

**Many thanks to Gloria Sefton (St. John Chrysostom, Rancho Santa Margarita) for graciously sharing these Green Tips as Church Bulletin resources for Episcopal congregations in the Diocese of Los Angeles:**

**October 2, 2025**

### **More Fall Efficiency Tips**

**Check the air pressure in your tires.** Cooler temperatures lower tire pressure and that, in turn, lowers efficiency for vehicles of all types. Check your tires and make sure that they are properly inflated.

**Vacuum your refrigerator's coils.** This keeps the compressor running efficiently. It's also a good time to check that the refrigerator is level ... the door should automatically swing shut instead of staying open. Check the seal on the door ... try closing it on a dollar bill. If you can pull the bill out easily, it's time to replace the gaskets. Here's another tip for running the refrigerator efficiently ... don't over fill it. Allowing room for cool air to circulate will keep everything at the right temperature.

**Use a clothesline to reduce energy consumption.** Clothes dryers are second only to refrigerators in household energy use, so cutting back on drying will reduce your home's carbon footprint. Line-dry clothes when you can, which will also help your clothes last longer. If you don't have a good place for a clothesline outside, you can hang clothes inside on a drying rack. Just be sure to allow adequate ventilation .

**September 24, 2025**

### **Green Your Hygiene**

Use bar soap instead of liquid soap in plastic bottles with pump dispensers that rarely get recycled. Bar shampoo and conditioner are also available at local stores or online. Think of all the plastic that will not go into a landfill!

Use cold water when only using small amounts of water in the bathroom or kitchen. Even if the hot water never reaches the faucet, your water heater will kick on, wasting energy, and you will pay to heat it.

Next time you need a new toothbrush, think about getting a non-plastic one, e.g., one made from bamboo. A plastic toothbrush takes 400 to 500 *years* to decompose! Loads of sustainable choices are available in stores and online. And, while brushing, don't forget Barney the purple dinosaur's song: "While I'm brushing my teeth and having so much fun, I never let the water run, no I never let the water run"!

**September 19, 2025**

### **Early Fall Green Tips**

**Fall begins on Monday, September 22! Here are some seasonal sustainability tips especially relevant as we observe the Season of Creation:**

**Opt for electric or hand-powered yard tools.** Go retro with a hand-powered pair of gardening shears or push mower when tackling the autumn chores this season. If you aren't quite ready to go old school with it, consider investing in electric options that not only waste less, but are quieter to use. As the autumn leaves begin to fall, rake them up rather than using a blower. Once raked up, use them as mulch to protect plants throughout the winter or add them to a compost pile.

**Clean and test your home's HVAC system.** Many people do not realize this, but your heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) system actually needs a regular cleaning, especially after a summer of likely heavy use. Throughout the year, it collects lots of dust and debris, more so with pets in the house, which can affect its performance and could even cause a fire. Air filters are relatively inexpensive and should be replaced every three months. Look for reusable filters or eco-friendly ones made of sustainable products.

**Sort through summer clothes.** Before packing away those summer clothes, go through them and determine which items to keep, which items to repurpose into something else (cleaning rags, craft projects, etc.), and which to donate.

**Bring in any houseplants that have spent the summer outside.** Not only do plants make the interior of your home look better, they will also help clean the air. It may be a good idea to start to bring them inside at night at first to ensure they aren't shocked when they come inside for good.

**September 10, 2025**

**California Coastal Cleanup Day**

**Saturday, September 20, 2025**

**Find an Event Near You!**

As we celebrate the Season of Creation, please take note that the California Coastal Commission is sponsoring a statewide coastal cleanup event, and you can join other volunteers to clean up the beach. As water flows downhill in a watershed, it carries trash, sediment, and other

materials to the beach. Through this yearly effort, thousands of pounds of trash and recyclable materials are removed from our beautiful beaches. This year, the world's largest "trashure hunt" will bring more fun to the event. Special "trash" items will be hidden at cleanup sites. Find one and you can redeem it for valuable prizes! Bring your energy and a refillable water bottle. More information and local cleanup locations are available here <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/ccd.html>. What a great way to be a steward of God's creation while enjoying a day at the beach too!

## **September 3, 2025**

### **Summer Watering and Plant Tips**

Water lawns, gardens, and plants no more than twice a week, early in the morning. The air is cooler and usually still. Watering in the middle of the day results in quick evaporation and, in the evening, the water just sits there, increasing potential lawn diseases. The best time to water is between 5 am and 10 am. If you have a lawn, consider replacing it with a beautiful native plant garden. You will attract bees, butterflies, and birds. When strolling through a nursery, veer toward drought-tolerant, preferably California native, plants. These hearty specimens thrive with little care and water while adding color and beauty to your yard and supporting biodiversity. California's native plants have evolved over thousands of years along with native pollinators, some of which rely exclusively on species of native plants.

## **August 27, 2025**

Data centers are becoming more prolific across our environment because of needs driven by our digital world. These centers require massive amounts of energy often generated from fossil fuels. The centers themselves also have a tremendous impact on land use and surrounding communities. You may not have considered that your digital communications drive this energy use. Reduce overall energy consumption by deleting emails – especially ones with big attachments – and unsubscribing from newsletters you don't read or email lists that you really don't want to be on. Also, avoid "replying all" unless necessary. Though a single email has negligible impact, consider the billions that are stored on servers that require energy both for storage and transmission, plus the cooling systems needed to prevent overheating. Many tech companies recognize their role in providing a sustainable service, but until we make the transition to renewable energy sources, consider your digital carbon footprint and only save what you really need.

## **August 20, 2025**

California Water Watch ([cww.water.ca.gov](http://cww.water.ca.gov)) says it well: "Our warming climate means that a greater share of the rain and snowfall we receive will be absorbed by dry soils, consumed by thirsty plants, and evaporated into the air. This leaves less water to meet our needs." Here are some tips to help us manage our most precious resource, while still giving us plenty:

- **Take shorter showers:** Showers generally last around 10 minutes, which uses as much as 25 gallons of water. To be sustainable, cut this time down by half and scrub yourself with soap without the water running. (This is what's called a Navy shower!) Capture all that cold water running from the showerhead while you wait for it to warm up by placing a bucket in the shower. You can use that water for multiple purposes, including flushing the toilet.
- **Run full loads:** If you have a dishwasher, wait until it's fully loaded and remember you don't need to fastidiously rinse before putting items in. Run full loads of laundry too.
- **Use the toilet responsibly:** Opt for a dual-flush toilet to regulate the amount of water going down the drain.
- **Tend your plants or garden at night:** This will help you save up to 30% of the water that would otherwise evaporate in the morning or the afternoon.
- **Thaw frozen food early:** You can do it in the fridge or at room temperature without running any water from the tap.

## August 13, 2025

**Inventory your supplies before buying more.** Take a careful inventory of the school supplies you already have that can be used again. Do you have extra packs of pencils, or barely used notebooks? Do you really need a new ruler? Is last year's backpack still fully functional? Is that lunch box still in great shape? Avoid last-minute impulse purchases by making a list of what you *really* need before you go to the store and stick to it!

**Choose non-toxic and eco-friendly school supplies.** More and more retailers are carrying eco-friendly versions of every day school supplies, so look for recycled paper and other products made of recycled materials and BPA- and phthalate-free backpacks, lunch boxes, and binders.

**Pack lunches.** The average elementary school disposes more than 18,000 pounds of lunch waste every year, according to EarthShare. By packing a whole food lunch for your child in a reusable lunch box with a reusable bottle for water or milk, you will help reduce the amount of paper bags, food packaging, and wasted food your child produces—and they will be so much healthier for it too. Provide durable, washable napkins (some fun designs are available) and real silverware. Get your kids involved in choosing their lunches, so they'll be less likely to pitch what they don't want to eat.

**If possible, avoid the car trip.** Ride a bike or walk the kids to school. Walking or riding to school not only prevents carbon emissions and air pollution, but it's also a good form of exercise, improving cardiovascular fitness and strengthening muscles. If you use your car, don't idle in front of school. Idling is a major source of smog, which is particularly an issue at schools because many bus drivers and parents sit with their vehicles idling, creating a cloud of pollution for kids to walk into as they leave the school. If you are going to be stopped for more than 30 seconds (except in traffic), it's always best to turn off your engine.

**Explain to your kids why you're making greener, healthier choices.** Making earth-friendly choices when getting ready for school is great, but what is even more awesome is teaching your kids why you've made those choices. Hopefully, because of your thoughtful conversations with your kids, they will grow up to help create a world where such toxic and polluting products don't exist in the first place.

## **July 30, 2025**

### **Take a Trash Bag Along**

Summer activities involve a lot of outdoor time, like hiking mountain trails, enjoying morning or evening walks in the neighborhood, or relaxing at the beach. Litter remains a major environmental problem and, of course, a visual blight. The Orange County Register reports that the presence of plastic items in the litter stream has increased over 165%, reflecting a 340% per capita increase in use of plastic packaging over the past 40 years. When we remember that litter is likely to end up in a watershed and ultimately in the ocean, it makes sense to do all we can to clean it up. Not only does litter harm natural land and marine habitats, it also reduces property values and affects our quality of life. Next time you take a hike, a casual walk, or stroll along the beach, take a trash bag with you and see how much litter you can collect, and then properly dispose of it, taking care to separate the trash from the recyclable items.

