



Carbon Calculator

Solid Waste: Trash, Paper, Plastic Bottles & Beverage Cups

Audit each classroom twice: first at the *beginning* of the Challenge to gather preliminary data and then again at the *end* of the Challenge, to see whether classrooms successfully met their reduction goals. Use this worksheet to collect all data (or feel free to create your own!), whether from one classroom, grade level, floor, or the entire school. Make as many copies as needed. Enter the sum of all the data into the *Solid Waste: Trash, Paper, Plastic Bottles & Beverage Cups* tab of the Carbon Calculator., where CO₂ emission reductions will be calculated.





Trash

Americans make up roughly 5% of the world's population, but [generate nearly 40% of the world's total waste](#) and on a daily basis, the United States [produces enough trash to fill 63,000 garbage trucks](#).

Paper

The process by which paper makes it to school for student and staff contributes to a school's carbon footprint. One ream of paper contains 500 sheets and it is estimated that the average teacher uses 50 reams of paper in one school year. Enter the data below to determine CO₂ emissions from paper use. Consider the following strategies to reduce the amount of paper the school uses. Change the default setting on your printer to print double-sided, ask yourself before you print, "Does this really need to be printed?", and investigate a paper-less policy (many districts are looking at this as a way to save money).

Plastic Bottles & Beverage Cups

[50 billion water bottles are sold in the US every year. Roughly 23% of plastic bottles are recycled](#). Take note that is only water bottles and does not include soda bottles. One strategy to reduce single plastic use bottles and beverage cups is to bring your own refillable bottle to school and if you do buy a plastic water bottle or beverage cup, **reuse and recycle** it.



CARBON CALCULATOR WORKSHEET: SOLID WASTE: TRASH, PAPER, AND BOTTLES & CUPS

CLASSROOM NAME/#: _____		
Trash Inputs	Pounds (lbs.)	
1. How much does the trash can weigh when it is completely empty?		
2. When the trash can is completely full, it contains approximately how many pounds of trash?		
	Before Taking Action in Pounds (lbs.)	After Taking Action in Pounds (lbs.)
3. What is the average number of full bins of trash collected in a week?		

CLASSROOM NAME/#: _____		
Paper	Before Taking Action	After Taking Action
1. On average, how many reams of paper are used per week?		
2. What is the recycled content of the paper? (pick one)	___ 0%	___ 0%
	___ 30%	___ 30%
	___ 100%	___ 100%

CLASSROOM NAME/#: _____		
Plastic Bottles and Paper Beverage Cups	Before Taking Action	After Taking Action
1. Approximately how many plastic drink bottles are used each week?		
2. On average, are plastic drink bottles recycled or thrown away?		
3. On average, do most coffee/tea drinkers at the school use a reusable insulated container for their hot beverages?		
4. Approximately how many disposable cups are used in a week?		