

Environmental News & Notes

Everyday Ways to Help the Environment – Starting At Home

(NAPSA)—Between car pooling, shopping and business meetings, being environmentally friendly is often a low priority. While being “green” may not make our to-do lists, taking one simple step each day can have a positive environmental effect.

Here are some tips from Green Mountain Energy Company for each day of the week that are easy to fit into an everyday routine:

Sunday—Take A Walk: Walking is great exercise. For longer trips, use mass transit.

Benefits: By walking or using mass transit instead of driving, you can reduce the amount of CO₂, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average passenger car uses 581 gallons of gasoline each year, and emits more than 11,500 pounds of CO₂.

Monday—Choose Your Power: Traditional methods of generating electricity have been one of the leading causes of industrial air pollution in the United States. But some electricity providers use renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar and water, as well as natural gas—to create electricity that is cleaner than the typical system power.

Benefits: By buying cleaner electricity, your household can reduce its share of CO₂ emissions. Cleaner electricity customers avoid contributing on average between 100 to 20,000 pounds of CO₂, depending where they live.

Tuesday—Go Stargazing: When buying a new appliance, look for the Energy Star seal. These appliances may cost more up front, but the energy savings can help pay for the purchase.



Separating waste and recycling can have a big environmental effect.

Benefits: A new Energy Star-labeled refrigerator uses half the amount of energy as a 10-year-old refrigerator.

Wednesday—Recycle When Possible: Most communities have recycling centers and offer curbside pickup for used paper, plastic and aluminum products. Check your Yellow Pages for local recycling centers. Make dropping off recyclable materials part of your weekly routine.

Benefits: Recycling all your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass and metal can reduce your home's CO₂ emissions by 850 pounds per year.

Thursday—Plug Into Preservation: Turn out lights when you are not in a room to help preserve valuable energy. Where possible, replace your regular incandescent lightbulbs with fluorescent bulbs. Fluorescent bulbs use 25 percent the electricity that incandescent lights use and generally last up to 10 times longer.

Benefits: If every household replaced four incandescent lightbulbs with fluorescent lightbulbs,

consumers would save as much energy as removing seven million cars from the road.

Friday—Clean With Green: Cleaning solutions can introduce toxic chemicals into your home and, when poured down your drain, may put unsafe chemicals into the environment. To reduce the environmental effect, choose cleaning products that are non-toxic, biodegradable, phosphate-free and chlorine-free. Use old T-shirts, towels and washcloths to clean, instead of paper towels.

Benefits: Americans generating 1.6 million tons of household hazardous waste per year. The average home accumulates as much as 100 pounds of household hazardous waste. Choosing more environmentally friendly cleaning products can reduce your share of harmful waste.

Saturday—Be Water Wise: Use water only when needed. Avoid leaving the faucet running while brushing your teeth or shaving. Consider installing water-saving showerheads and low-flow toilets that reduce water usage.

Benefits: By replacing standard 4.5-gallon-per-minute showerheads with 2.5-gallon-per-minute heads, a family of four can save approximately 20,000 gallons of water per year.

Green Mountain EnergySM electricity is the leading brand of cleaner electricity in the states where the company does business: California, Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Texas. Nearly half-a-million customers in seven states use Green Mountain Energy electricity. The Austin, Texas-based company (www.greenmountain.com) was founded in 1997 to “change the way power is made.”