

**July 2010**

## **Compost Re-cycle Reuse**

**Going green doesn't have to be some big hassle, lifestyle change where you stop showering and start eating only sprouts. It can be as simple or as complex as you want. But many things you do can also save you a lot of money.**

**Some simple changes you can make in your daily routine can have a very positive impact on the environment, and your wallet.**

**Buy local. Support your local business. Choose ones that support Going Green. Texas grown and produced products benefit you and the local economy.**

**Your favorite fruits and vegetables travel hundreds of miles to fill your fridge.**

**Buy from local farms: the food is fresher, it supports the local economy and saves gas.**

**During the dry months of summer, 40 percent of household water is sucked up by lawns and landscaping. A rain barrel can capture some of the hundreds of gallons of free water that run off your roof: a 1,000-square-foot roof yields up to 600 gallons from a 1-inch rainfall.**

**Adjust your thermostat by two degrees. Scrape your plates instead**

**of rinsing them. Don't overload the washing machine. Air dry your laundry.**

**Things like using reusable water bottles, reusable grocery bags, and reusable plastic containers to carry your lunch to work. All of these things will save you money and be that much less that ends up being thrown in the trash, and ultimately end up in a dump somewhere.**

**Other things you can do to have a positive impact on the planet is to save fuel. That can be as simple as combining errands so you don't have to make a bunch of trips, getting your car tuned up so it's running well, and properly inflating your tires.**

**Again, all of these things will allow you to spend less on gas and since you're using less gas that's fewer dangerous carbon emissions that are being sent into the air.**

**One of the best places to make a positive change is around your home. You can do a lot to make sure that your home is energy efficient.**

**Some of those things will involve making sure the heat you have to pay to make doesn't go right up your chimney or out of your roof.**

**An estimated 15% to 30% of a home's total heating and cooling energy is lost through poorly sealed duct-work, costing consumers about \$5 billion dollars annually.**

**If American households went online to view and pay their bills, it would save over 16 million trees. Find out what services and options are available to you.**

**Use public transportation whenever possible. Every year, public transportation reduces gasoline consumption by 1.4 billion gallons--- that's equal to 108 million full tanks of gas.**

**If just 10 percent of U.S. households attached shut off nozzles to their outdoor hoses, we'd save enough water to fill over 128,000 bathtubs - everyday.**

**Most baking instructions tell you to preheat your oven. Never do so for more than 10 minutes. If everybody reduced their oven time by an hour per year, we'd save enough energy to bake a billion cookies.**

**Moving your heater's thermostat down 2 degrees in winter and up two degrees in summer saves over 2,000 pounds of Co2 emissions-which is over \$100 on your annual energy bills.**

**Insulating your home's attic, pipes, ductwork, and floors can save 25 percent on your energy bill. Ask a professional to help make your home more energy efficient.**

**In the course of a year, if everyone in the US composted their kitchen scraps instead of sending them to the trash, the organic waste diverted from landfills would cover the entire city of San Francisco.**

**Next time you travel, consider a permanent tag for your luggage. If travelers in the U.S. stopped using paper luggage tags during their trips, 60 million sheets of paper could be saved per year.**

**Consumers will throw out about 400 million electronics this year. Sell, donate, or recycle your old electronics rather than throwing it away. Check your area for drop off locations.**

**Use leftover paper or plastic bags for your trash can. When one ton of plastic bags are reused, the energy equivalent of 11 barrels of oil is saved, and 17 trees are spared.**

**Did you know that 40% of our energy consumption and carbon emissions come from our homes, offices, and schools? There are simple steps you can take to reduce your energy use, save you money, and grow our economy. Speak to your local utility company about a free energy audit today.**

**Set your outside lights on timers or motion sensors. Reducing usage on a single outdoor floodlight can save you up to \$120 a year in energy costs.**

**Recycle your newspapers whenever you can. Each year, 10 million tons of newspaper are not recycled, but thrown away in landfills. If we changed this habit together, we could save up to 75 million trees.**

**Unplug your appliances when you're away on vacation. Residential households in the U.S. spend more than 5 billion dollars annually on standby power alone-which is 5% of all the electricity consumed across the country**

**Using bamboo products promotes the reforestation and expansion of more bamboo crops, which consume airborne carbon dioxide at a higher rate than any other tree, and does so year-round.**

**Lawns cover about 40 million acres nationwide. •2.5 gallons: The amount of water per person much of the world is allocated. •400 gallons: The amount of water per person used by the average American citizen; 30 percent of this is used for outdoor purposes, such as watering the lawn.**

**Pesticides include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides and any other materials that are intended to kill or otherwise harm living organisms. Pesticides are not only bad for weeds, pests or fungi, but also poison humans and animals. Some legal pesticides are even known to cause cancer in**

high doses. Even if you do not come into direct contact with a pesticide, it can still find its way into your body; there is pesticide residue on most of the food that we eat (unless it is organic) and most of the water that we drink.

The only way to reduce our exposure to pesticides is to stop using them wherever we can. There are lots of ways to control pests without pesticides. By fine-tuning your garden or lawn to your environment (i.e. with native plants), you can minimize the need for pesticides in the first place. Some complementary plants can actually serve as natural pest repellents for other species, so ask someone at your local nursery for their recommendations. And remember that not all “pests” are bad—dandelions, for instance, can be beneficial to your backyard ecosystem—so weigh both sides before trying to eliminate them.

Luckily we have choices beyond paper and plastic. Reusable shopping bags constructed of durable fabrics are popping up all over the place. Chances are they’re sold right inside the grocery store where you shop! A set of four can carry about as much as six paper bags or 12 plastic bags.

To avoid potential health complications, which include cancer, birth defects and increased risk of diabetes, and to keep the environment clean, buy non-bleached products and don't use chlorine bleach products. If you're unsure about making a switch, look for low-impact choices, like coffee filters and tea bags, before moving on to paper towels and other care products.