, information and action. There are PIRGs at campuses in Ontario, Montreal, British Columbia and throughout the United States. PIRGs give

students an outlet for positive change in which each student has the opportunity to get involved in the many facets of the organization on a volunteer basis.

In the short-term, Dal-PIRG will serve as a bridge between the campus and community. Dal-PIRG will work together with campus and community groups to provide a much needed element of organization.

PIRGs specialize in researching specific issues which concern students. Informational research is a valuable tool in prodding action on important issues in our

community. In this way apathy and inaction can be avoided and replaced by public interest research, designed to look at the issue at hand and offer methods of change and action realistically.

You can be involved in this important process. As Dal-PIRG will be a large and effective organization once established, it is important to acquire sufficient funding. Funding will come from a small refundable per student fee (\$3 has been suggested) initiated through a student referendum. This funding will be used to hire a small staff, set up an

office, conduct research and publish reports. The results of this research will form the basis for action by students via the media, community organizing, public forums and educational campaigns.

The main focus of Dal-PIRG will be as a campus and community resource centre where information on social, legal, environmental, economic and political issues are easily accessible. For example, in Ontario, PIRGs have published a tenant's handbook which was made avail-

able free to student members. This handbook explains the rights of student and community tenants. The Dal-PIRG office will provide valuable types of services and be a place where students can get together and discuss these issues and take concrete action on them.

Dal-PIRG will also serve as a liaison between various groups interested in tackling a particular issue, thus providing much needed organization. For example, when a problem arises, there is a need for information. With its resources, Dal-PIRG can accum-

ulate information on issues and make it available to students in the form of fact sheets and pamphlets.

For example, most people should be aware that we now have a campus environmental action group at Dal (CEAG). If the majority of students don't go to the meetings it is difficult to find out exactly what is going on at Dal in the form of recycling and environmental action. Dal-PIRG would provide information con-

cerning these important campus activities, thus providing a place where information can easily be acquired, hopefully spurring more students to get involved.

The possibilities for a group such as Dal-PIRG on our campus are enormous. All we need is the backing and participation of the students at Dal. Look for posters concerning Dal-PIRG around campus and please come to our meetings (meeting times will be posted).

Obviously, it would be impossible to give a total, comprehensive look at Dal-PIRG in such a short article. Therefore, it would be in your interest to come to meetings and tell us what issues interest you. If you are interested in helping out, the Dal-PIRG Organizing Club will be conducting its educational campaign in the next few weeks so keep watching for our posters and come to our meetings.

Dal-PIRG