

REMOVE YOURSELF FROM JUNK MAIL LISTS

by Deborah Mitchell — Senior Editor, [Environmental Protection](#)

Junk mail is more than a nuisance: unsolicited mail has a tremendous negative impact on the environment. At least 100 million trees are destroyed each year to produce junk mail, and 28 billion gallons of water are used to produce the paper. All of these resources are wasted to produce items many people don't even look at: about half of all junk mail is thrown out unopened or unread, and the rate of response to junk mail is less than 2 percent. The result is that more than 4 million tons of paper is wasted every year, according to the [Native Forest Network](#).



Junk mail also has an economic impact as well. An estimated \$320 million of local taxes are used to dispose of junk mail annually, and transportation of junk mail costs about \$550 million per year, not to mention the air pollution generated during transport.

You can fight back. Read on to learn about effective ways to reduce and even eliminate junk mail in 15 minutes or less!

How to Make a Difference

- Register to have your name removed from mailing lists. There are two main resources to accomplish this. One is a free service called the [National Do Not Mail List](#). When you complete the online National Do Not Mail List form, you can indicate if there are any types of mailings you would like to receive (a list is provided). You can choose as many or as few—or none—as you want. DirectMail.com will contact you every six months via e-mail so you can review and update your preferences. The second service is the [Mail Preference Service](#), which historically was free but which now charges \$1. You can register online or by regular mail. Your request is good for five years, and you cannot state preferences. Neither DirectMail.com neither service can guarantee that your name will be removed from ALL mailing lists. Therefore you may also want to try some of the suggestions below.
- When you order something from a catalog, your name and address is likely given to Abacus, an alliance of most catalog companies. To have your information removed from Abacus, contact them with your name and address. Abacus can be reached either via e-mail (optout@abacus-us.com) or by mail: Abacus, Inc., PO Box 1478, Broomfield CO 80038.
- To be removed from the mailing list of major sweepstakes mailers, contact the following: Publishers Clearinghouse, by phone: (800-645-9242) or by mail: Consumer & Privacy Affairs, Publishers Clearinghouse, 382 Channel Drive, Port Washington NY 11050; or by e-mail: privacychoices@pchmail.com. And Readers Digest Sweepstakes, phone (800-310-6261) or by mail: Reader's Digest, PO Box 50005, Prescott AZ 86301-5005.
- If you move, do not fill out the permanent change of address (COA) form supplied by the post office. Permanent COA information is provided to third parties. Instead, complete the temporary (10 month) form and notify companies and others on your own. Address changes can be done easily by completing the change of address form found on the back of bills.
- To eliminate extra or redundant telephone books, contact the producer of the book (should be listed inside the front of the book) and ask to be removed from their list.
- An optional step is to help an elderly friend or neighbor reduce his or her junk mail by offering to do the same service for them.
For more information on how to eliminate junk mail and similar unwanted printed materials, visit the [Privacy Rights Clearinghouse](#).

Source: <http://charityguide.org/volunteer/fifteen/junk-mail.htm>