

# Protecting Our Environment

## Sustainable Living Made Simpler

(NAPSA)—Here, for a change, is some good news about our environment. Steps can be taken now to ensure that a livable world exists for future generations.

More good news: One profession that is addressing this need is landscape architecture. Landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, planning, design, management and stewardship of the natural and built environments. Even better, these landscape architects have powerful influence over the future shape of communities.

These professionals preserve the land by designing communities that incorporate the principles of “smart growth” and prevent urban sprawl. Mindful of the environment when designing residential projects, they often use plants native to the geographical region and design projects that conserve water.

In addition, America’s landscape architects offer these suggestions you can follow to help preserve the environment:

- Reduce the need for air-conditioning by using trees and shrubs to shade windows and create “outdoor rooms” to increase time spent outside.

- Replace exposed concrete and asphalt driveways with pavers, which stay cooler and let plants grow.

- Use native plants common to the area to reduce watering. Use mulch when gardening and install a rainwater tank to collect storm water for watering.



**To protect the environment, landscape architects consider stormwater management, designing to reduce runoff and avoid overtaxing sewer systems while providing a way to cleanse any runoff that can't be avoided.**

- Recycle kitchen waste into garden compost.

- Choose an efficient vehicle to save fuel. Some places encourage this with tax breaks, HOV-lane passes and other incentives.

- Use public transportation, bike, walk or carpool when possible, and try to bundle errands.

If every person acts responsibly, collectively we can make a major difference. In the coming decades, Americans can do even more than simply reduce our impact. The country can create restorative landscapes that improve the health of ecosystems and restore the balance between man and nature. Landscape architects are working to make this a reality.

You can learn more at the American Society of Landscape Architects Web site, [www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org).