

One Green Thing X 100

THINK FIRST ... do I really need to use it? Have it? Own it?

If you already own it, can you reuse it or remodel it (or even share it)?

If you must purchase it, select a product with less packaging (and be sure to bring your own bag to carry it)

"I would feel more optimistic about a bright future for man if he spent less time proving that he can outwit Nature and more time tasting her sweetness and respecting her seniority" E. B. White

Home

Reduce Your Trash/ Pollution Output:

1. Eat less meat per week- have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich instead!
<http://www.pbicampaign.org>
2. Practice Pre-cycling- buy products that have the least wasteful packaging and/or packaging that has already been recycled
3. Avoid excess packaging, buy staple foods in bulk and transfer to air tight containers (pasta, rice, cereal)
4. Donate old clothing, books and furniture to organizations like the Salvation Army
5. Repair and reuse old furniture rather than buying new
6. Have shoes repaired rather than throwing them out
7. Dry your hands in the kitchen with a cloth towel rather than a paper one
8. Cloth napkins instead of paper
9. Wash reuse and recycle glass bottles and jars
10. Use reusable shopping bags- for all shopping not just groceries
11. Rent rarely-used equipment and tools rather than buy
12. Substitute liquid fabric softener with a ¼ cup of white vinegar, your clothes will be soft but won't smell like vinegar
13. Avoid using bleach.

Save Energy Painlessly:

14. Unplug electrical equipment and chargers when not in use
15. Wash your clothes on cold/cold except sheets- was in hot to kill dust mites
16. Turn down your water heater to 120 degrees
17. Turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth
18. Put a few drops of food coloring in the tank of your toilet and wait 15 minutes – if you see the color in the bowl, you could be leaking water (nearly 20% of all toilets are!)
19. When a light bulb burns out, replace it with a compact fluorescent bulb
20. Turn off the lights in a room when you leave
21. Adjust the thermostat higher by 2 degrees in summer and lower by 2 degrees in winter
22. Close vents in rooms that you spend very little time in
23. Put on a sweater rather than turning up the thermostat at home and work
24. Seal and caulk any drafty windows and doors in the fall
25. Insulate attics and crawl spaces, replace drafty basement windows with glass block
26. Use your dishwasher (instead of hand washing) – it really is more efficient
27. Open your dishwasher up to dry your dishes instead of using the drying cycle

28. After baking, open your oven door and let the warmth into the room
29. Don't peek at food in the oven (use your oven light) opening the door causes a 25-50 drop in temperatures
30. Using your microwave to cook lots of foods is more efficient than heating up the whole oven
31. Leave a few inches of space around your fridge- makes for more efficient energy use
32. Vacuum the back of refrigerator once a year
33. Change the furnace filter when timely
34. Use soy based candles
35. If you take a bath (remember a shower is really more "water efficient") leave the bathwater to cool a while, getting the benefit of the warmth and moisture in your home
36. If you've only used aluminum foil to cover something – give it a quick wash and you can use it again
37. Be sure to use proper disposal methods for paint cans, chemicals, etc.
38. Use reusable containers instead of plastic bags or wraps
39. Research "green cleaning products" (for office too!)
40. Consider putting your television, dvd player, cable box on a power strip too so you can turn it all off when you aren't watching (remember if you can see a green light when the equipment is supposedly turned off, it's definitely using phantom power!)
41. When you must get rid of electronics, do it properly at local drive that will recycle the components
42. Don't let your car idle when you are waiting
43. When running errands: make a plan/ route and stick to it, do as many errands in one trip as possible

Office

44. Reduce the margins in word documents for maximum efficiency
45. When making copies, use both sides of paper
46. Use "Eco-Font" (uses less ink- like in this document!)
47. Eat out less often (and eat less meat per week) bring fruit (and other products) purchased at a local farmers' market (of course using your reusable bag)
48. Be sure to recycle as much as possible
49. Don't turn on lights unless you absolutely need them (consider turning out every other one in long hallways, etc.)
50. Turn off computer, monitor and printer and of course the lights every night
51. Add power strips so you can easily turn everything off at one time (easier to remember)
52. Locate "phantom power using devices" that you may not think of (vcr, cell phone chargers)
53. Use paper products made from recycled paper
54. Avoid products you don't need ... air fresheners, too many kinds of cleaning products
55. Use "greener" cleaning products
56. Drink tap water (avoid bottled water and water coolers) Use aluminum or stainless steel water bottles
57. Avoid paper towels (ask for high-speed, low electrical usage hand dryers to be installed when possible)
58. Don't throw out the left-over coffee. Wait for it to cool and use it to water plants
59. Donate old office furnishings or offer for auction
60. Be sure there's no possibility of electronics "going to landfill" (make sure they are properly disposed of)
61. Look for ways to recycle ... phone books, ink cartridges, cell phones, vhs tapes, etc.
62. Try not to use salt or de-icing products (consider beet juice!)

