

## 15 Tips to Make Earth Day *Everyday*

### 1. Turn water off when brushing your teeth, shaving, and washing your hands.

- a. On average, about two gallons of water flow from a faucet each minute. Something as simple as turning off the water while brushing your teeth can save up to three or four gallons of water per person per day.
- b. We own 2 airbnb's and signs next to sinks remind guests to turn water off while brushing teeth/washing hands.
- c. Also - did you know that running the dishwasher uses less energy than washing dishes by hand? Be aware of dishwashing detergents with bleach and phosphates!
- d. Small steps, big impact.

### 2. Wash clothes in cold water and use formulas formulated to work in cold water.

- a. About 90% of the energy used by the washing machine during laundry goes towards heating the water. It's better for the planet and your wallet when you wash your clothes in cold water!
- b. Cold-water washing means clothing is less likely to shrink or fade and ruin clothes. Buying fewer clothes means less goes to landfill and saves you money.
- c. Cold water can also reduce wrinkles, which saves energy costs from less dryer time.

### 3. Dryer Balls and Hang Time

- a. Dryer balls separate clothes better than dryer sheets, allowing hot air to circulate more efficiently *and* reducing drying time.
- b. Wool from the dryer balls is absorbent, reducing drying time by 10 to 25%.
- c. Air-drying uses less energy and is better for our planet and your wallet.

- d. Air-drying extends the lifetime of clothing by reducing wear and tear from dryer heat and reduces static cling.

#### **4. Eco-Friendly Non-Toxic Cleaners and Laundry Products**

- a. Eco-friendly products are safe, biodegradable, non-toxic, and made with sustainable packaging, making them better for our planet and your health.
- b. *Example of toxin: phosphates*
- c. If too much phosphate is present in the water, the algae and weeds will grow rapidly, possibly choking fish/aquatic life.
- d. *Example of toxin: bleach*
- e. We now know that exposure to bleach can make asthma worse in people who already have asthma. Research shows that workers who are exposed to bleach can develop new asthma from exposure to bleach over time.
- f. Mixing bleach with other chemicals containing ammonia, quaternary ammonium compounds (found in other disinfectants), vinegar, or other acids can create toxic gasses.
- g. Bleach was the cause of 31,224 calls to the U.S. Poison Control Centers in 2019.
- h. Harsh chemicals impact most household items (floors, washing machines, tile, clothes, eco-friendly products are less harsh and abrasive).

#### **5. Compost if Possible**

- a. Why? → “Our landfills are getting full, and organic materials such as kitchen scraps and yard trimmings make up about 50% of the state’s landfill ‘trash,’” according to CalRecycle, “creating enough global-warming methane gas to make landfills California’s third largest methane source”.
- b. We need to stop seeing food ‘waste’ as trash. Home compost bins are affordable and not such an eye sore anymore. If you do not have the space, connect with a co-op or company that will do it for you.

## **6. Eco Friendly, Non-Toxic, Cruelty Free Personal Care**

- a. Watch out for greenwashing "charge" words such as green, natural, clean, healthy.....how products are made, manufactured and distributed play the largest role in keeping our planet well!
- b. Many common household chemicals used in personal care (toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, skin care and makeup) are endocrine disruptors, come in packaging that can not be recycled, and cause skin irritation.
- c. Parabens are a family of related chemicals that are commonly used as preservatives in cosmetic products. Small amounts are fine; it would be over exposure that can lead to serious health risks.
- d. Phthalates are a group of chemicals used to make plastics more durable. Phthalates are in hundreds of products, such as vinyl flooring, lubricating oils, and personal-care products (soaps, shampoos, hair sprays).
- e. Microplastics, smaller plastic particles, that result from single use plastic (many cosmetic products) breaking down, pollute our water sources and threaten the lives of marine wildlife creatures.
- f. Disposable plastic items don't biodegrade. Only 9% of plastic waste gets recycled.

## **7. Less Plastic in the Fridge and Freezer**

- a. Buy in bulk! Look at and pay attention to the packaging... Can it be reused (glass jars) or recycled? Do you know what to do with those numbers on the bottom of plastic?

## **8. Grow a plant this summer and a indoor plant or two in the winter months**

- a. Plants in your home or office are good for your health. They relieve stress, boost creativity, and promote healing. Some research shows houseplants may positively influence the air quality in your home as well.

## **9. Try a meatless day of the week or 2!!**

- a. Shop organic, fair trade when possible. Fair trade ensures that the product was treated sustainably *and* that you're directly supporting the local farmer and/or producer.
- b. Eat more *local* fruits and vegetables!!!

## **10. Gardening**

- a. Gardening decreases carbon dioxide (plants intake them) and increases oxygen.
- b. Eating from your own vegetable garden lowers your carbon footprint because food travels a long way to get to a grocery store – not to mention the resources used in the production of food!
- c. Gardening connects you to the earth and is known to improve mental health (grounding and connection to a creative process).
- d. Gardening increases your understanding of food and culture, improving communities.
- e. Gardening encourages eating more fruits and vegetables since you are now in charge of planting them!

## **11. All my favorite R words: Reduce, Reuse, Repurpurpose, Refurbish, Recycle, Reclaim, Redistribute**

- a. The most sustainable thing we can buy is nothing because everything we don't keep ends up in landfill.
- b. Examples from Thrifting: Pur most recent airbnb was completely furnished - with the exception of mattresses - from thrift stores, house sales, and FB marketplace.

## **12. Be Mindful of Energy Consumption**

- a. Turn down the heat/air conditioning a degree or 2.
- b. Turn off lights you are not using (exception is in the morning flooding your room with natural light helps you wake).
- c. BIG ONE: keep all appliances (including your computer, cell phone, coffee maker, hair dryer, and electric toothbrush) UNPLUGGED when not in use or fully charged.

- i. Leaving an electrical device plugged into an outlet all day still uses 0.1 to 0.5 watts per hour. This is not a super big deal for the planet or your wallet, but it is a thoughtful step and will help the life of your computer and/or cell phone.

### **13. BYOL, BYOC, BYOW**

- a. Bring Your Own Lunch
- b. Bring Your Own Coffee / Cup
- c. Bring Your Own Water (Bottle)

*Saves you big time MONEY and our planet through less packaging!*

### **14. Favorite B Words: Buy Used, Borrow**

- a. Again, thrifting is great for the clothing industry so we can reduce the amount of landfill waste.
- b. Borrowing clothes for a special occasion from a friend, for example, is a great way to save money *and* reduce your footprint if you know you will never wear that outfit again!

### **15. Get outside!**

- a. Enjoy everything this big beautiful planet has to offer!
- b. Use your car less and walk or bike to more places

Remember - even the small steps matter! It's important to focus more on staying *present* than being *perfect*. Enjoy the journey - because we are only here for such a short amount of time!

Also, be sure to check out the **Online Shopping Club** page on our website (<https://sustainablelifelive.com/online-shopping-club>). With a shopping link, you can get access to quality and sustainably sourced products for you and your family! That is where I get all my laundry, cleaners, personal care, and skin care supplies from; all the products are sustainable and good for the planet! Contact me for your personal shopping link - [annaemariesampson1@gmail.com](mailto:annaemariesampson1@gmail.com).

Happy Earth Day!