## **July 23, 2025**

### **Replace the Plug-in Air Freshener with a Green Option**

Conventional air fresheners are not harmless, even though they may smell "fresh and natural." The fragrances are concoctions of synthetic chemicals that have been linked to respiratory issues, hormone disruption, and even increased cancer risk. Not only are they bad for your

health, these chemicals contribute to air and water pollution. Plug-in air fresheners also have a big environmental impact because they're usually made from plastic (a petroleum-based product), require energy to produce and use, and incorporate non-reusable cartridges that end up in landfills. Packaging and shipping these products produces climate-warming greenhouse emissions adding to the impact. Save money by not buying these products. Instead, use natural alternatives like non-synthetic essential oil diffusers, beeswax candles, aromatic houseplants, or simmer pots with natural products like citrus peels, cloves, or cinnamon.

**July 16, 2025**

### **Summer Green Energy Tips**

Here are some summer tips from Green Mountain Energy (a renewable energy provider):

- **Set your thermostat to at least 74 when you're home.** For maximum energy efficiency, set it to the Energy Star-recommended temperature of 78.
- **Turn the temperature up when you leave.** If no people or pets will be at home for several hours, set the thermostat a few degrees warmer than usual.
- **Give your ventilation system a checkup.** Have your air conditioning unit inspected and replace or clean any air filters.
- **Seal air leaks around doors and windows.** Weather stripping can lower both your HVAC system's workload and your energy bill.

**July 10, 2025**

### **Buy Local and Organic**

Buying locally grown foods cuts down on the environmental costs associated with transporting produce to your community from great distances. In the summer months, farmer's markets are the ideal place to buy local produce, and certain grocery store chains actually feature local produce. Choose organic produce and other organic food items like coffee, eggs, and grains whenever possible as this is an excellent way to help reduce the runoff and pollutants that contaminate our water, soil, and air. Organic farming practices also reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based fertilizers that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Organic foods are healthier because they reduce our exposure to pesticides and other harmful chemicals, benefiting consumers and farmworkers alike.

**July 2, 2025**

Water is a precious resource. Here are some tips on conserving it during hot summer months:

- **Fix leaks.** A dripping faucet can waste 20 gallons of water a day. Even a small toilet leak can waste hundreds of gallons a day and hundreds of dollars per quarter. To detect a toilet leak, perform a simple test by adding a few drops of food coloring to the toilet tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, the toilet is leaking. Call a plumber right away to fix any leaks in and around your home.
- **Install new water-saving fixtures.** New, low-volume or dual flush toilets, low-flow showerheads, water-efficient dishwashers, and clothes washing machines can all save a great deal of water and money. According to the US EPA, low-flow showerheads (often costing less than \$30) are estimated to save about 2,700 gallons of water per year for the average family; splurging on a low-flow toilet could save another 20-60% of water used.
- **Save at the sink.** Leave the water off when you are brushing your teeth or shaving at the bathroom sink. Leaving the sink running can waste thousands of gallons of water each day. Likewise in the kitchen! You can peel potatoes without running water and give them a quick rinse afterward. When rinsing your produce, capture the water in a basin or bucket and re-use that water for plants or cleaning.
- **Wash only full loads.** Washing machines and dishwashers can use a lot of water for each load. Make sure you are only using these appliances with a full load or remember to set your washing machine to the specific load size if it can be adjusted.

**June 25, 2025**

### **Three Ways to Go Paperless!**

- Chances are that all your bills are available online so there really is no sense in having those bills delivered to you every month. Contact your utility companies, your phone company, your bank, and the rest and tell them that an e-bill will be sufficient for you.
- Ditch the receipt wherever possible and opt for emailed receipts. In addition to wasting natural resources and ending up in landfills, paper receipts often use “thermal” paper, which requires a coating of BPA, a known endocrine disruptor linked to health issues.
- With the ubiquity of smartphones, the need for a paper boarding pass has gone the way of the dinosaur. Download a digital ticket and play your part to reduce paper waste.

**June 18, 2025**

### **Fans in the Summer**

Use fans to cool off instead of air conditioning during hot summer days and nights. Electric fans use a fraction of the energy that air conditioners do, and Energy Star-rated ceiling fans are up to 50% more efficient than conventional fan/light units. Also, unlike air conditioners, fans do not use refrigerants, which can contribute to ozone depletion and global warming. Fans provide a

great opportunity to save energy and money too! On humid days, you might need a combination of air conditioning and fans, but this too will result in lowered energy consumption. Because fans create a wind chill effect that makes you (rather than the room) feel cooler, remember to turn off fans, just like you turn off your lights, when you leave the room.

**June 12, 2025**

### **Practice Sustainable Tourism**

Sustainability is probably not the term we think about the most when we go on vacation. But we shouldn't leave our sustainability cares at home. It's important to decrease our travel footprint and ease the pressure on countries, places, and people who are swamped by tourists in this season. Here are some tips:

- Opt for electronic boarding passes and nonstop flights if you're flying (takeoff and landing are a large part of a plane's fuel consumption)
- Pack light
- Bring your reusable water bottle (assuming the water is safe to drink) and opt for reusables throughout your stay
- Take your own bar of soap and travel-size shampoo to minimize use of all those little bars and bottles (and their packaging), which only get tossed when you check out of your room
- Support local businesses, e.g., local restaurants and accommodations, over big chains
- Buy local specialties instead of mass-produced souvenirs
- Walk if you're able and use public transport like buses and trains as much as possible

**June 4, 2025**

### **Campfires**

Summer is coming soon, and campfires are ubiquitous with summer. Before you pile on the wood scraps for that bonfire, be sure you're using safe wood and fire starters. Only use newspaper, dry kindling, or organic fire starters and avoid painted and treated wood. **Also, very important:** don't move firewood from one county to another. In Southern California, we are experiencing severe infestations of tree-killing borers, which are attacking numerous species of trees including native oaks. By bringing in wood from other places, you may inadvertently introduce infected wood into a park. Remember, too, that campfires contribute to global warming by releasing carbon dioxide and other gases into the environment, so consider



minimizing the campfire and engaging in other activities like stargazing or a night hike, or use LED flame lights instead.

**May 28, 2025**

### **Reduce Restaurant Packaging Impacts**

With our busy lives, it's not always possible to prepare meals at home. But the environmental impact of takeout or delivered food can't be understated. Almost always it's packaged in plastic – even Styrofoam – or wrapped in paper or aluminum, then sent out in a plastic bag with utensils and other items. Nearly all of this is not recyclable and will end up in landfills generating greenhouse gas emissions. When ordering takeout or delivery, decline plastic utensils, paper napkins, and plastic-wrapped condiments that you won't use. Whether dining in or out, you can also decline the (often plastic) straw. When dining in at a restaurant, you'll get extra points if you remember to bring your own reusable take-home container. At a coffee shop? Ask the barista for a ceramic cup! Support the restaurants that are offering compostable food packaging and utensils rather than plastic ones.

**May 14, 2025**

### **Organize Your Fridge to Reduce Waste**

In a 2021 report, the US EPA estimated that each year, U.S. food loss and waste embodies 170 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent – equal to the annual carbon dioxide emissions of 42 coal-fired power plants. One way to help is to organize your fridge to reduce waste.

- Place leftover items that need to be eaten soon front and center so you don't forget them
- Stack opened items on top of (e.g., hummus) or in front of (e.g., milk) new items to remind yourself to finish the opened ones first
- Plan your meals around items in your fridge that are nearing expiration
- Use glass containers so you can see what's in your fridge



Source: EPA.gov

**May 7, 2025**

### What's So Bad About Single-Use Batteries?

Americans buy about three billion household batteries (about 10 per person) annually and about 80% of those are single-use batteries (most commonly alkaline batteries). The volume of single-use batteries discarded annually contributes heavily to landfill waste. While seemingly small and insignificant, a single-use battery contains heavy metals and other chemicals that produce the battery's power. These materials are potentially toxic to water and soil if not disposed of properly. The next time you need to buy batteries for your gadgets, choose rechargeable batteries instead. Rechargeable batteries can be reused dozens of times, which saves money and resources, and also reduces the greenhouse gas emissions associated with manufacturing and transport. Batteries can be recycled, but not in your curbside recycling bin. Some home improvement and electronics stores offer battery recycling. Earth911.com has a handy [recycling locator](#) or you can discard them on hazardous waste collection days in your municipality.

**April 30, 2025**

### Sustainable "Tips"

Our purchasing habits can have downstream impacts that we don't necessarily think about. For example, think about ear swabs. Many swabs are made with plastic applicators, which take years (decades) to biodegrade. Some swabs, however, are made with paper applicators, which is better for the environment because they are biodegradable when composted. Moreover, they

do not involve petroleum product in their manufacture the way plastic does (although they do use adhesive to maintain the attachment of the cotton to the applicator). Being single-use products, all swabs have a negative impact on the environment. They are among the most common ocean litter, as they often find their way into ocean habitats, damaging marine species. This is true for both paper and plastic. So, always be sure to dispose of them properly and, when you buy swabs, look for paper ones (like Q-tips brand) and avoid plastic altogether.

**April 23, 2025**

### **Kitchen Green Tips**

Green your kitchen by making food in larger batches. Making a meal from scratch every day uses a lot of energy and water and multiplies food waste. By making more than one meal at a time, you'll benefit, too, from reduced clean-up time because you're not bringing out the pots and pans for each meal.

Save your leftovers! Instead of tossing food in the garbage because your family won't eat leftovers, create something new from those leftovers. Make just one pot of rice and use it for multiple meals during the week. Add leftover meat or vegetables and top it off with a sauce, nuts, avocado, or hummus. For breakfast, make a large pot of oatmeal to last as a base for a few days. Add different toppings each day for variety. When you've had enough, simply freeze what's left over for a later date.

