

100 Ways you can improve the environment

In your home—conserve energy

1. Clean or replace air filters on your air conditioning unit at least once a month.
2. If you have central air conditioning, do not close vents in unused rooms.
3. Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120°.
4. Wrap your water heater in an insulated blanket.
5. Turn down or shut off your water heater when you will be away for extended periods.
6. Turn off unneeded lights even when leaving a room for a short time.
7. Set your refrigerator temperature at 36° to 38° and your freezer at 0° to 5°.
8. When using an oven, minimize door opening while it is in use; it reduces oven temperature by 25° to 30° every time you open the door.
9. Clean the lint filter in your dryer after every load so that it uses less energy.
10. Unplug seldom used appliances.
11. Use a microwave whenever you can instead of a conventional oven or stove.
12. Wash clothes with warm or cold water instead of hot.
13. Reverse your indoor ceiling fans for summer and winter operations as recommended.
14. Turn off lights, computers and other appliances when not in use.
15. Purchase appliances and office equip-



16. Only use electric appliances when you need them.
17. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs to save money and energy.
18. Keep your thermostat at 68° in winter and 78° in summer.
19. Keep your thermostat higher in summer and lower in winter when you are away from home.
20. Insulate your home as best as you can.
21. Install weather stripping around all doors and windows.
22. Shut off electrical equipment in the evening when you leave work.
23. Plant trees to shade your home.
24. Shade outside air conditioning units by trees or other means.
25. Replace old windows with energy efficient ones.
26. Use cold water instead of warm or hot water when possible.
27. Connect your outdoor lights to a timer.
28. Buy green electricity - electricity produced by low - or even zero-pollution facilities (NC Greenpower for North Carolina - www.greenpower.com).



In your home—reduce toxicity

29. Eliminate mercury from your home by purchasing items without mercury, and dispose of items containing mercury at an appropriate drop-off facil-



ity when necessary (e.g., old thermometers).

30. Learn about alternatives to household cleaning items that do not use hazardous chemicals.
31. Buy the right amount of paint for the job.
32. Review labels of household cleaners you use. Consider alternatives like baking soda, scouring pads, water or a little more elbow grease.
33. When no good alternatives exist to a toxic item, find the least amount required for an effective, sanitary result.
34. If you have an older home, have paint in your home tested for lead. If you have lead-based paint, cover it with wall paper or other material instead of sanding it or burning it off.
35. Use traps instead of rat and mouse poisons and insect killers.
36. Have your home tested for radon.
37. Use cedar chips or aromatic herbs instead of mothballs.



In your yard

38. Avoid using leaf blowers and other dust-producing equipment.
39. Use an electric lawnmower instead of a gas-powered one.
40. Leave grass clippings on the yard—they decompose and return nutrients to the soil.
41. Use recycled wood chips as mulch to keep weeds down, retain moisture and prevent erosion.



42. Use only the required amount of fertilizer.
43. Minimize pesticide use.
44. Create a wildlife habitat in your yard.
45. Water grass early in the morning.
46. Rent or borrow items like ladders, chain saws, party decorations and others that are seldom used.
47. Take actions that use non hazardous components (e.g., to ward off pests, plant marigolds in a garden instead of using pesticide).
48. Put leaves in a compost heap instead of burning them or throwing them away. Yard debris too large for your compost bin should be taken to a yard-debris recycler.



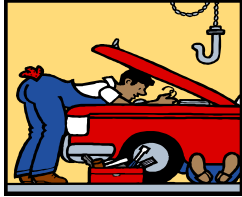
In your office

49. Copy and print on both sides of paper.
50. Reuse items like envelopes, folders and paper clips.
51. Use mailer sheets for interoffice mail instead of an envelope.
52. Set up a bulletin board for memos instead of sending a copy to each employee.
53. Use e-mail instead of paper correspondence.
54. Use recycled paper.
55. Use discarded paper for scrap paper.
56. Encourage your school and/or company to print documents with soy-based inks, which are less toxic.
57. Use a ceramic coffee mug instead of a disposable cup.



Ways you can protect our air

58. Ask your employer to consider flexible work schedules or telecommuting.
59. Recycle printer cartridges.
60. Shut off electrical equipment in the evening when you leave work.
61. Report smoking vehicles to your local air agency.
62. Don't use your wood stove or fireplace when air quality is poor.
63. Avoid slow-burning, smoldering fires. They produce the largest amount of pollution.
64. Burn seasoned wood - it burns cleaner than green wood.
65. Use solar power for home and water heating.
66. Use low-VOC or water-based paints, stains, finishes and paint strippers.
67. Purchase radial tires and keep them properly inflated for your vehicle.
68. Paint with brushes or rollers instead of using spray paints to minimize harmful emissions.
69. Ignite charcoal barbecues with an electric probe or other alternative to lighter fluid.
70. If you use a wood stove, use one sold after 1990. They are required to meet federal emissions standards and are more efficient and cleaner burning.
71. Walk or ride your bike instead of driving, whenever possible.
72. Join a carpool or vanpool to get to work.



Ways to use less water

73. Check and fix any water leaks.
74. Install water-saving devices on your faucets and toilets.
75. Don't wash dishes with the water running continuously.
76. Wash and dry only full loads of laundry and dishes.
77. Follow your community's water use restrictions or guidelines.
78. Install a low-flow shower head.
79. Replace old toilets with new ones that use a lot less water.
80. Turn off washing machine's water supply to prevent leaks.



Ways to protect our water

81. Revegetate or mulch disturbed soil as soon as possible.
82. Never dump anything down a storm drain.
83. Have your septic tank pumped and system inspected regularly.
84. Check your car for oil or other leaks, and recycle motor oil.
85. Take your car to a car wash instead of washing it in the driveway.
86. Learn about your watershed.

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Create less trash

87. Buy items in bulk from loose bins when possible to reduce the packaging wasted.
88. Avoid products with several layers of packaging when only one is sufficient. About 33% of what we throw away is packaging.
89. Buy products that you can reuse.
90. Maintain and repair durable products instead of buying new ones.
91. Check reports for products that are easily repaired and have low breakdown rates.
92. Reuse items like bags and containers when possible.
93. Use cloth napkins instead of paper ones.
94. Use reusable plates and utensils instead of disposable ones.
95. Use reusable containers to store food instead of aluminum foil and cling wrap.
96. Shop with a canvas bag instead of using paper and plastic bags.
97. Buy rechargeable batteries for devices used frequently.
98. Reuse packaging cartons and shipping materials. Old newspapers make great packaging material.
99. Compost your vegetable scraps.
100. Buy used furniture - there is a surplus of it, and it is much cheaper than new furniture.



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SUSTAINABLE
ENVIRONMENT
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