

EMA GREEN LIFESTYLE TIPS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Drive a fuel efficient, ultra low emission car or hybrid. Turn off your car whenever possible; idling wastes money and fuel and contributes to air pollution.

Carry a canvas bag wherever you shop. Say no to paper AND plastic! But if you can't and are asked paper or plastic, say paper! Paper products have a better chance of being recycled.

Use energy efficient compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL's). They last 10 times longer than regular light bulbs and reduce electric bills by up to 70%. If each one of us replaced just one light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb we could save enough energy to light more than 2.5 million homes for a year and prevent greenhouse gasses equal to the emissions of nearly 800,000 cars.

Turn off lights when leaving a room. Unplugging equipment, such as cell phone chargers, DVD players and microwaves when not in use can save 0.9 tons of CO2 annually.

Conserve water. Buy and use the most efficient plumbing fixtures such as low-flow shower heads. A low-flow shower head can reduce water consumption by as much as 50%. If your faucet is dripping, fix it. It can waste as much as 50 liters of water per day. Turn the water off when brushing your teeth, shaving and washing your face. Make sure your sprinklers are not damaged and that they are watering only grass and bushes – not pavement.

Buy organic. Organic foods are produced without the use of synthetic, chemical pesticides, fertilizers, growth hormones or antibiotics. Healthier for your body and our Earth!

For poultry, meat, and dairy: Look for words like: hormone-free; antibiotic-free; free-range; cage-free; humanely raised; grass fed; fed organic feed.

For seafood: Pregnant moms and parents should heed mercury warnings, as well as learn what types of seafood are harvested sustainably. (seafoodwatch.org)

Major key labels to look for on "green" products:

USDA Organic; Fair Trade Certified; Equal Exchange Fairly Traded; and local state labels such as California Certified Organic Farmers.

Go to www.localharvest.org to find farmers markets and www.greenpages.org to find green business services and retailers in each state.

BBQ. Outdoor grills use less energy than electric kitchen stoves. They also keep heat out of the house, lowering air conditioning costs. Stick with grills that use propane or natural gas; they emit 5.6 pounds of carbon dioxide while a charcoal grill emits 11 pounds for the same use.

Buy clothes made from recycled fibers. Organic cotton, recycled silk, recycled cotton, tencel, modal, bamboo, hemp, etc.

When dry cleaning, locate your local "green" dry cleaner.

Electronics can and should be recycled as well! Anything with a screen such as TV's, computers and cell phones. Also, look for items that come with rechargeable batteries and replace regular batteries with rechargeable ones. Electronicrecyclers.com

Buy Energy Star Appliances. When purchasing new appliances, buy the most energy-efficient models with the Energy Star Label. Wash your clothes in cold water, line dry when possible. Close the curtains to keep the heat in on cold nights.

Go Bamboo. When buying any wood or furniture product look for bamboo products first. Even bamboo disposable plates! Bamboo is fast-growing and versatile and has become the unofficial poster material to environmental designers and builders. Bamboo can be flattened into flooring, molded into furniture, pressed into veneers, even sliced up to make window blinds. Because it is so fast-growing, it is much easier to maintain healthy bamboo forests. Bamboo is one of the greenest materials around.

Buy and use non-toxic household products whenever possible. Discarding toxic products correctly is important, but not buying them in the first place is even better. Seventh Generation, Shaklee or Method are all companies who make eco-friendly products that actually work. Ed Begley, Jr. also makes Begley's Best a very good multi purpose cleaning product.

Switch to 100% recycled bathroom tissue. We can save 5 million trees and 17,000 garbage trucks full of waste by replacing just one 12-roll pack in every household with tissue made from recycled paper.

Use chemical free personal care/hair products and non-toxic biodegradable cleaning products. Some chemicals found in these products are linked to cancer, birth defects and other health problems. Read the label. If the fumes are hazardous, if it shouldn't touch your skin, if it's harmful to aquatic fish and wildlife, do you really want to use it in your home and flush it down the drain? Parents should also be careful of using toxic pesticides, roach & ant sprays etc. Look for Poison-Free spray to kill bugs (e.g. Victor brand) or home remedies.

When buying household paints: Look for words like water-based, low VOC and less-toxic.

Buy and use cotton diapers. Each can be reused up to 100 times and decompose in 1 to 6 months. About 1% of all America's landfill space is occupied by disposable diapers. They can take up to 500 years to decompose in a landfill. But we know they're so much more convenient so if buying disposable, buy Seventh Generation or Planet.

Buy a flat screen. An LCD flat panel uses as little as a third of the electricity of conventional tube-based models, saving you on power bill the equivalent of leaving a 50-watt bulb on all year. LCD's use half as much energy as plasma TV's.

Carbon Offset. Go carbon neutral. Climateclean.net

Go solar. Install solar panels and watch your electric bill go down to zero! Join the EMA BP Solar Neighbors Program.

FOR YOUR KIDS:

Buy organic baby food. Look for those that come in reusable glass jars and recyclable paper boxes. The weight saved in glass would tip scales at 680,000 pounds, about as much as a Boeing 747.

Buy baby lotion squeeze containers that can be recycled. If just 10% of the babies born this year used these recyclable bottles or reusable containers, roughly 20,000 pounds of plastic could be saved from landfills.

Buy the largest size available. When buying baby shampoo you'll get more for your money and your planet. About 22 grams of plastic will be saved for every ounce of shampoo.

Avoid crayons made from paraffin wax. Paraffin comes from petroleum. Try using those with soybean oil instead, which are also non-toxic. We can produce well over one trillion crayons without tapping oil supplies.

Play with dust-free chalk. It limits the potential exposure to airborne particles that aggravate asthma and other respiratory illness. Whiteboards serve as great alternatives to blackboards. Non-toxic dry-erase markers eliminate all chalk dust damage.

Buy recycled, non-chlorine paper. Post-consumer recycled paper requires 44% less energy to produce, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 37% and producing 48% less solid waste. Look for post-consumer recycled fiber file folders as well.

FOR YOUR PETS:

Consider a vegetarian diet. If every dog in the U.S. ate vegetarian one day per month, the energy savings per year would be the equivalent of 190 million gallons of gasoline.

Choose toys made from recycled materials. The virgin materials saved if all pet toys purchased in a year were 100% recycled could be combined to make a Frisbee nearly 2.5 miles in diameter.

Buy treats with no packaging or recycled packaging. 58,000 cubic yards of waste would be eliminated annually if just 10% of all dog and cat owners purchased treats in recyclable packaging.

**For additional information and resource ideas visit
"green links" at www.ema-online.org**