And remember, leftovers don't have to be covered in plastic. A plate works just fine for a day or two and not using plastic wrap saves money and the planet.

**April 11, 2025**

### **Green Up Your Easter!**

Here are some tips to make Easter less impactful on our environment:

- **Baskets:** Instead of buying a plastic basket, check around the house for a basket that you can use. You can make it a tradition by using it year after year with no added cost. Shred colored construction paper or comic strips and use that material instead of plastic grass.
- **Eggs:** Use ingredients around the house to dye your eggs. Boil eggs with a teaspoon of vinegar and any of these natural ingredients for color: cranberries, raspberries, or beets (pink); yellow onion skins or paprika (orange); blueberries or red cabbage (blue); spinach (green); orange or lemon peels (yellow); pomegranate juice or red onion skins (red). For more color, strain the dye liquid through a coffee filter, cover the eggs with the dye, and put them in the refrigerator overnight.

- **Candy:** Look for “organic” chocolate, which is made from cocoa grown with fewer pesticides and often with techniques that avoid deforestation while improving soil health. Avoid chocolate that contains palm oil, a major driver of deforestation.
- **Table:** Say “no” to disposable dishes and utensils and paper napkins! Pull out the good dishes. Be eclectic; it doesn’t have to be a perfect match. If you need more dishes, try your local thrift store. Tie everything together with a pretty tablecloth and matching cloth napkins and use the gifts of God’s earth to decorate your table!

**April 8, 2025**

### **Things we can “give up” for Lent and all year ‘round:**

1. **Give up bottled water.** It takes at least as much (and often much more) water to make the bottle as the drinking water it holds. And most plastic water bottles are made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET), a plastic derived from petroleum. The extraction, processing, and transportation of raw materials and the bottled water itself contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Use non-plastic reusable water bottles instead.
2. **Give up conventional laundry detergents.** Many eco-friendly detergents are made to clean clothes effectively in cooler water temperatures, are plant-based, concentrated, biodegradable, and fragrance-free. They are often also available in non-plastic packaging.
3. **Give up that refrigerator in the garage.** It’s common for the old refrigerator to find a new home in the garage. Don’t do that. First, the old appliance is not running as efficiently (or you wouldn’t have replaced it). Second, it will run even more inefficiently in a garage that isn’t air conditioned.
4. **Give up conventional toilet paper.** Believe it or not, switching to recycled toilet paper can change the world. It uses much less water to produce, saves our trees, and uses fewer chemicals in the processing. Recycled toilet paper is also safer for low-flow toilets because of its weaker fibers.
5. **Give up paper towels.** No matter how you look at it, paper towels create waste and cause tremendous tree loss. Use old towels instead. When you are finished with them, toss the towels in the wash and reuse them again and again. They are even great for countertops and mirrors. When you absolutely have to use paper towels, look for recycled ones.
6. **Give up 2 degrees.** Electric power plants are the country’s largest industrial source of the pollutants that cause global warming. By snuggling under a blanket on the

couch on cold nights instead of turning up the heat, you can save pounds of pollution, plus money off your utility bill. In the spring, set your thermostat to 68 degrees or less during the day and 55 degrees before going to sleep or when you are away for the day.

**April 3, 2025**

### **Use Cloth Napkins**

Reduce or eliminate your use of paper products like table napkins. It may seem a small and seemingly insignificant item, but a table napkin can have a significant environmental impact. For instance, if 50% of the US population (about 170 million people), uses one paper napkin per meal three times a day, over 186 *billion* napkins would be used over just a one-year period.

Opt for cloth napkins instead of paper. All around it saves you money, especially over time. Research indicates that, so long as you wash your napkins regularly, paper is no healthier to use. As for the environment, anytime you can reuse resources over the long run, you're helping the planet. The only time cloth comes close to falling behind paper in cost and environmental impact is when you wash your napkins in a separate load of laundry, in a less water and energy efficient washer and dryer. However, this can be negated by throwing all your napkins in with your regular laundry. Save energy by washing in cold water and give yourself extra credit for line drying.

**March 26, 2025**

### **Take the Train!**

It's important not to forget that **air travel** has a significant carbon footprint. For business, virtual meetings can obviously reduce travel impacts and a lot of cost. For trips to reasonably close destinations, why not consider slowing down and enjoying the scenery by taking a train? In general, **train travel emits much less carbon than planes and cars**. How much CO<sub>2</sub> your train journey emits will depend on whether the train is fueled by diesel or electricity, and whether the electricity is powered by fossil fuels or renewables. Many wonderful destinations can be reached from Southern California in reasonable time by train. When air travel is a must, keep these green ideas in mind for a lighter-impact flight:

- **Take direct flights:** Takeoff and landing account for 25% of the emissions produced during a standard flight – for shorter journeys, even higher.
- **Pack Light:** The heavier your luggage, the more fuel it takes to haul your stuff. Stick to the essentials for a lower carbon footprint.

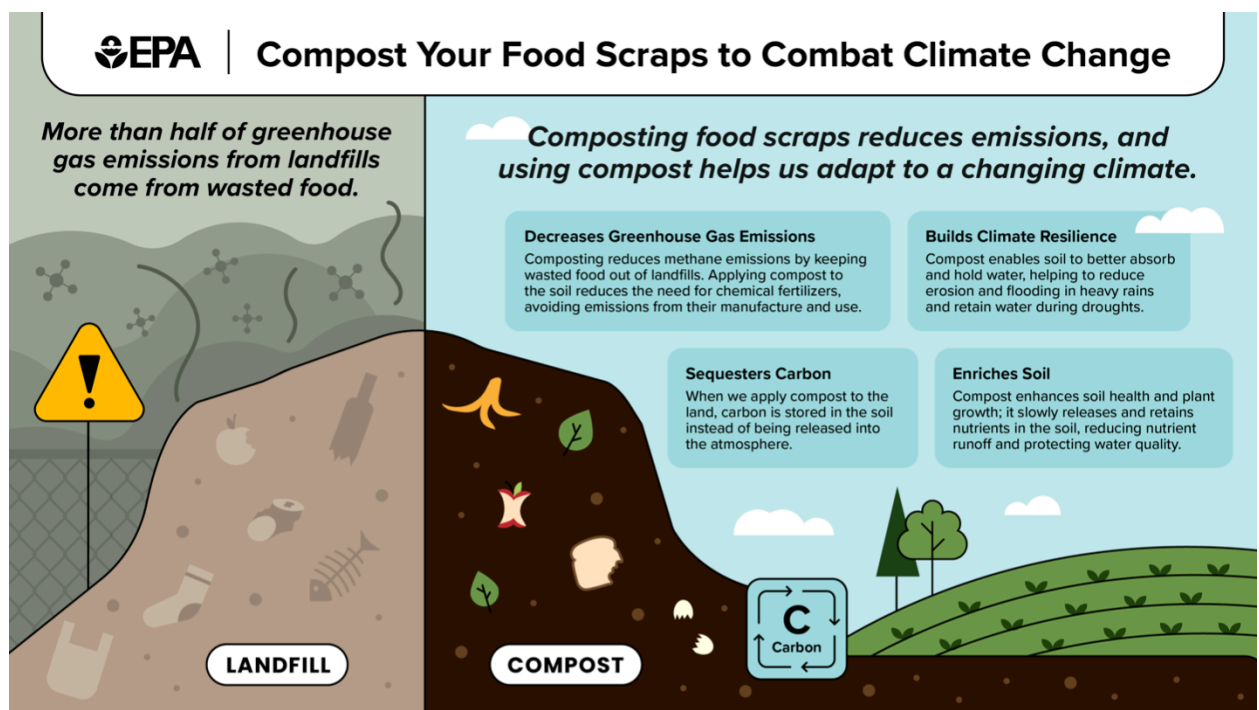
**March 19, 2025**

### **Green Waste Produces Carbon Emissions**

Improperly managed green waste can be detrimental to the environment, contributing to excess landfill use and increased methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas. Composting is a great way to manage your green waste (veggie and other food scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds, tea bags, yard trimmings, etc.)

Benefits of Composting (from epa.gov)

- Protects the climate by reducing methane emissions from landfills.
- Reduces waste.
- Recycles organic materials into a valuable soil amendment (compost).
- Recovers nutrients in organic materials and provides an opportunity to keep them local.
- Creates green jobs.
- Extends municipal landfill life by diverting organic materials.



**March 12, 2025**

Food waste accounts for a third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and generates 8-10% of greenhouse gases annually. With these statistics in mind, we should strive to reduce this environmental footprint. Here are some tips from *American Wasteland* author and food guru, Jonathan Bloom, for reducing food waste (and great for saving money, too): Plan meals. Create a menu in advance and make a corresponding shopping list. Stick to your list! Avoid

impulse buys, especially with perishable foods. Be realistic. If you work late, don't shop like you have time to make meals from scratch. Plan for a leftover night or two. Can you say smorgasbord?! It saves time and money! Shop for perishable items last. They won't start breaking down in your cart and you're less likely to make impulse buys because you'll be ready to finish and leave. Don't hit the store hungry – you'll buy way too much. Edible food should never end up in the trash; it should be donated to those in need or, at worst, composted.

