

Reduce Deforestation & Toxins in the Environment

Goal: Switch to 100% recycled toilet paper

Why are we cutting trees down to make toilet paper?

Habit. In the olden days there seemed to be limitless trees to harvest for human use. Today we have already cut down 97% of the old growth forests in the United States. Trees are the earth's lungs converting Carbon Dioxide into oxygen. They provide homes for numerous species and are part of fragile inter-dependent ecosystems. Trees are living creatures in their own right. Do we really want to cut trees to make toilet paper?

What is the alternative?

By purchasing toilet paper made from recycled materials we can slow the destruction of our forests.

Is chlorine bleach dangerous?

Yes. Chlorine bleach is used to make our toilet paper white. The production and use of chlorine bleach creates dangerous toxins such as dioxin, furans and other organochlorines. Once loose in the environment, these chemicals accumulate in both people and animals. Hundreds of studies have shown a direct link between dioxin exposure and cancer, birth defects, and developmental and reproductive disorders.

Is there an alternative to chlorine bleach?

Yes. Toilet paper that is bleached with Sodium Hydro Sulfite, a nontoxic biodegradable bleach made from salt and oxygen, is much better for the planet than chlorine bleach. This environmentally safer process keeps chlorine's dangers out of your home and our environment and still gives you the hygienic purity you've come to expect with chlorine bleach.

Why Switch?

If every household in the U.S replaced just one 4-pack of 500 sheet virgin fiber bathroom tissues with 100% recycled ones, we could save:

1.2 million trees

5.1 million cubic feet of landfill space, equal to over 5000 full garbage trucks

537 million gallons of water, a year's supply for over 15,300 families of four (It takes much more water to convert trees into paper than it takes to convert office and home paper into new toilet paper.)

230,000 pounds of pollution avoided, including chlorine toxins

How do I Switch?

Next time you go shopping look for these three things when you buy toilet paper:

1. "made from 100% recycled fibers"
2. "80% (minimum) post-consumer content"
3. "No chlorine bleaching"

What does "post-consumer" mean?

Post-consumer materials are those that we recycled from our homes and offices, which would otherwise be landfilled. The higher the percentage of post-consumer content, the better it is for the environment.

Where do I get it and how much does it cost?

Worst

Most Major Brands, 0% post consumer content, \$2.98 at any big grocery chain

Good

Green Forest Brand, 10% post consumer content, \$1.38 at any big grocery chain

Natural Value Brand, 10% post consumer content, \$1.69 at Wild Oats

Better

Trader Joe's Brand, 10% post consumer content, Chlorine Free, \$0.99 at Trader Joe's

Wild Oats Brand, 20% post consumer content, Chlorine Free, \$1.29 at Wild Oats

Seventh Generation, 35% post consumer content, Chlorine Free, \$2.69 at most big chains

Best

Seventh Generation, 80% post consumer content, Chlorine Free, \$1.49 at most big chains

Whole Foods 365, 80% post consumer content, Chlorine Free, \$1.29 at Whole Foods

What about Bidets?

There are several companies that make easily installable bidets that can attach to any toilet. Bidets reduce the need for toilet paper by shooting a stream of water from inside your toilet for paperless "wiping". Paper is needed only for drying, reducing the amount of toilet paper used. An inexpensive model can be found at: <http://www.tushyclean.com/>. Search the web for more elaborate and expensive models that allow you to control temperature, etc.

For more information on toilet paper made from 100% recycled fibers visit:

American Forests at www.amfor.org

Union of Concerned Scientists at www.ucsusa.org

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