

TOWN OF GIBSONS ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY

(as adapted by the Town's Zero Waste Committee)

ZERO WASTE IN THE TOWN OF GIBSONS

Zero Waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people in changing their lifestyles and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use. Zero Waste means designing and managing products and processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them. Implementing Zero Waste will eliminate all discharges to land, water or air that are a threat to planetary, human, animal or plant health.

There are steps toward Zero Waste that we can all take, forming a hierarchy that starts with the most important or most preferable step (“Rethink”). The Zero Waste hierarchy promotes the highest and best use of materials as practical and possible:

1. RETHINK: Avoid or prevent waste—as the best and most sustainable action. Before we create or take possession of anything, we should ensure it can later be fully reused or recycled.

Actions include designing and using products that are durable, repairable and reusable; avoiding products with non-recyclable packaging; supporting the local economy to minimize packaging and transportation; examining and considering what we dispose to better inform purchasing/consumption choices.

2. REDUCE: Reduce the amount of resources we consume, and the waste we create, to minimize our ecological footprint.

Actions include planning meals to avoid disposing of excess food; not purchasing wrapping paper, single-use cups and other disposable items.

3. REUSE: Ensure products or materials are used as many times as possible before entering the recycling or waste stream.

Actions include repairing broken items; resoling shoes; reusing containers (bags, mugs, bottles); purchasing second-hand, sharing or borrowing; contributing unspoiled food products to food banks if unused/unpurchased.

4. RECYCLE: Recycle and compost materials back into resources that can be used again.

Actions include regularly using an effective wildlife-proof composter; depositing recyclables and organics at your local recycling depot as a routine; keeping materials clean and free of contamination; recycling and composting as close to source as possible; consulting a local community assets inventory of recycling resources.