

## Green Living

As humans, we utilize the Earth's natural resources every day for our existence. We breathe the air, we drink the water, we use energy for transportation and conveniences, and we till the soil to produce our food. As consumers, we have many options available to us to meet these needs.



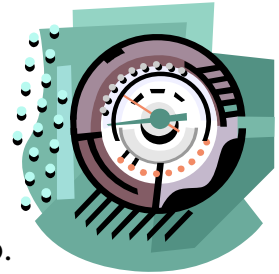
When someone chooses to adopt a green lifestyle, he or she is making deliberate consumer choices to lighten his or her impact on the natural world. Some examples might be driving less, conserving water, recycling, or buying local products.

In the following paragraphs, you will find simple suggestions to “green” up your lifestyle. The suggestions have been listed by categories, and it may be helpful to look at your own lifestyle one category at a time. Making changes in small steps will help you permanently adopt these practices.

### Save Energy

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs.
- Unplug appliances when not in use. This includes chargers for cell phones and other small electronics. Using power strips can make it easy to unplug multiple devices at once. In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off.

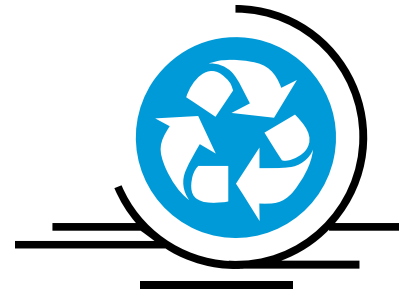
- Turn off lights, televisions, computers, and other electrical devices when not in use.
- Purchase appliances or electronic products that have been awarded the ENERGY STAR seal.
- Turn your thermostat up or down in accordance with the seasons. In the winter, try lowering the temperature of your home at least two degrees, and more while you are not at home or sleeping. In the summer, use ceiling fans to help cool your home, and turn the thermostat up a degree or two.
- Investing in a programmable thermostat, and programming it correctly, will take the guesswork out of temperature control.
- Keep filters on heating/cooling units clean, and choose pleated filters. This will help them run efficiently.
- Run the clothes washer and dryer only when there is a full load. Try using the cold water cycle instead of hot or warm water. Consider using a clothesline or drying rack in warmer months.
- Use manual appliances when possible, such as a can opener.
- Maintain your car by changing the oil and air filter regularly, and keep your tires properly inflated.
- Choose to purchase a fuel-efficient or flexible fuel vehicle.
- Reduce miles driven by combining trips for errands and carpooling.



### Reduce Waste

- Think before you buy: look for items that use minimal packaging, buy frequently used items in bulk to reduce packaging, and look for items that are packaged in reusable or recyclable containers.

- Recycle as much of your waste as possible, including aluminum cans, plastic milk newspaper, white paper, junk mail, and cardboard.
- Eliminate catalogs and junk mail by having your name removed from mailing lists. (Contact the Direct Marketing Association at <http://www.the-dma.org/>. Click on link “Remove my name from mailing lists”.)
- Take your own reusable bags for shopping. Many grocery stores will give you a few cents for each of your own bags.
- Use travel mugs instead of disposable coffee cups. Many coffee shops give a 5-10 cent discount if you bring in your own mug.
- “Close the loop” by purchasing items made of recycled materials.



### Save Water

- Replace old toilets with low-flow toilets. Check existing toilets for leaks.
- Use low-flow showerheads and faucets.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.
- Catch the water that runs while waiting for it to get hot (or cold). Use this water for plants or household cleaning.
- Use a broom to clean off sidewalks and driveways instead of a water hose.
- Run the dishwasher only when there is a full load.
- In your yard, choose native plants that are drought resistant.



### Eat Responsibly

- Plant a garden and produce some of your own food. Avoid pesticides by companion planting and use compost for fertilizer.

- Buy food from local growers and utilize farmers markets.
- Look for sustainably produced items in your local grocery store, and ask managers to stock these items.



## Act Locally

- Volunteer in your community to get a recycling program started, or pick up trash.
- Plant trees on your property, or work with a local school to plant trees.
- Be a resource for your community. Set a good example for your neighbors, and be ready to answer questions. Direct them to the local Cooperative Extension office.



For more detailed information, look for these publications at your local Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service Office:

*IP-66 Heating and Cooling Systems: Saving Energy and Staying Safe*

*IP-70 Managing Household Waste: Preventing, Re-Using, Recycling, and Composting*

*ENRI-127 Simple Steps to Save Water at Home*

### References:

US Environmental Protection Agency, Take Action at Home, <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/athome.htm>. Accessed Feb. 23, 2007.

US Department of Energy. <http://www.energy.gov/applianceselectronics.htm>. Accessed Feb. 23, 2007.

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