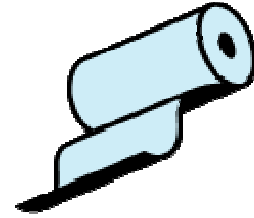


Welcome to the Tuesday Tree Huggin' Tip!



Tip 24: Make Green Paper Towel and Napkin Choices

The convenience of throw-away paper products is a staple of modern life and most of us are not willing to completely give up paper towels and napkins in favor of reusable cloth ones, at least on an everyday basis. Here are some things you can do to lessen the environmental impact of those disposable products:

- **Best Choice -- Green: Paper—Totally Chlorine Free, 100 Percent Recycled**
There are two types of materials used in recycled paper products: Post-consumer fiber and recovered fiber. Post-consumer fibers come from paper that has already been used by the consumer and sent to recycling. Recovered fiber is from paper waste leftover in manufacturing, such as trim, scraps, unused stock. When you are buying recycled paper products, strive for 100 percent recycled paper with a minimum of 90 percent post-consumer materials. The higher the post-consumer percentage, the more paper is being saved from hitting the landfill. Make sure the paper is unbleached or bleached using a natural process. Paper bleached using Elemental Chlorine (chlorine gas) is horrible for the environment and for us. Chlorine bleach is responsible for the release of chlorinated compounds like dioxins and furans, which are powerful carcinogens and mutagens. These chemicals can adversely affect immune systems and reproductive systems and are dreadful for aquatic life and wildlife. Look for Totally Chlorine Free (TCF) paper towels and napkins—these are brown, and a very pretty brown at that. CVS actually has a green paper towel that is relatively inexpensive and Marcal is a leader in manufacturing 100% recycled products. Look for them at your local stores.
- **Good Choice -- Greenish: Paper—Partially Recycled, Alternative Bleaching**
If you can't find paper products that are made of 100 percent recycled paper, look for ones with at least some recycled content. Also, steer away from products bleached with elemental chlorine and instead chose ones that use alternative bleaching. Process Chlorine Free (PCF) is a great choice, this process does not use not bleach with chlorine or its derivatives. Totally Chlorine Free (TCF) is the best choice—this is pulp that has never been bleached with chlorine or its derivatives.

And, for home use, why not break out those cloth napkins you inherited from your grandmother? Or use those dishtowels for more than decorations? If you don't own a lot of cloth items, hit your local thrift store and see what goodies you can dig up. Cloth napkins can be used again and again, keeping excess disposable products out of the landfills and you can simply throw them in with the rest of your wash.†

Yours in crunchiness,

Angelique

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† Adapted from *Greenest Paper Towels and Napkins*

posted by Melissa Breyer <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/greenestpaper-towels-and-napkins.html>; accessed June 22, 2010, 9:45 a.m. EST