63. Take your banana peels, coffee grounds and whatever you can home with you for composting (your garden will love you)
64. Do your own office “energy audit”, check your room for maximum efficiency (looking for things like leaking windows) and then talk to somebody about the effects of not doing such needed energy saving work
65. Reuse shipping materials / boxes / mailing envelopes
66. Look around your office ... do you have extra things plugged in that you don't need (like a clock when you could just look at the time on your computer?)
67. Don't purchase a book you can get from the library

Garden

68. Feed your garden soil- start a compost pile!
 69. Conserve water, prevent weeds, keep your soil cool, protect you plants in winter- mulch your landscape!
 70. Use soaker hoses in the garden
 71. Water your lawn after 6pm and before 8am
 72. Plant Rain Gardens to process pollutants from rainwater
 73. Use Rain barrels to water your plants
 74. Avoid pesticides- at all costs
 75. A manual reel mower saves on fuel and is a great workout for you
 76. Replace your lawn or large sections with Xeriscaping- Landscaping that requires very little water input
 77. Use Milky Spore, a natural product, to battle white grubs (Japanese Beetles) in your lawn
 78. Dispose of chemicals at community hazardous chemical collections
 79. Plant more trees on your property; evergreens on the NW and deciduous on the S & E
 80. Use water permeable surfaces for patios and walkways
 81. Plant landscapes in layers: groundcover, flowers, shrubs, trees for the best diversity
 82. Instead of building a fence, plant a hedge
 83. Learn to grow your own vegetables- organically
 84. Attract beneficial wildlife and insects to your garden
 85. Mow your lawn to 3” tall
 86. Don't be in a rampage to eliminate all the weeds in your lawn
 87. Grow a victory garden- use heirloom vegetable and herb seeds (www.seedsofchange.com)
 88. Plant fruit bushes and trees in your landscape
 89. Have a garden “swap”, sharing excess plants with your friends and neighbors
- ### Traveling Tips
90. Leave those little bottles of shampoo and lotion, bring your own from home
 91. Stay on the trails when hiking- don't risk the possible environmental damage
 92. Staying in a hotel more than one night? Let the hotel staff know to change linens every other day
 93. Use digital photography rather than disposable cameras
 94. Take a picture of the super-fabulous-rare-wildflower rather than picking it!
 95. Remember hotel owners pay a large percentage of their expenses to the power company (don't abuse by leaving everything turned on when you leave the room!)
 96. If you don't see a recycling container, ask them why they don't recycle
 97. If they don't furnish recycling, take the recyclable materials with you and recycle at home
 98. No matter how you plan to travel, a few of those nasty plastic bags you get could be helpful, add them to your suitcase

Transportation

99. Get every drop when you fill up your automobile (it only takes a few seconds) check and fill your tires for optimum miles per gallon
100. Don't exceed speed limits
101. Does your company allow working-from-home? Do it!
102. Use the air conditioning in hottest weather (rolling windows down creates drag at high speeds)
103. Get rid of unnecessary items in the vehicle (wastes gasoline)
104. If you change your own oil, be sure to take it to a recycling location
105. Remove the luggage carrier (clamshell/ big mac box) when not in use
106. Consider new products including "micro-green oil filters" and synthetic oils
107. In winter, be sure to get vehicle washed to keep the salt/snow off the vehicle
108. Leave your vehicle at home, take the train (or car pool)
109. Even better, walk or bicycle to work
110. When you purchase a new vehicle, consider a hybrid
111. (May not be green) but be sure to wear your seatbelt!!!

It's All About You!

112. Be sure to learn more about sunscreens, insect repellants, air fresheners, soaps, lotions and other body products (avoid parabens)
113. Use natural products (exchange petroleum based lip conditioners for beeswax products)
114. Make your own products so you know exactly what goes into them
115. Fill the rooms you spend time in with plants to clean the air around you
116. Examine labels, boxes, etc. for content so you can buy natural fabrics, organic cottons, etc.
117. Purchase American-made products (avoiding additional overseas shipping costs)
118. Add new accessories to make an old garment look new
119. Check ingredients on all foods – sometimes brand names don't mean better (and often they are made overseas too)
120. Frequent farmers markets, buy home-made jams/jellies and organic food suppliers
121. Finally, if you smoke- NEVER drop a butt outside, they take up to 10 years to degrade and they release toxic chemicals into the soil and waterways. There are 599 "approved" additives to cigarettes, when they are burned they produce 4000 different chemical reactions and many of these new chemicals are carcinogenic to the smoker and people nearby and the environment. Nicotine is an herbicide! It kills plants- don't put cigarettes into flower pots and planters!!!!

Check out these websites for more green living suggestions:

- <http://www.treehugger.com>
- <http://www.green-living.com>
- <http://www.nrdc.org/greenliving>
- <http://www.thegreenguide.com>
- <http://www.greenbiz.com>
- <http://www.thedailygreen.com>
- <http://www.idealbite.com>
- <http://www.ecofabulous.com>
- <http://www.inhabit.com>
- <http://www.plantabillion.org>
- <http://www.recycline.com/>

<http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com/>
<http://www.planetnatural.com/site/milky-spore.html>
<http://www.com2computer.com/recycling.html>
<http://www.dothegreenthing.com>
http://www.planetnatural.com/site/gardening_tips.html
<http://www.greensolutions.il.gov>
<http://www.illinoisenergy.org>
<http://www.standingupforillinois.org/green/sustainplan.php>

Additional tips from our lecture:

122. Have a district-wide or company-wide meeting to educate your employees and make them aware of what the park district is doing to go green and perhaps to earn the ISO green certification (use ISO 14001 for Environmental Management)
123. Use elephant dung business cards for a more inexpensive and environmentally friendly way to communicate.
124. Contact the athletic affiliates in your park district and ask them to encourage their members not to use disposable water/drink bottles anymore. BPA-free reusable or aluminum are more sustainable, healthier choices.
125. Look into applying for grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation
126. If you use a portable dishwasher- put the drainage hose into a bucket in the last rinse and use the grey water for your plants- let it cool first!

