



REDUCE JUNK MAIL

The US Postal Service delivers more than 90 billion pieces of direct mail every year. A significant portion of this is unwanted advertising mail, or "junk" mail. Recycling junk mail is a good start, but reducing the amount of junk mail you receive saves landfill space and conserves natural resources. Here's how you can reduce junk mail.

Don't Let Your Name Become a Commodity

Every time you enter a contest, make a purchase or donation, join a buyer's club, order a product by mail, subscribe to a magazine or return a warranty card, your name and address can be placed on a mailing list and sold. To prevent this from happening, write "Please do not rent or sell my name" next to your name. Also consider not returning the warranty card for a new product - it's usually not required.

Contact Companies and Organizations Directly

To stop receiving mail from specific sources, call the company or organization's customer service number (often a toll-free number). You can also make your request via e-mail (from the company's website) or send in a written request.

Sign Up for the Mail Preference Service

A good way to remove your name from several national mailing lists at once is to sign up for the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service (www.dmachoice.org/MPS/). This website provides instructions on how to register (a \$1 processing fee is charged). This service is only for national, not local, mail and only for residential, not business, addresses and is good for five years.

Get Off Lists for Credit Offers

The major consumer credit bureaus have a toll-free, 24-hour number you can call to have your name removed from mailing lists used for credit offers: 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688). The recording will ask for your full name, address, telephone number and social security number (to confirm the identity of the caller making the request). When presented with options, press 1 to have your name removed for two years, or press 3 to have your name removed permanently.

Reduce Unwanted Mail at Work

The National Waste Prevention Coalition's Business Junk Mail Reduction Project (www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/nwpc/bizjunkmail.htm) has strategies and tips on how to reduce the amount of unwanted mail coming to your business or workplace.