

STRATEGY 3: Promote Reuse and Repair in Erie County

According to the EPA, each person in America produces 4.9 pounds of waste every day. This translates to 1,789 pounds per year per person or to 1.65 billion pounds of waste per year in Erie County alone! Additionally, the EPA estimates that 28.1% of our municipal solid waste is made up of packaging.

As expressed in STRATEGY 1: “Reduction of Waste Generated,” the most effective way to reduce waste is to not create it in the first place. Consider all the things we buy for use at home and work. GHG emissions from the creation of all these products are emitted throughout the entire product life cycle, which begins during the extraction of raw materials from the earth, includes the manufacturing process, the energy, waste and transportation throughout the various stages, and from the one-time-use packaging used to protect the product prior to use.

As a result, reuse and repair can be extremely effective ways to reduce natural resource consumption, protect the environment and save money.

Waste reduction through reuse and repair can be achieved in many different ways and has a number of benefits. When feasible buying what you need, buying items that can be used more than once, reusing and repurposing items, buying used, repaired or remanufactured items, taking good care of your things through maintenance and repair, and borrowing, renting, and sharing items can all reduce the amount of waste generated in addition to saving consumers money.

This methodology is intended to extend the life of a product in order to protect our resources and reduce the amount of waste we produce, by encouraging a shift in mindset away from both impulse buying and a “throw-away, convenience” culture. In order to increase reuse and repair in Erie County, the County will disseminate information about current reuse, repair and resell practices and markets, and focus on educating consumers, removing barriers, and supporting and enhancing reuse-repair activities. The County will make it easier for citizens to reduce the amount of waste they generate by informing the community on the positive impact of reuse, connecting people with reuse options, and promoting reuse through campaigns such as “Bring Your Own.” Furthermore, we will expand the reuse and repair movement through legislative support of bills that promote product stewardship by extending the life of products to reduce their impact, including the Digital Right to Repair Act.

DEFINITIONS
Short-term: By or before 2030
Medium-term: By 2040
Long-term: By 2050
Direct: County can directly control the action - relating to County operations and infrastructure
Indirect: Regional agencies and municipalities have control and/or County can support/influence
Support: State or Federal policies and programs

ACTION ITEM	HORIZON	SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	LEAD COUNTY ENTITY	PARTNERS
3.1: Identify and disseminate current reuse, repair, resell, and sharing practices and markets in Erie County to determine how they can be supported and enhanced.	Short-Term	Direct	DEP	Buy Nothing Groups, Academic Institutes, local donation centers, SBR, local tool libraries, Local Repair Cafes
3.2: Support right to repair organizations and legislation such as Digital Fair Repair Act and “Right to Repair” legislation. (Senate Bill S4104A, Senate Bill S149)	On-going	Direct	DEP	Chambers of Commerce, Local Repair Cafes
3.3: Promote and educate consumers on the benefits of reusable products like refillables, donation, product repair, and buying used.	On-going	Direct	DEP/ Department of Health	Local municipalities, SBR, State agencies

3.4: Promote business reuse in commercial spaces through programs such as Material Exchange Network/United Way	Ongoing	Direct	DEP	SBR
3.5: Support and expand the Library's Sports Equipment Lending program.	Ongoing	Indirect	DEP	Local municipalities, Library System