

# You Can Reduce Unwanted Mail

*In 1998, credit card issuers jammed the mailboxes of U.S. consumers with approximately 3 billion solicitations, according to Consumer Reports.*

## How Do I Get on Mailing List?

Every time you enter a contest, make a donation, buy something, order a product by mail, write a check, send in a subscription or warranty card, chances are your name and address are being added to a mailing list of some kind. Then the mailing list may be rented, sold or traded.

## What Can I Do to Reduce Junk Mail?

Below are steps you can take to reduce junk mail. Be patient. It takes three to six months before you notice a reduction in your junk mail. Tell companies you do business with to keep your name and address private.

## Call Mail Order Catalog Companies

Most catalogs provide an 800-telephone number for placing an order, call this number and ask to be taken off their mailing list.

## Contact Specific Organizations or Businesses

If you receive unwanted flyers or mail, call the customer service department of the organization or business responsible and request that your name be removed from their mailing list. Alternatively, send in a written request that is signed and dated. Include a sample of the mailing label so the sender can identify how you are listed in their files.

## Return Junk Mail Stamped "Address Correction Requested" or "Return Postage Guaranteed"

Return it **unopened** to the sender by writing "refused, return to sender" on the envelope. **DO NOT** write this on mail *without* that special notation; otherwise the post office will not return it to the sender.

## Get off National Mailing Lists

Write to the address below and ask to be placed on a "suppress" file. Include a list of your name and address in all the different ways it appears on your junk mail. The Mail Preference Service places your name in the suppress file for five years. The Direct Marketing Association sends this list to its business subscribers four times a year.

Mail Preference Service  
Direct Marketing Association  
P.O. Box 9008  
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008



## Notify Mailing List Brokers \*

Some companies specialize in collecting and selling mailing lists. Write or call these companies and ask to be placed in their "suppress" files:

The Polk Co. (formerly National Demographics & Lifestyles)  
(800) 873-7655  
(Maintains city directory lists.)

Donelly Marketing, Inc.  
First Data Solutions, Data Base Operations  
1235 N Avenue  
Nevada, IA 50201-1419  
(888) 633-4402

Experian  
(800) 407-1088

Database America  
Compilation Department  
100 Paragon Drive  
Montvale, NJ 07645-4591  
(800) 223-7777

Haines & Co.  
Criss-Cross Directory  
Attn: Director of Data Processing  
8050 Freedom Ave., NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
(800) 562-8262

\*Note: Some of these companies also utilize the Direct Marketing Association "Suppress" files.

## Reduce Coupons, Ads, Product Samples

If you don't want these items, check for the name of the company distributing the item. Write or call and ask that your address be removed from the company's lists. One company mailing these items is:

Advo Incorporated  
Delivery Services  
1001 W. Walnut Street  
Compton, CA 90220-5191  
(310) 637-0438

## Contact Credit Bureaus

Credit bureaus may sell names and addresses to banks and credit card companies. Federal legislation that took effect in 1997 enables consumers to remove their names from the lists that credit-reporting agencies provide to credit-card issuers. There is now a new, easier single number for consumers to call to get off these mailing lists. The new toll-free number is 1-888-5-OPT-OUT (888-567-8688). Consumers are asked to give their name, address and social security number in order to have their name removed.

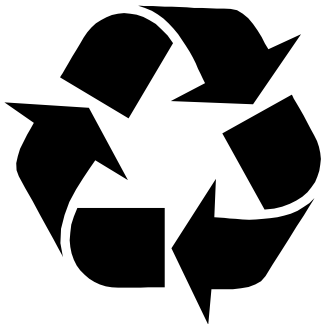
## Avoid Warranty Cards

Warranty cards are a means of gathering names for mailing lists and to inform customers about product recalls. When you purchase a product, you may be covered by the manufacturer's warranty even if you do not send in the warranty card. Check with the manufacturer's to find out whether or not you are covered and keep the receipt as proof of purchase.

Write or call National Demographics and Lifestyles to be removed from lists created from warranty cards.

National Demographics & Lifestyles  
List Order Department  
1621 18<sup>th</sup> Street #300  
Denver, CO 80202  
(800) 525-3533

**Don't forget to recycle the junk mail you do receive!**



## TELEMARKETING

### How Can I Stop Sales Calls?

It is difficult to completely eliminate sales phone calls. However, you can dramatically decrease the number of calls you receive by taking the following steps:

1. Sign up for the Direct Marketing Association Telephone Preference Service (TPS) to have your phone number added to the DMA's "don't call" list. The major nationwide telemarketers participate in this service. Send your name, address and phone number, including your area code, to:

Telephone Preference Service  
Direct Marketing Assoc.  
P.O. Box 9014  
Farmingdale, NY 11735-9014

2. When you are contacted by telemarketers, tell them to put you on their "**don't call**" list. Federal laws require them to maintain and honor such lists.
3. Screen your calls with an **answering machine**.
4. Get an **unlisted phone number**.

### For More Information

**CIWMB** hotline: (800) 553-2962 to order publications.

**California Waste Prevention Info Exchange** at (916) 255-INFO or <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/mrt/wpw/wpmain.htm>.

**The Stop Junk Mail Association**, 3020 Bridgeway, Suite 150-F, Sausalito, CA 94965, (800) 827-5549. They lobby on behalf of postal privacy rights.

**The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse** at (619) 298-3396 or <http://www.privacyrights.org>.

**National Waste Prevention Coalition** at (206) 296-4481, <http://www.metrokc.gov/nwpc/>.

For further information in the City of Los Angeles, please contact the **Solid Resources Citywide Recycling Division** at (213) 473-8228.

Special thanks! Material in this fact sheet was adopted from "How to reduce junk mail" by King County Solid Waste Division, and "Junk Mail Reduction Kit" by City of Palo Alto Recycling Program. Additional information obtained from the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse.