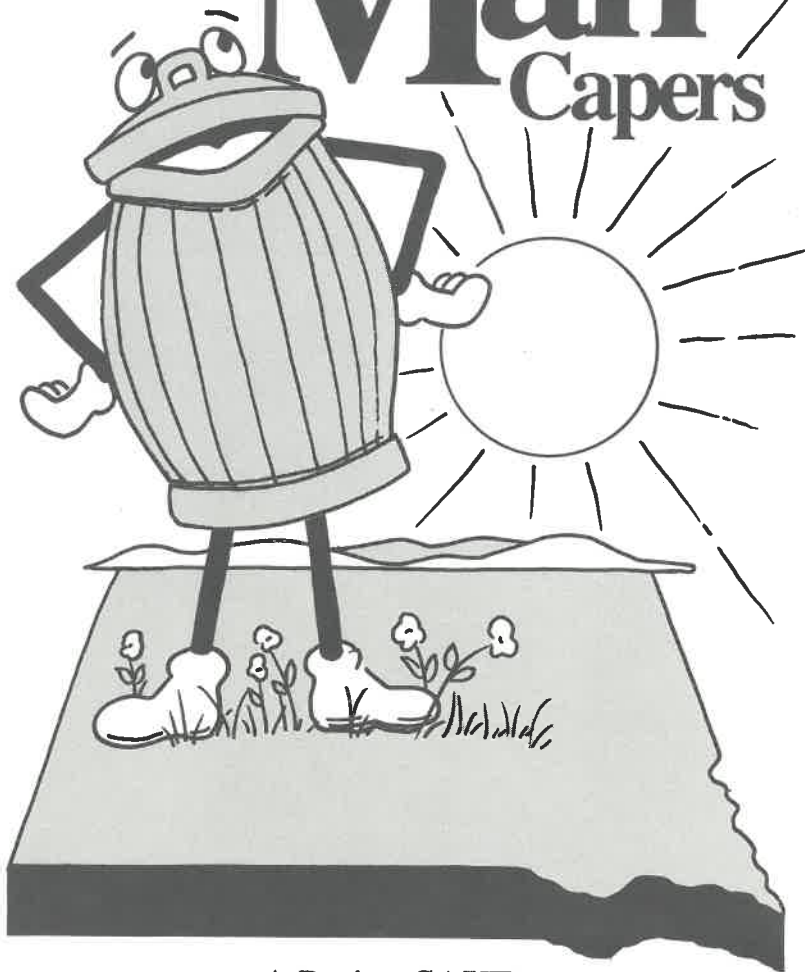


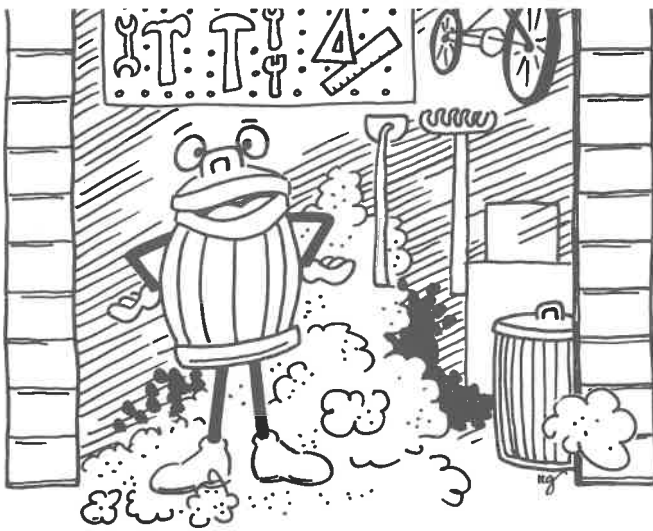
The Can Man Capers



A Project SAVE
Environmental Reader Series

South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Written by Clark Haberman
and Nancy Gordon
Illustrated by Nancy Gordon



Out of the dusty mist of a garage comes our hero...
The CAN MAN! Every day in South Dakota, The CAN MAN works towards his goal of solving trash problems to keep our state beautiful for everyone. Today his adventure takes him to our state capitol, Pierre.

What kind of dilemma is our hero faced with today? It seems there is a shady character that is unfriendly to our environment. Although his true identity is not known, he is called "the Paper Eater".

Who is this faceless Paper Eater? It's your mission to help the CAN MAN find out.

As the mystery unfolds think about what the Paper Eater might look like, then draw a picture of this bad news dude. Your friends or classmates should do the same. See how many drew the same picture.

Now, back to our story. The CAN MAN has been called upon to help the people of Pierre. The landfill in Pierre is beginning to fill up and who is partly to blame? You guessed it, the Paper Eater.



CAN MAN to the rescue! First, our hero visits some Pierre stores in search of the Paper Eater. Many of the owners invite the CAN MAN to take a look around.

As our hero investigates, he finds a very suspicious looking character that stands only about 15 inches tall.



As the CAN MAN moves from business to business, He finds many of the same little characters. Some are standing right out in the open and some are hidden away. But they are all very quiet....and they all are filled with.....you guessed it, paper!

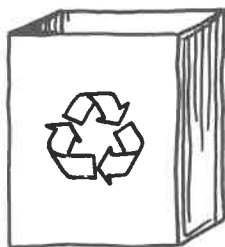
Could these quiet little guys be Paper Eaters? Could they be the cause of the problems that face the Pierre landfill? Just where does all that paper go?



