

# A.P.E.S. Personal Solid Waste Inventory

*We Are the Sum of Our Throughputs*

## Project Deliverables Overview:

1. **Three photos:** Three photos on your top page:
  - A. One showing your **SWAG** bag(s) in fairly full-frame;
  - B. One *glamour*-shot showing you holding your **SWAG** bag(s); and
  - C. One photo showing **ALL** of your **SWAG** bag items displayed neatly on your driveway, patio, porch, or flooring, -somewhat similar to the way Peter Menzel presents his photographs in the book Material World: A Global Family Portrait.
2. **Your daily personal solid waste inventories in tables below**
3. **A Tally of your inventoried throughputs, using the Tally Sheets below.**
4. **Responses to the discussion questions.**

## Purpose:

The purpose of this project is for students to inventory all solid waste\* items used in a **seven-day period**. (\*items which would enter the "waste-stream" or be recycled in some manner.) In doing this assignment, it is my hope that you are as *honest and thorough as possible*, while realizing that this assignment requires a certain effort level and perhaps a particular focus to detail that can sometimes drive one a bit *crazy*.

However small or seemingly insignificant we think a given "throughput" or "piece of trash" might be, the fact remains that from an interdisciplinary and integrated accounting perspective, essentially every product that we use in our lives has certain costs and an ecological footprint associated with it.

Quantifying these costs and footprints is challenging and probably not something that most human beings give thought to. Such footprint and ecological wake quantifying efforts may also represent great opportunities for coexisting and sustainably living in the long run. As Glenn Close states near the end of the documentary "Home", it is too late to be pessimistic, for there are too many signs that people are working together to bring about positive change and increasing the quality of life for all of the world's people.

Procedure: All students are to:

Keep a **running inventory** of their solid wastes throughout the week, starting on \_\_\_\_\_, and running through the end of the day on \_\_\_\_\_.

## STEPS

1. Take 2 Trash bags to serve as your **SWAG bags** and make sure to clearly label. One smaller one you will carry during the day for items used during the day, to be transferred to larger one to be kept at home.
2. All students are to store all "finished" throughputs in one or more **SWAG bags**. Your SWAG bag(s) will be kept at your home/dorm room. Therefore, the nature of this assignment should be clearly and effectively communicated with all family members/roommates/dorm parents etc. Having done this, it will be difficult to

have a case in which "someone" threw out your "valuable throughput collection", -thinking that your SWAG was merely "regular trash" instead of an environmental science assignment upon which your letter grade in the course could depend.

**\*\*Note:** items that will serve as bacteria/fungi breeding grounds should **NOT** be SWAG-bagged. (you can record them but do not keep them)

3. Each day you should tally your items in the tables below
4. A **final tally of the number of items in each major material category** (paper, paperboard/cardboard, plastic, aluminum, Styrofoam, mixed metals, glass, etc. being tabulated at the end of this time period.)
5. Take 3 photographs and insert in lab.
6. Reflect on the assignment:
  - a. Answer the discussion questions.
  - b. Decide if there is one type of waste you would like to educate others about and create a "Trashion Fashion" project. Keep these items aside before discarding the rest in the proper bins!

## **Personal Solid Waste Inventory**

*\* items to be noted but do not need to go in bag*

DAY 1 =

<b>PLASTIC</b> To the landfill	<b>PLASTIC-</b> (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	<b>PAPER</b>	<b>ALUMINUM/ METAL</b>  <b>&amp; GLASS</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes /cotton balls/ Q tips
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		

___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non-composted paper towels and napkins *		

DAY 2 =

PLASTIC To the landfill	PLASTIC- (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	PAPER	ALUMINUM/ METAL & GLASS	OTHER
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non-composted paper towels and napkins *		

DAY 3 =

PLASTIC To the landfill	PLASTIC- (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	PAPER	ALUMINUM/ METAL  & GLASS	OTHER
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non- composted paper towels and napkins *		

DAY 4 =

<b>PLASTIC</b> To the landfill	<b>PLASTIC-</b> (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	<b>PAPER</b>	<b>ALUMINUM/ METAL &amp; GLASS</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non- composted paper towels and napkins *		

DAY 5 =

PLASTIC To the landfill	PLASTIC- (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	PAPER	ALUMINUM/ METAL  & GLASS	OTHER
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non- composted paper towels and napkins *		
Other				

DAY 6 =

<b>PLASTIC</b> To the landfill	<b>PLASTIC-</b> (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	<b>PAPER</b>	<b>ALUMINUM/                      METAL                      &amp; GLASS</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non- composted paper towels and napkins *		
Other				

DAY 7 =

<b>PLASTIC</b> To the landfill	<b>PLASTIC-</b> (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	<b>PAPER</b>	<b>ALUMINUM/                      METAL</b>  <b>&amp; GLASS</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
___ packaging (non-food)	___ 1-beverage bottles	___ (pages) Magazines/ catalogs	___ cans	___ wipes
___ food wrappers	___ clam shells (berry and to go)	___ printed/ worksheets or lined paper	___ lids	___ to go cups (paper lined with plastic too)
___ to go containers (no numbers of Styrofoam= 6)	___ 2 -beverage bottles/ shampoos etc.	___ (pages) newspaper	___ beverage bottles	___ food scraps and tea bags that could have been composted *
___ straws	___ 5 Yogurt tubs	___ junk mail envelopes		___ other disposable 1 use items (wrapping paper, etc.)
___ lids		___ Store receipts		
___ plastic utensils		___ cardboard boxes		
___ plastic bags		___ estimated toilet paper square use *		
___ disposable 1 use items (pens, *razors, etc.)		___ non- composted paper towels and napkins *		
Other				



**1 WEEK TOTALS = of items in each category**

PLASTIC To the landfill	PLASTIC- (recyclable= has a number on hard surface)	PAPER	ALUMINUM/ METAL	OTHER

**Grand Totals:**

Total Throughputs (Solid Waste Items) for the 1 week inventory period:  
= \_\_\_\_\_ Items.

Total Throughputs (Solid Waste Items) for 1 year: (~52 wks./yr) = \_\_\_\_\_ Items.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What 2 specific items did you find that you used the most (besides TP)? Is it something that you could do without or use less of? What are alternatives to get the service you needed with less throughput?

2. What items did you find surprising in your Swag bag—in other words you didn't think about them in your waste stream as much. What items would you like to educate other students about in a trash fashion project?

3. If you did this project including your whole family how do you think it would differ, explain. Are there times of year when your throughput changes? Why?

4. Did you alter your choices about foods eaten and/or items purchased/used during the last seven days, due to the type or amount packaging, - or due to the nature of the assignment itself? -Describe how your choices were modified during this assignment.

**INSERT PHOTOS HERE:**

1. My full Swag bag
2. ME and my Swag bag
3. The contents of my swag bag after 1 week.