

Environmentally friendly lifestyle

— critical purchasing

Waste is inevitable in all consumption and is a resource that should not be wasted. It is possible to utilise most types of waste materials as raw materials for new goods by using systematic sorting methods.

We face decisions that matter to the environment on a daily basis. A big step toward a more environmentally friendly lifestyle is to examine the waste involved in our lifestyle and to try to reduce it.

Most of what we throw into the waste bin is kitchen waste and packaging of various types. We should therefore be critical when purchasing. Examine how big a proportion of what we carry home from the store ends up in the rubbish bin. How much food ends up in the rubbish bin and can we reduce the volume? Can we in some cases select goods that are in smaller or no packaging? Creating less waste should be a priority and is the best way to reduce the environmental impact that accompanies all waste.

Nothing wasted in the future

— the goal is to achieve more than 95%

utilisation of household waste

Household waste contains waste that will probably not be sorted and collected specifically, such as diapers, sanitary towels, pet waste and other biological material.

Preparations have begun for the construction of a gas and composting plant for the greater Reykjavík area that is suitable for all organic waste. The plant is expected to begin operations in 2020 and that SORPA will produce methane that will be enough to fuel 8,000 cars as well as produce 12,000 tonnes of compost, which can be used for the reclamation of land.

The production of compost of the highest quality requires increased sorting and recycling of glass, mineral, plastic waste and hazardous waste. Drop-off centres now have containers for the collection of glass waste. The location of glass containers can be found on sorpa.is.

The Good Shephard

— a new lease of life

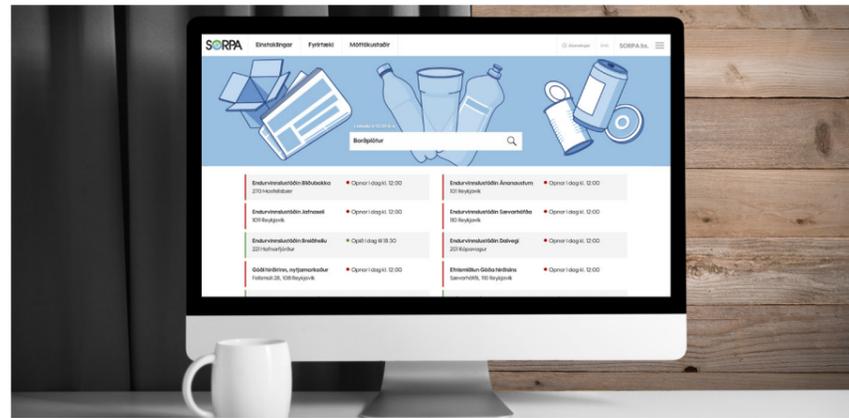
The Good Shephard is SORPA's thrift store where old goods gain a new lease of life. You can find anything and everything in the Good Shephard, provided that it has been left in the containers for reusable items at the recycling centres. All profits from sales in the Good Shephard are donated to charities.

The Materials Distribution of the Good Shepherd is located in the recycling station at Sævarhöfði. The materials distribution is a market for used construction materials and goods that can be used for construction and artwork.

The Good Shephard and the Materials Distribution of the Good Shepherd are on Facebook where you can see further information on auctions and offers.

The Good Shepherd	Working days	Saturdays	Sundays
Fellsmúli 28, Reykjavík	12.00–18.00	12.00–16.00	Closed
Materials Distribution of the Good Shepherd			
Sævarhöfði 21, Reykjavík	12.00–17.30*	12.00–17.30	Closed

*Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays from 1 October to 30 April.



The SORPA sorting website

— detailed information on the sorting of waste, fees and operating centres

On sorpa.is, users can easily enter a search term and are then directed to the appropriate waste category. The site shows a map of where it is possible to drop off different types of waste and where drop-off centres are located. Also shown are overviews of recycling stations and where specific waste categories are located within the centres.

Progress in environmental issues

SORPA is an independent firm jointly owned by the seven municipalities of the greater Reykjavík area and is responsible for receiving their waste. The company is a non-profit organisation focusing on the environment and efficiency.

SORPA directs waste towards the correct channels: for reuse, recycling or disposal. Waste collection and provision of waste containers are handled by the municipalities.

The volume of waste should be reduced before it is discarded, thereby ensuring better utilisation of containers, reduced transportation, reduced environmental impact and the lowest possible cost imposed on the general public.

Centres in the greater Reykjavík area

There are six recycling centres in the greater Reykjavík area. These accept over thirty waste categories. In addition, there are approximately 85 drop-off centres in the area with containers for 2–5 waste categories. The centre in Gufunes and the landfill site in Álfsnes are recommended for larger loads.

Recycling centres	Working days	Weekends
Ánanaust, Reykjavík*	12.00–18.30	12.00–18.30
Jafnasel 8, Reykjavík	12.00–18.30	12.00–18.30
Sævarhöfði 21, Reykjavík*	12.00–18.30	12.00–18.30
Breiðhella 8–10, Hafnarfjörður*	8.00–18.30	12.00–18.30
Dalvegur 1, Kópavogur	12.00–18.30	12.00–18.30
Blíðubakki, Mosfellsbær*	12.00–18.30	12.00–18.30

*Large, spacious centres

Suggestions for household sorting



Maintaining the cycle of materials in the environment

— sort and recycle to SORPA

Reusable items



Sort

All items that are still usable and can be sold, e.g. furniture, electrical appliances, tableware, books, toys, etc.

Recycle

Properly placed in the containers for reusable items at the recycling centres. Note that smaller items need to be packaged to withstand transportation. The items will be sent for reuse and resale in the Good Shepherd store.