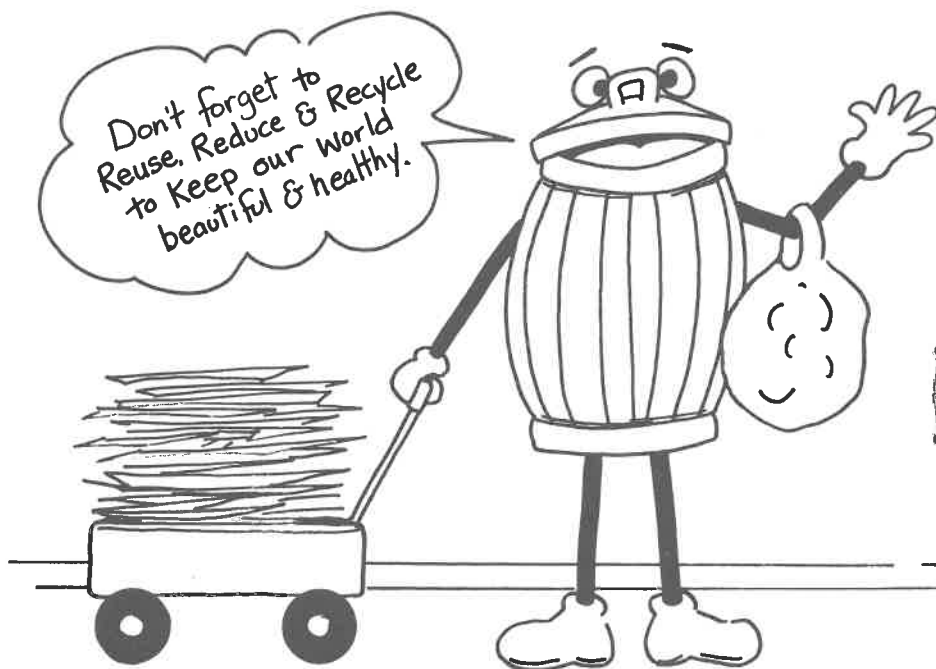
You can help the Can Man by searching your school. Can you find something about 15 inches tall that might be the Paper Eater?


The Can Man is off to the State Capitol building in search of more clues. He finds that many people are reusing paper by writing notes on the back of paper that would usually be thrown away! "That is a good way to cut down on paper in the landfill," says the Can Man.

"HMMMM," the CAN MAN wonders what is this thing sitting next to the desk? It's a cardboard box with a symbol of 3 arrows bent in a circle on it, and the box is filled with used paper. Do you know what this symbol means?



It is the symbol for reuse, reduce, recycle. It is used to remind people to help take care of our world by **reusing** paper, plastic containers, clothing and whatever we possibly can. It reminds us to **reduce** the amount of trash we throw out. You can use products with less packaging or use glass or plastic instead of throwing away paper plates and cups. Finally, it reminds us to



recycle everything we can by taking things like aluminum cans, paper bags, plastic bags and containers to recycling bins. That is where materials are collected that can be used again to make many products. This  symbol is also used to label products that **can** be recycled. Reuse, Reduce, and Recycle are things we can all do to keep our world beautiful and healthy for all living things.



Back to that sly Paper Eater. It's time we close this case and help Pierre put an end to all the waste paper that is filling up the landfill. What is about 15 inches tall that that is constantly filling up with paper? Usually it is dumped into a garbage can or dumpster, and then hauled to the landfill by the garbage collector.

You guessed it! The Paper Eater is a waste basket.



Knowing who the paper eater is, we can all start doing our part to see that he doesn't get his fill. We can use cardboard boxes like we found at the Capitol that have the recycling symbol on them. When people put their waste paper into those boxes it is dumped into a color coded bag. A gold canvas bag holds all the colored paper, and a white bag is for the white paper.

The paper in each bag is gathered from offices and stores and taken to a recycling center where it is pressed into a large bale of paper.

The bales are shipped by train to a paper mill where it is mixed with some new materials to make recycled paper products. Look for recycled paper products when you



Think about how much paper is thrown away. If you throw away five pieces of paper every day for a week that is 35 pieces of paper. In a year, that would add up to 1,820 pieces of paper from just one person. There are 13,000 people that live in Pierre and if everyone threw away 5 pieces of paper a day for a year, how many pieces of paper would be added to the landfill? You can see how feeding the paper eater can add up to big problems for Pierre or your town.

The CAN MAN says "together we CAN make a difference." Here are some ideas. See if you can come up with some of your own.

Reuse

- Use both sides of paper when drawing or doing school work.
- Reuse plastic butter containers to use for storing food or snacks.
- Save glass juice bottles to keep cold water in the refrigerator.
- Give old clothes to someone who needs them or use them as rags.

Reduce

- Buy products that use less packaging.
- Use dishes that can be washed instead of paper ones.
- Take your own shopping bag to the store.

Recycle

- Save and sort paper, aluminum cans, plastic bags, and many different plastic containers to take to recycling centers.
- Join in a recycle program. If there isn't one in your town, write to Project SAVE and ask where the closest recycling center is to you....or find out how to get a recycling program started in your community.
- Look for the recycling logo on plastic containers to determine what group it belongs to.



Match the plastic container to correct recycling logo.

And, don't forget to buy and use paper or products that are made from recycled materials whenever you can!

*We hope you liked the
CAN Man Capers.
Please write to the address below
and tell us what you liked
about the story.*

Project SAVE

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