

A REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH ON HOUSEHOLD TRASH PREVENTION

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ABSTRACT

Based on a UK portfolio of primary research and a wide international assessment, this article presents a synthesis of policy-relevant data on home trash prevention. Waste prevention was defined as rigorous avoidance, source reduction (e.g., at home composting), and reuse (for the product's intended purpose) - recycling was not included. Consumers were a primary emphasis. The review revealed a general hierarchy in their popularity, ranging from donating goods to charity at the top to small reuse behaviors around the home to activities involving changes in consumption habits at the bottom; one estimate is that 60% of the public engages in at least one of these activities, at least some of the time. Modern consumer culture, as well as a real misunderstanding that waste reduction is the same as recycling, are both barriers to homeowner engagement. With a broad variety of interventions and communications methods available, the public may be involved via local or nationwide campaigns. Increased reuse was highlighted as the main potential within the scope of the assessment on the product and service side. Operational challenges (financing, capacity, logistics) and customer attitudes regarding used products were among the roadblocks. The major possibilities are for local governments to do more strategic planning for reuse, as well as for greater coordination and collaboration with the third sector.

KEYWORDS: Behaviour, Evidence, Household Waste, Reduction, Waste Prevention.

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