Old, usable items can easily gain a new lease of life in the Good Shepherd.

On an annual basis, approximately 500-1000 tonnes of household goods are sold to new owners through the market.

All profits from sales in the Good Shepherd are donated to charities.

Usable construction materials and goods that can be used for construction and artwork can be dropped off at the Materials Distribution of the Good Shepherd at Sævarhöfði.

Clothes and textiles



Sort

All textiles, such as clothes, coats, curtains, upholstery, blankets, bedding, towels, duvets, pillows, cushions, etc. **The textiles may be torn and worn.**

Recycle

In closed plastic bags in Red Cross neighbourhood drop-off containers and at recycling centres.

The textiles will be sent for reuse and recycling by the Icelandic Red Cross.

It is estimated that approximately 9,500 litres of water are saved due to the reuse of clothing and textiles that are deposited in SORPA.

If every Icelander purchased one item of used woollen clothing instead of a new item, this would save ten million litres of water and 2.9 tonnes of chemical colouring agents.

Paper and paperboard



Sort

All paper and cardboard packaging, such as milk cartons, food packaging and pizza boxes, newspapers and magazines, advertising material and printing paper.

Recycle

In the blue bin, neighbourhood drop-off containers or to recycling centres.

The material is sent to Sweden and will become new packaging, newspaper paper or toilet paper.

The packaging should be clean and free of foreign materials.

The evidence of the environmental impact of goods can be seen the entire time that it is in use.

Goods and packaging commonly contain only approximately 5% of the materials needed for their manufacture and transportation between locations.

Each tonne of paper that is recycled saves around 26,000 litres of water and 17 trees.

Plastic



Sort

All plastic packaging and other plastics, such as trays, plastic containers, bags and boxes, etc.

Recycle

Into neighbourhood drop-off containers or recycling centres.

The material is variously used for recycling or energy production in Sweden.

The packaging should be clean and free of foreign materials.

Compress to minimise volume; it saves space and decreases transport.

For each kg of plastic that is sent for recycling, 2 kg of oil is saved.

Bottles and cans



Sort

Containers of all beverages that can be directly consumed, such as aluminium cans, plastic bottles and glass bottles from juices, sodas and alcohol beverages. **Not dairy goods however!**

Recycle

Select recycling centres. Information on the receipt and refunding of deposits can be found on sorpa.is.

Recycling centres and some drop-off centres have separate containers if people want to donate the containers in support of a good cause.

Deposit beverage containers are the equivalent of money – do not throw valuables away!

Old cans become new cans, and plastic bottles become fleece clothing and polyester wool. Glass bottles can be used as foundation material in landscaping and roadworks.

The recycling of one plastic bottle saves enough energy to run a 60 W bulb for six hours. The recycling of an aluminium can saves enough electricity to run a television for three hours.

Metals



Sort

All types of metals such as iron, copper, lead, bronze, steel, stainless steel, brass and aluminium. Tin cans, aluminium foil, aluminium trays and metal lids from jars, hand tools, tea-light tubs, electrical wiring and items partly or wholly made of metal.

Recycle

At recycling centres or loose in the energy bin (waste bin).

Metals are mechanically sorted from other household waste at the Baling and Sorting Plant.

Metals are valuables that can be recycled again and again, with the attendant environmental benefits.

The recycling of mixed metals brought in to SORPA each year saves energy that is equivalent to the annual electricity use of 30,000 households.

Glass and minerals



Sort

Everything that is made of glass or can be defined as an inert mineral that does not degrade.

This includes glass jars and containers, mirrors, tiles, concrete, rocks, bricks, paving stones, ceramics and porcelain.

Recycle

At recycling centres. A fee is collected for the material if it is from construction work.

Glass containers can be left at most drop-off centres.

Can't find what you are looking for?

Have a look at sorpa.is which contains further information on the different types of waste.

Sort

Everything that is made of glass or can be defined as an inert mineral that does not degrade.

This includes glass jars and containers, mirrors, tiles, concrete, rocks, bricks, paving stones, ceramics and porcelain.

Recycle

At recycling centres. A fee is collected for the material if it is from construction work.

Glass containers can be left at most drop-off centres.

The material replaces gravel in landfills. This reduces mining operations and the effects that such operations have on the environment.

See the location of neighbourhood drop-off containers for glass on sorpa.is.

Organic waste



Food remains, tissues, diapers, waste from pets, etc. goes in the energy bin (waste bin).

The material goes to the landfill at Álfsnes.

At the beginning of 2020, the plan is to send the material for soil and methane production through the new gas and composting station.

Methane (CH₄) that forms during the decomposition of organic waste at the landfill is collected and used as vehicle fuel. Methane is the only environmentally certified fuel in Iceland and carries the Nordic eco-label – the Swan. Driving the 1,400 vehicles that currently use methane collectively emits pollution equivalent to that of 13 petrol-fuelled cars.

Home soil production from organic waste provides excellent compost for the garden. This maintains nutrients within nature's cycle.

Hazardous materials and electrical appliances



Sort

Batteries, spray cans, cleaning agents, paint, light bulbs / CFLs, out-of-order electrical appliances, etc.

Recycle

Into containers for hazardous materials and electrical appliances at recycling centres.

Further information on the sorting of hazardous materials and electrical appliances can be found on sorpa.is.

The materials are sorted and sent for destruction or recycling.

Correct labelling on the containers makes it easier to sort hazardous materials and ensure their safe destruction.

Note that medicinal products should never be included in general household waste. Such products must always be returned to a pharmacy.