

“GREENING YOUR HOME” – WASTE NOT – WANT NOT.

An exciting challenge is to begin imagining life without waste, where everything that is thrown away at the end of one life becomes the technical or organic nutrient of another life. If anything in your dustbin has a use (can be reused, reduced, recycled or repaired) it should not be there! The waste that is put in bins from our homes is really the tip of the iceberg. For every product used substantial waste has been generated in the making of the product. Waste is a point of view – one person's waste is another person's resource.

When waste is not managed it is called pollution.

Humans produce excessive quantities of waste that is hard to recycle or biodegrade. Some of it is toxic and exists in complex man-made mixtures. Solid waste generates greenhouse gases, mainly as methane from landfill sites and carbon dioxide from burning. As matter starts to decay in a landfill site, a liquid called leachate is produced and if this is not treated poisons soil and groundwater.

To deal with the bulk of our waste:

Reduce – avoid the use of an item or reduce the amount that you use.

Reuse – instead of throwing away an item, reuse it in its current form.

Recycle – collect items for reprocessing into useful objects.

Repair – repair items rather than throw them away.

Here are some tips to reduce waste generated in your home:

At the shop – buy from shops that sell unpacked goods, select what you need and put it in a re-useable bag; avoid pre-packaged veggies and fruit; avoid disposable products; remove and leave behind extremely large packages, such as cereal boxes, in the supermarket to encourage less packaging.

At home – reuse bottles and jars; use candle stubs, cardboard, paper or vegetable oil to start your braai; use old clothes as rags or give them away to charity; make compost with your kitchen and garden waste and recycle glass, paper, cardboard, plastic, cans, Tetrapak and polystyrene. Contact **Go Green** on 073 114 8960 for details.

In your home office – reuse paper that has been printed on one side and then recycle; use refillable and rechargeable items; return your e-waste (electronic and electrical) to the retailers.

We all make waste and all need to shift our ways on all fronts, with government pushing, the public pulling and industry performing, until all waste finds its way back into something beneficial. Please ensure this newspaper the **“Meander Chronicle”** is recycled.

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