

Re-Thinking the Way We Print

Paper use is, perhaps, the most common recurring issue in the sustainability discussion. Aquinas College uses over [two tons of paper annually](#) or 34 trees worth. The Daily Green lists [15 important facts](#) about the paper industry:

1. Forests store **50%** of the world's terrestrial carbon. (In other words, they are awfully important "carbon sinks" that hold onto pollution that would otherwise lead to global warming.)
2. **Half** the world's forests have already been cleared or burned, and **80%** of what's left has been seriously degraded.
3. **42%** of the industrial wood harvest is used to make paper.
4. The paper industry is the **4th largest** contributor to greenhouse gas emissions among United States manufacturing industries, and contributes **9%** of the manufacturing sector's carbon emissions.
5. Paper accounts for **25%** of landfill waste (and **one third** of municipal landfill waste).
6. Municipal landfills account for **one third** of human-related methane emissions (and methane is **23-times** more potent a greenhouse gas than is carbon dioxide).
7. If the United States cut office paper use by just 10% it would prevent the emission of **1.6 million tons** of greenhouse gases -- the equivalent of taking 280,000 cars off the road.
8. Compared to using virgin wood, paper made with 100% recycled content uses **44%** less energy, produces **38%** less greenhouse gas emissions, **41%** less particulate emissions, **50%** less wastewater, **49%** less solid waste and -- of course -- **100%** less wood.
9. In 2003, only **48.3%** of office paper was recovered for recycling.
10. Recovered paper accounts for **37%** of the U.S. pulp supply.
11. Printing and writing papers use the least amount of recycled content -- just **6%**. Tissues use the most, at **45%**, and newsprint is not far behind, at **32%**.
12. Demand for recycled paper will exceed supply by **1.5 million tons** of recycled pulp per year within 10 years.
13. While the paper industry invests in new recycled newsprint and paper packaging plants in the developing world, **almost none** of the new printing and writing paper mills use recycled content.
14. China, India and the rest of Asia are the **fastest growing** per-capita users of paper, but they still rank far behind Eastern Europe and Latin America (about 100 pounds per person per year), Australia (about 300 pounds per person per year) and Western Europe (more than 400 pounds per person per year).
15. The Forest Stewardship Council's certification of sustainable forestry practices is growing, with **50%** of the paper product market share and **226 million acres** accounted for. Advocates say the demand for recycled paper and sustainably harvested pulp from consumers, advertisers, magazine makers and other users of paper will yield the fastest reforms of the industry.

The production of paper and printer ink is also a chemically intensive process involving dangerous chemicals such as bleach and heavy metals. With the enormous potential to reduce paper waste, consider the following easy options to lessen your impact:

- Think before you print: do you really need to copy or print the document?
 - Rather than printing, save the document to a pdf file or e-mail it to yourself
- Set your default margins to “Narrow” or 0.5 inches.
- Select “EconoMode” or “draft” to use less ink
- Two sides are better than one: print duplex (or double-sided).
- Bigger is not better: decrease your font size to 10 or 11pt, or use a narrow font such as “Arial Narrow.”
- Use scrap paper with one blank side for quick printouts

For more information on these ideas and more, visit the ITS Online Knowledge Base (<http://campus.aquinas.edu/its/>).

Paper Use on Campus

Want to recycle on campus? You can! The blue bins are dedicated to paper waste and here is what they can accommodate:

- Paper
 - Newspaper
 - Magazines/Catalogs
 - Brown Paper Bags
 - Junk Mail
 - Paperboard
 - Computer Paper
 - Miscellaneous (i.e. - envelopes, shoe boxes, cracker boxes, cereal boxes, etc.)
- Corrugated Cardboard
 - Heavy shipping and packaging boxes with a wavy liner. (Please remove all staples, tape, etc.)