

Earthstep #6: Sort It Out!

The Earthstep* this week is: **SORT OUT YOUR TRASH SO IT CAN BE RECYCLED.**

We all know that recycling saves energy and resources. Recycling programs have been initiated at HBS. What is critical to our recycling effort at this point is that everyone contribute to recycling to ensure that it is economically viable and that it continues to exist.

There are a number of recycling programs on campus which are in danger of being discontinued due to lack of sufficient volume. One example of a recycling program that has the potential to be disbanded is the white paper recycling buckets by the mail boxes. Because it is too expensive to remove color dyes from colored paper before it can be reprocessed, we can now only throw white paper in our recycling bins. As a result, the mail box effort is now only sending approximately half a ton of paper to the recyclers per week, versus twice that amount two months ago. For this and other recycling programs to be economically viable, we need to grow and support the recycling program by increasing volume. This will require not only greater student participation but also increased support from the faculty and administration.

The administration has taken notice. Three Harvard College students have been employed to make a comparative study of Harvard's environmental practices and policies in comparison to other universities. In response to requests from the Harvard Environmental Network, Derek Bok has also directed Tom Vautin, Director of Facilities Management, to conduct an environmental audit of the entire University. This will entail a comprehensive overview of Harvard's use of water, energy, transportation, and production of solid waste. Vautin has hired

two Kennedy school students and two Harvard College students to assist in the audit which is scheduled to be presented to Bok on April 6. One of the college students, Brian Trelstad who is also a member of the Harvard Environmental Network said, "the audit committee is using the Harvard Environmental Networks's letter sent to Bok as the basis for the study. It's satisfying that students can have an impact." Because the audit covers Harvard Real Estate, it will hopefully include Soldiers Field.

The audit will hopefully start some much needed reform around here, like fixing the heat controls in my room.

Nonetheless, the bulk of the burden is still on all of us. Here are some suggestions:

— Place all white non-glossy office paper in recycling containers. Keep it clean. Contamination greatly reduces the value of paper.
— Return your used wire coat hangers to the cleaners. They will be glad to reuse them.

- Recycle your newspaper. There is a drop-off bin at 175 North Harvard Street by the stadiums. Otherwise newspaper can be dropped in Cambridge, the second Saturday of every month at 147 Hampshire Street or call 498-9078 for details.
- Returning bottles and cans goes without saying. Sections may want to consider collecting cans in the class room and donating them to a worthy cause.
- If your building doesn't already have a recycling program, start one. Call Robin at Earthworm at 426-7344.

BY HENRIK JONES

Each little step has a multitude of ramifications. The present mail room recycling effort saves 8 trees a week and the energy equivalent of 1.25 barrels of oil. Saving trees means less

carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere and hence slower global warming. Less oil means less smog. Less oil extracted from the earth also means less disruption of nature, less offshore drilling, and less chances for disastrous oil spills.

There are a number of individuals who have been instrumental in starting the white paper recycling effort on campus. First and foremost, Al and Zoe Nierenberg started the Recycling Group and recycling by the mail boxes. Jim Cleary started recycling in Soldiers Field while Garret Spitzer has been active in Morgan. Considerable time and effort in the administration has been devoted by Barbara Siegfriedt, Ken McCabe, Sarah Benioff, and Kathy Randall. Also, recycling also been an adjustment for all of the custodians who now have different procedures for handling white paper. It's not easy to start new programs around here. Let's honor the efforts of these individuals by dumping lots more in the recycling bins!

*Earthsteps are recommendations from the Harvard Environmental Network for how the Harvard Community can reduce its impact on the environment by Earth Day on April 22. The Harvard Environmental Network includes environmental organizations from the following Harvard Schools: Business, College, Divinity, Design, Education, Kennedy, Law, Medical, and Public Health. Suggestions can be submitted to the Harvard Environmental Network by dropping them in the Earth Day box in front of Baker 20 or calling 3-8664.

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