**March 5, 2025**

## **Green Laundry Tips**

### **1. Use an energy efficient washing machine**

A **high efficiency (HE) washer** uses up to 50% less water than a conventional top loader. Multiply that savings by the hundreds of loads you do each year, and you'll **save thousands of gallons of water**. High efficiency washers also use roughly 40% less electricity, and they leave clothes dryer, so you'll cut drying time and thus energy use. Replacing an older washer with a high efficiency one will likely pay for itself over the machine's lifetime. Be sure to use HE laundry detergent with HE washers to avoid excessive suds.

### **2. Wash less often**

Folks have been trained to think that if they wear something once, it needs to hit the hamper. Not so. If it looks and smells clean, go a little longer between washes and you'll save water, energy, and time. **Run only full loads** and save still more energy and water. The larger capacity of high efficiency washers also lets you wash fewer loads overall.

### **3. Use cold water**

Cut the energy used to clean your clothes by choosing **cold water settings** as often as possible. Up to 90% of the energy used to wash your clothes goes to heating water! If every load laundered in the US used cold water instead of hot, the country would slash millions of tons of carbon emissions each year. This simple switch may also save you hundreds of dollars per year.

### **4. Avoid harmful chemicals**

Conventional detergents, stain removers, and dryer sheets contain synthetic chemicals linked to endocrine disruption, developmental toxicity, and other health concerns. If something smells "good," remember it's a chemical making that smell. Fortunately, there's no shortage of **non-toxic alternatives** for your laundry room, from **plant-based detergents** to **oxygen-based brighteners**. Good old white vinegar makes an effective fabric softener and stain remover.

### **5. Use a clothesline or dryer balls to reduce energy consumption**

Clothes dryers are second only to refrigerators in household energy use, so cutting back on drying will **reduce your home's carbon footprint. Line-dry clothes** when you can, which will also help your clothes last longer. In winter, if you don't have a good place for a clothesline outside, you can **hang clothes inside** to dry. Just be sure to allow adequate ventilation, so moisture levels don't get too high and promote indoor mold growth.

## 6. Run your dryer only when necessary, and do so efficiently

When you do run the dryer, be sure to keep your **lint screen clean** so air can flow and dry your clothes faster. Use the moisture-sensing setting if your dryer has one rather than timed drying. Also, try **dryer balls** to reduce dry time and soften clothes. Dryer balls let you avoid the harmful chemicals in conventional dryer sheets; you can add essential oils if you want your clothes scented.

**February 26, 2025**

**It bears repeating: Ditch the single-use plastic water bottles and invest in a reusable metal or glass water bottle!**

More than 60 million plastic water bottles are thrown away by Americans every day and about 86% of empty plastic water bottles end up in US landfills instead of being recycled. It's estimated that plastic water bottles take around 450 years to decompose.

Bottled water production uses about 2,000 times more energy than tap water production. Companies must source the water (often depleting groundwater sources while paying next to nothing), manufacture the bottles (from petroleum-based chemicals), shrink-wrap them in more plastic, and then ship their brands far and wide in trucks, trains, and boats (nearly always running on fossil fuels).

If that's not bad enough, bottled water is subject to weaker regulations than tap water. Bottled water is more likely to contain contaminants, including microplastics, which have been linked to cancers and hormone disruption.

From an environmental justice perspective, water is a vital resource that should remain safe and accessible to all. Bottled water moves this resource into corporate hands for profit. And profit they do: Bottled water can be anywhere between 240 and 10,000 times more expensive than tap water depending on the type of bottled water purchased.

Many public places (libraries, airports, etc.) have purified water dispensers just right for refilling your reusable bottle. Make a serious effort to change this habit if you are still purchasing bottled water. If you are in a workplace, encourage your employer not to supply water in plastic bottles, but rather supply employees with reusable bottles and invest in a water-filling station.



**February 19, 2025**

### **Silica Gel is Useful!**

Ever wonder what to do with those packets of silica gel beads that show up in your vitamin bottles and new shoe boxes? They're there to eliminate excess moisture that can damage goods. Delay your reflex to chuck them straight into the garbage. You can use them to protect important personal documents or put a few silica packets in your toolbox or a container holding your razor blades to prevent rusting. Also, slow the effects of tarnishing by placing the silica gel packets in jewelry boxes or with sterling silverware. After the silica beads absorb water (up to 40 percent of its own weight), they lose effectiveness. But there is a silver lining to this raincloud: the beads can be [reactivated](#) and reused repeatedly.

**February 12, 2025**

### **Monarch Butterflies Need Our Help!**

According to the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, this season's monarch count revealed the second lowest "overwintering" population ever recorded since tracking began in 1997. Only 9,119 butterflies were counted compared with the past three years, when more than 200,000 overwintering western monarchs were observed in each of those years. Habitat destruction, pesticides, and climate change have all caused decline of this iconic species, and the recent LA fires have exacerbated population loss with a complete destruction of habitat in Topanga Canyon. Take steps to give these fragile butterflies a fighting chance by planting native flowers attractive to monarchs. Monarch larvae need milkweed, especially *native* milkweed. Tropical milkweed interrupts the monarch's natural migratory cycle and should be avoided and, ideally, removed if already planted. Adult monarchs need nectar resources to develop the fats in their bodies needed for their rigorous spring migration. Some winter flowering plants good for monarchs in our region include lantana, verbena, achillea, coyote mint (*Monardella* species), goldenrod, sunflowers, black sage, Cleveland sage, fleabane, lemonadeberry, and manzanitas.

**February 5, 2025**

### **Making Valentine's Day More Sustainable**

The go-to meaning of "sustainability" dates to 1987, when the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined it as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Before you buy some Valentine's chocolates, consider the sustainability of your purchase, which touches both environmental and ethical societal practices. On the environmental side, as

demand for chocolate continues to rise, more land is targeted for cocoa farming, which can lead to mass deforestation and reduced biodiversity. Look for “organic” chocolate, which is made from cocoa grown with fewer pesticides and often with techniques that avoid deforestation while improving soil health and biodiversity. Avoid chocolate that contains palm oil, which is a major driver of deforestation. On the societal side, beware that the world’s cocoa may be harvested by children or forced labor. To avoid buying these products, look for “fair trade” chocolate, which indicates that farmers receive a fair price for their cocoa, have safe, non-exploitative working conditions, and are empowered to invest in their communities. Choosing organic, fair trade chocolate is a way to contribute to sustainability – a healthier planet and a more just society.

## **January 29, 2025**

Climate scientists say the evidence is clear: human-caused climate change is amplifying fire threat and ferocity in our region – as tragically seen in the latest Los Angeles fires during an unusually strong Santa Ana wind event. Scientific American reported that “[h]otter, drier conditions and increasing ‘weather whiplash’ made the local vegetation much more flammable.” Not only do fires cause tremendous loss and devastation, but they also produce an enormous amount of greenhouse gas emissions, offsetting greenhouse gas reductions and worsening the climate crisis. Fire prevention is therefore a critical component of caring for creation and protecting lives. One way to reduce risk of home fire is to reduce the risk that burning embers will enter your attic. If you have attic vents, the Orange County Fire Authority recommends covering vents with 1/8-inch metal mesh screens or replacing them with ember-resistant baffle vents as an important part of protecting your home.

## **January 15, 2025**

### **How to Green Your Cup of Coffee**

Most of us probably grab our morning Joe without thinking twice—even if we should.

#### **DITCH THE PAPER CUP AND PLASTIC CAP**

Billions of paper cups are thrown away each year. Although the cups’ plastic resin coating helps insulate our brew and prevent leaking, it also complicates recycling. Do your part to reduce paper waste and opt for a reusable (non-plastic) mug.

#### **COMPOST COFFEE GROUNDS**

Get the most out of your coffee—even after you’ve downed it. Instead of tossing the grounds, add them to your compost pile. The relatively nitrogen-rich grounds supply bacteria with energy to decompose organic matter.

#### **LOOK FOR THESE LABELS**

## USDA Organic

Growing coffee organically could help minimize the risk of environmental contamination and accidents involving toxic chemicals.

## Fair Trade

Fair trade certification helps protect suppliers from exploitation by ensuring that they're paid a fair price for their hard-earned crop.

## January 8, 2025

Even though it is January, all of Orange County and the majority of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties are in moderate drought. Here are some tips (inspired by the Water Systems Council) on conserving water during the winter months:

- **Fix Leaks!** The average household leak can waste 10,000 gallons of water a year. Call your plumber right away to fix any leaks in and around your home.
- **Check your toilet.** If it's old, replace it with a more efficient low flow toilet. You can save five gallons per flush.
- **Save at the sink.** Leave the water off when you are brushing your teeth or shaving at the bathroom sink. Leaving the sink running can waste thousands of gallons of water each day. Likewise in the kitchen! You can peel potatoes without running water and give them a quick rinse afterward. When rinsing your produce, capture the water in basin or bucket and re-use that water for plants or cleaning.
- **Wash a full load.** Washing machines and dishwashers can use a lot of water for each load. Make sure you are only using these appliances with a full load or remember to set your washing machine to the specific load size if it can be adjusted.
- **Modify your landscape.** Winter is the perfect time to modify or make plans to plant low-water, native plant gardens that attract wildlife, such as butterflies and birds.
- **Use a car wash to wash vehicles.** There are many negative impacts to the environment from washing your car at home, including water waste and pollution from residues from detergents, exhaust, and motor oils. Most commercial locations reuse wash water several times before sending it to a treatment plant and most commercial car washes use 60% less water for the entire process than a homeowner uses just to rinse the car.

## December 18, 2024

According to the National Christmas Tree Association, approximately 25 to 30 million real Christmas trees are sold in the US every year. After the holidays, look for environmentally friendly ways to dispose of your real tree instead of sending it to a landfill. Although the tree will biodegrade with municipal trash, it's usually underground where there is little oxygen. Bacteria thriving in these places tend to turn the tree's carbon into methane, which packs more potent global warming potential than carbon dioxide, trapping about 80 times as much heat as CO<sub>2</sub>.

according to [MIT's Climate Portal](#). DO check with your community solid waste department and find out if they collect and mulch trees. DON'T burn your Christmas tree. It contains flammable oils that will coat your chimney and could increase risk of fire. Burning also sends the tree's carbon right back into the atmosphere, definitely not a good choice for the environment. Keep in mind that artificial trees are generally made of plastic and not recyclable. If you have one, keep using it; when its life is over, you can donate it or pass it along as a family heirloom.

**December 11, 2024**

### **Aim for a "Zero-Waste" Christmas!**

It's estimated that approximately 25-43% more trash – from shopping, gift-giving, wrapping, packaging, and holiday meals – is generated between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, accounting for about 25 million tons of garbage. (Source: U.S. PIRG). This garbage pollutes our environment and increases greenhouse gas emissions. Take the challenge to reduce the amount of trash you produce during the Christmas season by getting creative with your gift choices and wrappings. Look for gift items that have minimal packaging and for those that will last. Baked goods and other edibles wrapped in reusable, non-plastic containers are great choices. Other ideas are pieces of art, experiences, and "pre-loved" or refurbished things. Wrap gifts in materials you already have like reusable gift bags, paper bags, the newspaper comic pages, a reusable tote bag, or fabric. Decorate your packages with natural or reusable materials. Before buying wrapping paper, check if it is recyclable. Foil or glittered paper and wrapping paper coated with plastic are not recyclable, and "recycled" paper doesn't mean it's recyclable. Use china plates, glasses, non-disposable silverware, and cloth napkins for your holiday meals. Together, we can make a huge difference in the amount of garbage we produce!

**December 4, 2024**

### **Bishop's Commission on Climate Change: Webinar and Opportunity to Get Involved**

The Bishop's Commission on Climate Change (BCCC) hosted internationally renowned climate scientist Dr. [Katharine Hayhoe](#) as the keynote speaker at a diocese-wide webinar on November 20. Dr. Hayhoe's engaging presentation embraced the BCCC's theme "Now is the Time for Urgency and Hope." You can access her talk here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74vZH8YoGNQ>. Dr. Hayhoe reminds us: "Caring about God's creation – the people and other living things that are already being affected by climate change today – is a genuine expression of our faith, a faithful acceptance of our responsibility, and a true expression of God's love." You can join the community of Climate Change Liaisons to the BCCC by signing up here:

<https://diocesela.org/commission-on-climate-change/community-liaisons/>.

**November 27, 2024**

This holiday season, be a conscious consumer and buy gifts locally to support your local economy and reduce packaging waste and emissions that contribute to climate change. If you do end up buying a gift online, try looking for a brand with a third-party verification of their positive impact, like 1% For the Planet ([www.onepercentfortheplanet.org](http://www.onepercentfortheplanet.org)).

Better yet, as we continue to amass unnecessary “things,” ask yourself and your family, do we really need more? Purchasing planet-friendly *experiences* may be a way to go. As Episcopalians, we can also let our families and friends know that instead of gifts, we would love for them to donate to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) in our honor. ERD has a catalog of beautiful gifts that change lives (<https://support.episcopalrelief.org/gifts/catalog>).

## **November 20, 2024**

You may have recently heard that many black plastic kitchen utensils are made from recycled e-waste that contains toxic flame retardants and other chemicals that shouldn't make contact with food. This includes black plastic containers from takeout orders and the black plastic spatula you use for your scrambled eggs. The chemicals, brominated flame retardants, aren't considered safe for consumption at any level. It is recommended that you get rid of the black plastic items you have in your kitchen and throw them in the trash instead of the recycling bin. Yes, they'll end up in a landfill which presents its own sustainability issues, but it's better than letting them re-enter the plastic recycling chain to further contaminate other black plastics. Replace your black plastic utensils with wooden or stainless steel utensils. Silicone utensils are generally thought to be safe, but, particularly at high temperatures, could release chemicals.

## **November 13, 2024**

### **Tips for a Green Thanksgiving**

**1. Use the good dishes, glasses, cloth napkins, and reusable utensils.** Disposable dishes and plastic utensils create a ton of waste.

**2. Prepare less food.** Everybody feels compelled to put a huge turkey in the oven and prepare numerous courses. Choose a smaller bird and skip some of the less-popular dishes to reduce food waste.

**3. Eat less meat.** The meat industry is the number one source of methane gas, which is a major contributor to climate change. Even if you're not vegetarian, try adding a little less meat to your plate and filling the rest of the plate with healthy sides, such as squash, green beans, or kale.

**4. Buy local and organic foods when possible.** There are significant environmental benefits of using local and organic foods – and they taste better. While these choices may be more

expensive, buying even one or two items locally and/or organically grown can make a difference. Be sure to skip the plastic produce bags and bring your own shopping bags.

**5. Decorate with nature.** Forget the petroleum-based plastic and synthetic decorations and adorn your table with natural and homemade festive decor. Fill clear vases with pinecones, acorns, and colorful leaves.

**6. Get outside.** The temperature around Thanksgiving is usually perfect for enjoying the outdoors. Connecting with nature doesn't have to involve hiking up a mountain. Just being outside and feeling the sun on your face improves your mood and health greatly.



**November 6, 2024**

### **Leave the Leaves!**

Before you get out the rake this fall, think twice about clearing leaves from your lawn and garden. Fallen leaves are an ecosystem, providing food, shelter, and nesting materials to a variety of wildlife, as well as protection for insect species, all of which work together to contribute to a healthy yard. According to the National Wildlife Federation, in the case of moths, 94% of species rely on the leaf layer to complete their lifecycle. If you rake up and throw away all your leaves this fall, you'll be getting rid of important habitat for these beautiful and beneficial insects, many of which are pollinators.

If you still desire to clean up your yard or need to make defensible space, you can rake a layer of leaves into flower beds, garden beds, or around trees, or mow your leaves into smaller pieces and let them remain on your lawn. Excess garden waste should go in the organic/green waste container, not in plastic bags destined for the landfill. Gas-powered leaf blowers should be avoided as they are highly polluting in terms of carbon emissions, dust, and noise.

**October 30, 2024**

### **Eco-friendly Candles**

We all love the coziness that candles provide during the cooler months, but did you know that most candles on the market are made from paraffin wax, a product of petroleum refining? A more environmentally friendly choice is candles made from beeswax and only scented with essential oils. Beware of artificial fragrances (that are filled with chemicals) or pesticide-laden cotton wicks. It's great if you can buy environmentally friendly candles at a local market or craft fair to avoid the carbon costs of shipping. Be sure to do your research before you stock up on products that make you feel cozy during the fall and winter.

**October 16, 2024**

### **Green Food Choices**

Did you know the food choices you make and the way you shop for, prepare, and serve food can negatively impact the environment? Well, that is absolutely true—and it is becoming increasingly important that we all help our environment in every way we can. Here are some great “eating green” tips to help you get started.

**Try eating nonmeat meals a couple of times per week.** It is now known that the cost to the environment of meat production is far greater than the cost to produce vegetarian protein foods such as soybeans, legumes, etc.

**Make a shopping list.** Take inventory of everything you need for preparing healthy meals **before** you head out the door. This will prevent multiple trips back and forth to the store. You'll save on fuel, help reduce gasoline emissions, and save wear and tear on your car. You'll also avoid impulse buying. Stick to the perimeter of the store, where healthier choices tend to be located.

**Got canvas?** Neither paper nor plastic bags are a good choice for the environment. It takes gallons of crude oil to make plastic bags, and many trees are sacrificed to make paper bags. Invest in reusable (preferably canvas) shopping bags—and be sure that you bring them with you to the grocery and all stores!

**Stop buying bottled water.** Americans buy billions of plastic water bottles every year, and every year many of those empty bottles get thrown in the trash. The environmental cost for transporting bottled water is enormous too. Break the habit—use a neoprene or stainless steel bottle instead (or check [www.libertybottles.com](http://www.libertybottles.com) for cool recycled aluminum bottles made in the USA). Tap water is regulated by the EPA with stricter inspection regimens than bottled water, which is regulated by the FDA.

**Buy local and organic.** Buying locally grown foods cuts down on the environmental costs associated with transporting produce to your community from great distances. Try to choose organic produce whenever possible as this is an excellent way to reduce exposure to pesticides and help reduce the runoff and pollutants that may contaminate our water, soil, and air.

**Cook and clean up efficiently.** Save energy and speed up cooking times by covering pots. When it's time to clean up, make sure the dishwasher is "full" before you run it. If you have a small number of dirty dishes, think about doing them the old-fashioned way: by hand, with no running water, and be sure to use a biodegradable dish detergent.

**October 9, 2024**

### **Anticoagulant Rodenticides Harm the Environment**

Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed [a bill](#) that expands an existing moratorium on the use and sale of anticoagulant rodenticides, with only limited exceptions. The new law takes effect January 1.

The use of anticoagulant rodenticides to control rodents can result in exposing your pets and local wildlife to deadly poison. Regardless of who distributes the poison -- homeowners, professionals, or your HOA -- your pets and local wildlife are at risk. The poison is designed to block the cycle that clots the body's blood. It can take up to 10 days for the rodent to die by internal bleeding, if it is not eaten by another animal first. Rodents filled with toxic anticoagulants continue to move around and, as they start to feel the effects of the poison, they begin to move slower and become easy targets for your cat, dog, and our native predators such as bobcats, hawks, owls, coyotes, and mountain lions. Anticoagulant poison moves up the food chain and eating a poisoned animal leads to secondary poisoning of domestic and wild animals. (Source: National Park Service)

If your rodent problem is too big for you to control, contact a pest-exclusion company that uses sustainable practices to help you get to the root of the problem without the use of poisons. The new law creates civil penalties: Anyone who sells or uses the poisons in violation of the law is subject to a fine of up to \$25,000 per day for each violation.

**October 2, 2024**

### **Green Your Halloween**

#### **Here are some tips for a greener Halloween:**

**Green Your Costume.** Did you know that many costumes sold in stores contain toxic chemicals like PVC and phthalates? Yuck! Instead, get creative by going handmade and upcycled. Host a pre-Halloween costume swap in your community, repurpose existing clothes, or fashion costumes from recycled materials. Recognize, too, that store-bought costumes are often made in other parts of the world and travel great distances to arrive here. There's a huge carbon footprint with that.



**Use Natural Decorations.** Decorating with locally grown gourds and pumpkins is a great way to reduce waste and carbon emissions. Use recycled paper to make window decorations like spooky Halloween trees and masks.

**Throw a Low or No-Waste Party.** Instead of buying plastic plates, cups, and utensils for your Halloween party, use silverware or compostable utensils. Visit your neighborhood thrift store and purchase mismatched cloth napkins and have guests toss them in a bin for washing and reusing at your next party. Recycle bottles and cans, and compost leftovers.

**Don't Use Fake Spider Webs as Outdoor Decorations.** This stuff is strong enough to snare an owl and takes a terrible toll on small birds, including hummingbirds. It's also deadly to butterflies and even bees.

**September 25, 2024**

### **Save Money and Energy: Turn Down the Water Heater**

Many water heaters default to 140 degrees Fahrenheit when they ship from the manufacturer, but temps that high pose not only high energy costs but scalding risks to your family. Most water heaters operate just as efficiently (and showers are just as comfortable) at 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The lower temperature could help increase the lifespan of the heater and reduce utility costs by an estimated 4-22%, according to the Department of Energy. Additionally, wrapping an insulating blanket around your water heater will help save energy – especially in the cooler months. Find them in your local hardware store. Reducing the demand for hot water by washing clothes in cold water will also contribute to lower costs and energy demand. Investing in a solar water heater is another excellent choice for the environment.

**September 18, 2024**

### **Early Fall Green Tips**

Fall begins on Sunday, September 22! Here are some fall sustainability tips:

**Clean and test your home's HVAC system.** Many people do not realize this, but your heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) system actually needs a regular cleaning, especially after a summer of likely heavy use. Throughout the year, it collects lots of dust and debris, more so with pets in the house, which can affect its performance and could even cause a fire. Air filters are relatively inexpensive and should be replaced every three months. Look for reusable filters or eco-friendly ones made of sustainable products.

**Sort through summer clothes.** Before packing away those summer clothes, go through them and determine which items to keep, which items to repurpose into something else (cleaning rags, craft projects, etc.), and which to donate.

**Bring in any houseplants that have spent the summer outside.** Not only do plants make the interior of your home look better, they will also help clean the air. It may be a good idea to start to bring them inside at night at first to ensure they aren't shocked when they come inside for good.

**Do some outdoor landscaping.** As the autumn leaves begin to fall, rake them up rather than using a blower. Once raked up, use them as mulch to protect plants throughout the winter or add them to a compost pile. You can also plant trees and bushes in the fall, which will give them enough time to develop a deep root system over the winter months and reduce their water needs come spring.

**September 11, 2024**

### **Used Furnishings**

Did you know that Americans throw out more than 12 million tons of furniture and furnishings, 80% of which ends up in landfills? (Source: EPA) Rather than toss these items, donate them to a thrift store that can turn your unwanted item into proceeds that go to fighting homelessness and hunger. Also consider buying used rather than new furnishings. They are generally of higher quality than new furnishings, have fewer shipping impacts, and usually have no packaging waste. By making a local purchase you put money directly back into the community, and a strong local economy means a healthier, more vibrant community. You can find high quality used furnishings at yard sales, estate sales, thrift stores, or online, such as through the app Offerup or Facebook marketplace.



**August 28, 2024**

**California Coastal Cleanup Day**

**California Coastal Cleanup Day**

**Saturday, September 21**

**Find an Event Near You!**

The California Coastal Commission is sponsoring a statewide coastal cleanup event, and you can join local volunteers to clean up the beach – either at the beach or at a watershed near you. As water flows downhill in a watershed, it carries trash, sediment, and other materials to the beach. Through this yearly effort, thousands of pounds of trash and recyclable materials are removed from creeks, rivers, and our beautiful beaches. Bring your energy and a refillable water bottle. Bags and gloves will be available. Find more information and local cleanup locations here [www.coastalcleanupday.org](http://www.coastalcleanupday.org).



**August 15, 2024**

### **Ditch the Receipt!**

Did you know that most receipts are “thermal” paper, printed via a heat process instead of with old-fashioned ink? The heat-activated printing process requires a coating of bisphenol A (BPA) or bisphenol S (BPS) for the print to appear. According to health experts, these chemicals are endocrine disruptors that have been linked to health issues like cancer, obesity, and attention disorders. They may be especially harmful to children and developing fetuses. Put your receipts in the regular trash, where the chemicals will be more isolated from the environment, rather than in the recycle bin. Better yet, ditch the receipt wherever possible and opt for emailed receipts.

**August 7, 2024**

### **Back to School Green Tips**

**Inventory your supplies before buying more.** Take a careful inventory of the school supplies you already have that can be used again. Do you have extra packs of pencils, or barely used notebooks? Do you really need a new ruler? Is last year’s backpack still fully functional? Is

that lunch box still in great shape? Avoid last-minute impulse purchases by making a list of what you *really* need before you go to the store – and stick to it!

**Pack school lunches.** By packing a whole food lunch for your child in a reusable lunch box with a reusable bottle of water or milk, you will help reduce the amount of paper bags and food packaging your child tosses away – and they will be so much healthier for it too. Aim for products made with eco-friendly (non-plastic) materials and added insulation for keeping food chilled in hot weather and warm in the cold. Opt for durable, washable napkins (some fun designs are now available!) and real silverware. Get your kids involved in choosing healthy lunch ingredients, so they'll be less likely to pitch stuff they don't want to eat.

## **July 31, 2024**

### **Opt for a Staycation!**

According to Forbes, a solo traveler in 2023 could expect to spend just under \$1,400 on a trip lasting three days in the US, with round-trip economy airfare, a mid-range hotel, car rental, and meals. Add kids to the equation, and a one-week vacation could easily jump to several thousand dollars. To cut back on the expense – and impact on the environment – *opt for a staycation*, where one stays at home or takes day trips rather than traveling long distances. Spend time outdoors at the beach or camping at a local campground. Every minute outdoors is a minute less of indoor energy use. And don't abandon your green habits! Make sure to recycle properly and conserve energy use. If the place you are visiting does not have a recycling bin, take recyclables home with you.

## **July 24, 2024**

### **Green Your Travel**

With people traveling in record numbers this summer, it's important not to forget that air travel has a significant carbon footprint. Virtual meetings can greatly reduce business travel, and driving (especially in an electric vehicle) for business or pleasure – even solo – is less carbon intensive than flying. When air travel is a must, please keep these green ideas in mind for a lighter-impact flight:

- Take direct flights: Takeoff and landing account for 25% of the emissions produced during a standard flight – for shorter journeys, even higher!
- Pre-Order Vegetarian: Swap the in-flight pot roast for a plant-based option to reduce your overall emissions for the day.
- Bring Reusables: Airlines generate millions of pounds of cabin waste. Nip that by bringing your own drink container, silverware, hand sanitizer, and face masks.

- **Go Paperless:** With the ubiquity of smartphones, the need for a paper boarding pass has gone the way of the dinosaur at this point. Download a digital ticket and play your part to reduce paper waste.
- **Pack Light:** The heavier your luggage, the more fuel it takes to haul your stuff. Stick to the essentials for a lower carbon footprint.

**July 18, 2024**

### **Energy Saving Tips!**

Make the simple change to do all your energy-heavy chores off peak hours. Do your laundry, dishes, vacuuming, and even cooking at night. Doing so will cut your energy bill and help prevent your home from heating up unnecessarily during the day. Skip the dryer altogether especially during these warm days and invest in a clothesline or rack to hang your clothes outside (or even inside) to dry.

**July 10, 2024**

### **Here are some summer green camping tips:**

**Light up your nights with eco-friendly options.** Our climate crisis means rethinking some traditions like wood burning. It just isn't climate friendly because of the carbon pollution it emits. LED lanterns are a great green camping choice.

**Pack reusable dishes for your cookouts.** It's a good idea to have a set of camping dishes as well as a washbasin and biodegradable soap for cleaning up. Wash dishes at least 100 feet from streams, ponds, and other bodies of water.

**Take a break from your beauty routine.** Personal care and beauty products can be pretty toxic to the environment. Also keep in mind that if your only bathing option is a natural body of water, it's best to leave all soap and products behind. Cover exposed skin with UPF clothing and hats to avoid impacts of sunscreen.

**Always leave your campsite better than you found it.** Any scout will tell you that this is the golden rule of camping! Keep a reusable bag with you throughout your trip to pick up any trash or debris you find along the way. Recycle what you can and properly dispose of the rest.

**July 3, 2024**

### **Use the Public Library to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint!**

Book production requires a lot of resources. For the US alone, the publishing industry uses around 32 million trees to produce books each year. The production of print books requires paper, which is manufactured by cutting down trees that are nature's carbon sinks. Globally, the production process itself emits more than 40 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. When it comes to pulp and paper, book publishing is reportedly the third-largest industrial greenhouse gas emitter. So, the next time you have the impulse to buy a new book to read, download an e-version (available at public libraries if you don't want to purchase) or borrow the hard copy from the library or a friend instead of buying a new copy. Sharing books is a great way to reduce waste and reuse materials. And remember, your used books can be donated to Goodwill or a "friends of the library" associated with many public libraries.

**June 26, 2024**

### **Green Your Fourth**

With the 4th of July right around the corner, here is a little green to mix with your red, white, and blue: Ditch the disposable party ware. Though disposable plates, cups, and utensils are popular and convenient, they're not so convenient for the environment. Do your best to use regular tableware that can be washed (full loads only!) and reused. If you must go the disposable route, clean them up (they're often washable) and use them at your next big gathering. Avoid individual plastic drink bottles. Instead, fill pitchers with water, homemade lemonade, and iced tea. Even if you follow that tip, you're likely to have some individual-sized beverages in a cooler. Opt for aluminum, not plastic, and be sure to encourage recycling by putting out easily identifiable bins.

**June 19, 2024**

### **Eating "Green"**

Did you know the food choices you make and the way you shop for, prepare, and serve food can negatively impact the environment? Well, that is absolutely true—and it is becoming increasingly important that we all help our environment in every way we can. Here are some great "eating green" tips to help you get started.

Try eating non-meat meals a couple of times per week. It is now known that the cost to the environment of meat production is far greater than the cost to produce non-meat protein foods such as soybeans, legumes, etc.

Buy local and organic. Buying locally grown foods cuts down on the environmental costs associated with transporting produce to your community from great distances. In the summer months, farmer's markets are the ideal place to buy local produce, and certain grocery store chains actually feature local produce! Choose organic produce whenever possible to reduce

exposure to pesticides and help reduce the runoff and pollutants that may contaminate our water, soil, and air.

Make a shopping list. Take inventory of everything you need for preparing healthy meals before you head to the store. A shopping list helps prevent impulse buying and multiple trips back and forth. You'll also help reduce emissions and save wear and tear on your car.

**June 12, 2024**

### **Ditch the single-use plastic water bottles and invest in a reusable metal or glass water bottle!**

Sixty million plastic water bottles are thrown away by Americans every day and about 86% of empty plastic water bottles end up in US landfills instead of being recycled. It's estimated that plastic water bottles take around 450 years to decompose.

According to Food & Water Watch ([www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)), bottled water production uses up to 2,000 times more energy than tap water production. Companies must source the water (often depleting groundwater sources while paying next to nothing), manufacture the bottles (from petroleum-based chemicals), and then ship their brands far and wide in trucks, trains, and boats (running on fossil fuels).

If that's not bad enough, bottled water, regulated by the FDA, is subject to weaker regulations than tap water, which is regulated by the EPA. Bottled water is more likely to contain contaminants, including microplastics, which have been linked to cancers and hormone disruption.

From an environmental justice perspective, water is a vital resource that should remain safe and accessible to all. Bottled water moves this resource into corporate hands for profit. And profit they do: Bottled water can be anywhere between 240 and 10,000 times more expensive than tap water depending on the type of bottled water purchased.

**June 5, 2024**

### **Cultivate good water habits**

It's always important to be conscious of water use, but even more so now that our damp weather is just about over. All the water that goes down the drain, clean or dirty, ends up mixing with raw sewage, getting contaminated, and meeting the same fate. Try to stay aware of this precious resource disappearing and turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving and always wash laundry and dishes with full loads. When washing dishes by hand, fill up the sink and turn off the water. Take



shorter showers. To put things in perspective, take a quick look at your next water bill when it arrives. See if you can make this number go down.

**May 29, 2024**

### **Consider Impacts of Sunscreens**

Though we're still in the "May gray/June gloom" period, don't underestimate the amount of UV radiation passing through clouds. It's important to protect your skin from harmful ultraviolet radiation, both UVA and UVB. But we need to be mindful of the impacts of sunscreens.

- Chemicals in some sunscreens can harm marine life. Avoid oxybenzone, benzophenone-1, benzophenone-8, OD-PABA, 4-methylbenzylidene camphor, 3-benzylidene camphor, nano-titanium dioxide, nano-zinc oxide, octinoxate, and octocrylene.
- Mineral sunscreens (e.g., titanium dioxide and zinc oxide) are generally safer choices (though not perfect because of the nanoparticles in them).
- Do not use spray-on sunscreen. Much of the stream ends up in the environment without ever protecting anyone's skin. It is also unhealthy to inhale.
- Shower before going into natural waters, as personal care products like sunscreen, oils, leave-in conditioners wash off into the waters, build up over time, and disrupt ecosystems.
- The only truly environmentally friendly option is to avoid using sunscreen altogether by covering exposed skin with hats, long sleeves, and hand coverings. Skin cancer is always a concern on the face and neck, so be sure to cover up there, too.

**May 22, 2024**

### **Why Do We Do Green Tips?**

Have you wondered why green tips show up in the weekly church bulletin? Have you asked yourself "what does this have to do with my faith"?

During the Episcopal Church's 80th General Convention, the House of Bishops named the climate crisis an urgent concern that affects all issues of social justice, proclaiming: "As people of faith, we are not without hope, but the sustainability of God's creation demands our action. Confronting climate change and environmental degradation has never been more urgent. As members of The Episcopal Church, we are committed in baptism to resist evil, seek God's will,

treat all people with dignity, and strive for justice and peace. Living into these promises, we must face the climate crisis for the sake of love of God and neighbor.”

In the last 10 to 15 years, the effects of climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have increasingly been recognized as issues of life- and health-threatening relevance. According to NOAA, *the year 2023 was the warmest year on record since global records began in 1850*, and the 10 warmest years in the 174-year record have all occurred during the last decade (2014–2023). The impacts of climate change not only cause natural disasters with increasing frequency and intensity, they also cause loss of biodiversity, food shortages, and human displacement, hitting the poorest the hardest.

We hope that the green tips help increase awareness of the human impact on the environment and spur the action needed for us to be ardent stewards of God’s creation.

**May 15, 2024**

### **Glass Instead of Plastic!**

Instead of using plastic bags or cling wrap to store cut veggies, use reusable glass storage containers. After placing the lid on the container, turn it upside down and store in your refrigerator drawer and you’ll easily see what’s inside! (For extra points, ditch the plastic or silicone lid in favor of a metal lid.) Also, some veggies – for instance, cucumbers and zucchini – really don’t need any kind of container. If we use fewer plastic bags, we’ll use fewer petroleum products to make and distribute them – which will in turn reduce carbon emissions – and we’ll send less plastic waste to our landfills.

**May 9, 2024**

### **Food and Food Packaging Waste**

One way to really reduce our impact on the environment is to minimize food waste. Jonathan Bloom, author of *American Wasteland: How America Throws Away Nearly Half of Its Food (and What We Can Do About It)* estimates that Americans waste enough food every day to fill the Rose Bowl! The waste is not just of the food; it’s also the fossil fuels going into growing, processing, transporting, and refrigerating the food.

So here are some tips: Make your recipes healthier and reduce waste by not using packaged foods. Don’t buy more food than you can possibly eat before it goes bad. Rethink portion sizes so that you’re not scraping extra food into the trash. And plan leftover nights!

**May 1, 2024**

## **Do you really need paper towels?**

The production of paper towels can hurt the environment by contributing to deforestation, which in turn leads to habitat loss, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and, therefore, rising global temperatures.

Additionally, paper towels are single use, which means you use them once before immediately tossing them in landfill trash. According to the U.S. EPA, paper and cardboard waste, of which paper towels are a contributing factor, make up the largest percentage of waste materials in the U.S.

Paper towels also come wrapped in plastic, which we know is bad for the environment because plastic uses fossil fuels for production and ends up as non-biodegradable waste.

The good news is that paper towels are almost always optional. Viable alternatives will still help you wipe, dry, and clean without all the negative impacts on the environment. Choose cloth rags, old kitchen towels or T-shirts, and sponges for cleaning purposes instead. You can toss these in cold water wash and re-use them hundreds of times.

If these alternatives don't work for your situation, choose more eco-friendly paper towels, like those made from 100% recycled materials. These types of paper towels don't contribute to devastating deforestation and often forgo dyes, fragrances, and inks that can also contribute to pollution. Recycled paper towel production also requires less energy and less water.

**April 24, 2024**

## **More Seafood Sustainability Tips . . .**

We recently gave some tips to help the environmental challenges affecting the seafood industry. Climate change is significantly affecting fisheries. As oceans warm, fish populations off the coast move into cooler waters, causing productivity to dwindle. Ocean acidification due to absorption of carbon dioxide directly threatens survival of shellfish and degrades coral reefs that provide essential habitat. The plastic waste crisis is also taking a toll on marine life.

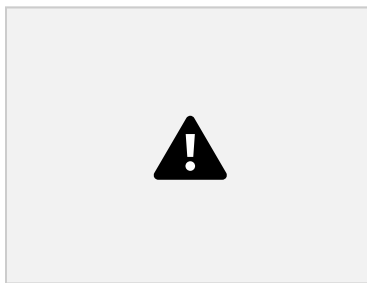
So here are more ways we can help make sustainable choices when buying or ordering seafood:

1. Increase the market demand for sustainable seafood by asking the grocery store or restaurant if they sell sustainable seafood, where the seafood came from, and how it was caught or farmed.
2. Eat local fish and shellfish whenever possible.
3. Refer to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch (<https://www.seafoodwatch.org/>) for best choices and those to avoid.

**April 17, 2024**

### **Earth Day Green Tip**

Plenty of studies show that being present in – or simply viewing – open, green spaces enhances wellbeing, reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, and improves health. Studies also show that exposure to natural environments may reduce feelings of anger, frustration, and aggression. Most of us can relate to this even without the science to back it up. We know the feeling of peace that we get when we're in a forest, or in a meadow, or at the coast. When we remember that God created us and our natural environment, it should come as no surprise that the presence of natural spaces increases our sense of wellbeing and improves our quality of life. Why? Because we and our natural environment are intertwined and perfectly balanced. This Earth Day weekend, appreciate the natural spaces so close to us and do something for your local environment: pick up trash if you take a walk, reduce your waste impact, and be sure to recycle.



**April 10, 2024**

### **Spring Cleaning Tips**

Spring has finally arrived, and with it the chance to enjoy the outdoors and also do some spring cleaning! You can reduce the cost and impact of your cleaning by using non-toxic cleaning products like vinegar for windows, baking soda for sinks and tubs (add a little soap for the toilet), lemons, and water. Check <https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/non-toxic-home-cleaning/> for some good cleaning recipes. Not only are these effective, they help avoid plastic containers. Use natural fiber sponges and rags that can be washed and re-used.

Here's another tip for you now that the rainy season is pretty much behind us. Remember that the most sustainable way to wash your car is at a commercial car wash. At home, harmful pollutants like oil, grease, and soaps run off directly down the driveway into storm drains. If you must wash your vehicle at home, park on the grass or gravel to soak up wash water and prevent it from going down the street into a storm drain and use biodegradable, water-based, phosphate-free soap.

**April 3, 2024**

**Here are some tips for saving energy in the kitchen:**

Choose the smallest oven suited to the task. The smaller the oven, the less energy used in cooking. Heating up the big oven for a slice of pizza just isn't efficient. With an electric stovetop, make sure your pan completely covers the heating element. With gas burners, make sure the flame is fully below the pan. And keep a lid on it! Covered pots retain heat and help cook food more quickly.

Consider replacing that old refrigerator that's using a lot of electricity. Southern California Edison has an Energy Savings Assistance program, designed to help income-qualifying customers save money purchasing and installing energy-efficient home appliances at minimal or no charge.

<https://www.sce.com/residential/assistance/energy-saving-program>

**March 27, 2024**

**Seafood and Sustainability**

Many factors are negatively affecting the seafood industry. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, today, only 66% of wild marine fish stock are considered to exist at biologically sustainable levels. Here are ways we can help make sustainable choices when buying or ordering seafood:

1. Buy American-caught seafood to support strong fishery management. According to the NRDC, as much as 32% of imported seafood is harvested through illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, including labor and human rights abuses at sea and in the supply chain and exposure to dangerous antibiotics and chemicals. (The US FDA only inspects about 2% of all imported seafood!)
2. Refer to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch (<https://www.seafoodwatch.org/>) for best choices and those to avoid. You can also subscribe on this website to get monthly updates of seafood on the "Super Green List."
3. Choose to buy or order underappreciated species like mussels, oysters, rockfish, and scup (aka porgy) to prevent overfishing of the same seafood types (e.g., salmon, tuna, shrimp, and tilapia).

**March 20, 2024**

**Green up Your Easter!**

Here are some tips to make your Easter holiday less impactful on our environment:

- Buy or make Easter baskets made from wood or reeds or engage children in decorating shoebox baskets for the holiday. A reusable basket can become a tradition used year after year with no added cost.
- Shred colored construction paper or old Sunday comics and use that material in place of plastic grass.
- Vow to reuse plastic eggs forever!
- When shopping, look for organic, chemical-free items, and don't forget to bring your own bags.
- Say "no" to disposable dishes and utensils and paper napkins! Pull out the good dishes. Be eclectic; it doesn't have to be a perfect match. If you need more dishes, try your local thrift store. You can tie everything together with a pretty tablecloth and matching cloth napkins.
- Use the gifts of God's earth to decorate your table!

**March 13, 2024**

### **More tips on reducing plastic pollution . . .**

**Reduce \*Before\* Recycling.** While it's better than the landfill, recycling plastic isn't a sustainable solution. Plastic degrades as it's recycled and is sometimes exported to other countries. Reduce first (don't buy it), then reuse, then recycle. Opt for glass containers whenever possible.

**Keep Plastic Out of the Kitchen.** Avoid heating plastic containers, which can leach toxic substances. Use kitchen dishes and implements made of glass, porcelain, wood, cast iron, and stainless steel instead.

**BYO (Bring Your Own) Everything.** From utensils and mugs to bags and diapers, we can kick the single-use habit by purchasing longer-lasting products meant to be reused.

**De-plasticize Your Personal Products.** Did you know that a plastic toothbrush takes about 400 years to decompose? Switch to a biodegradable bamboo or cornstarch toothbrush that takes about 5-6 years to decompose – even less in a composter. Look for dental floss in paper packaging and avoid cosmetics containing microplastics.

**March 6, 2024**

Plastic pollution is a global problem. Unlike other materials, plastic does not biodegrade. It can take up to a thousand years to break down! According to National Geographic, only about 9% of all plastic globally has been recycled. The rest is in landfills or the oceans. Plastic in the oceans can entangle marine mammals and fish or be ingested by seabirds. Moreover, plastic is made from fossil fuels in an energy-intensive manufacturing process. All this plastic is wreaking havoc on our health and environment. Here are some tips on fighting back against plastic pollution:

**Support Plastic Fees and Bans (bags, microbeads, takeout containers, etc.).** Policy is the most effective tool to fight plastic pollution. Tell your local, state, and federal elected leaders that you want to dis-incentivize wasteful plastic use. Many cities have already done it.

**Put Pressure on Manufacturers.** If you believe a company could be smarter about its packaging, make your voice heard. Write a letter, sign a petition, or reward a more sustainable competitor by buying their product instead.

**Change the Culture.** At a coffee shop? Ask the barista for a ceramic cup. Decline plastic bags and excess packaging at stores. Decline plastic utensils and straws at restaurants, whether for take-out or dine-in.

**Volunteer to Cleanup a Waterway.** Sign up to participate in a coastal or watershed cleanup. It's a fun (and eye-opening) way to care for your local environment.

### **Additional Green Tips & Creation Care Commentary**

#### **Many Thanks to Kathy Cartelli for these resources**

1. Upcycling: reuse (discarded objects or material) in such a way as to create a product of higher quality or value than the original. How is this different from recycling?

Recycling destroys the waste and creates something new often using chemicals to do so, while upcycling takes waste and makes something new from it in its existing state. When upcycling, the original form is retained and the object is recognizable, it can be seen what it has been and also what it has become. There are lots of creative things you can do with items you would normally throw away. Google "upcycling ideas" to get a list of sites that have a wealth of upcycling ideas for you to try. There are also food manufacturers that use upcycled ingredients in their products.

According to the Upcycled Food Association's website ( [upcycledfood.org](http://upcycledfood.org) ), upcycled food is the easy way for anyone to prevent food waste via the products they buy. Upcycled products prevent food waste by creating new, high quality products out of surplus food. It's an innovative approach to food waste because it is the first consumer product-based solution, making it highly scalable and economically sustainable".

2. For those of you interested in exploring electrification of your home, here is a great resource: <https://www.rewiringamerica.org/electrify-home-guide>

3. If you are trying to reduce the amount of single-use plastic you use, be aware there are sources of hidden plastic in items you may use every day. Here are a few examples and some plastic-free alternatives:

- Tea bags; a plastic polymer is used to seal the bags as well as keep its shape when it's dunked into hot water. Consider using looseleaf tea with a tea strainer instead of tea bags or look for tea bags that do not contain plastic.
- Microwave popcorn bags are lined with plastic. Go the old-fashioned (and cheaper) route and make it on the stove top or in a microwave popcorn maker.
- Chewing gum is primarily made from plastic with flavorings and synthetic dyes. Simply Gum is a brand that is made from natural ingredients and is biodegradable.
- Laundry and dishwasher pods and sheets have a form of plastic (PVA or PVOH) that dissolves but doesn't go away. Fortunately, there are brands that do not include PVA/PVOH and don't come in a big plastic container. Blueland is one brand that does not use any form of plastic in their cleaning products.

4. When you ask yourself what else you can do to reduce your impact on the environment, an obvious answer is to reduce use of plastic. Refuse to use plastic straws and utensils when you order takeout. If available, purchase milk in glass bottles. Use silicone lids rather than plastic wrap to cover bowls. When buying laundry detergent, consider the packaging when you make your selection. And think about your cleaning products. Here is a recipe from Imperfect Foods for a non-toxic, great smelling cleaner that you can put in a glass spray bottle.

#### Materials

- 1 quart-sized glass canning jar with lid
- 1 glass spray bottle
- ½ cup rosemary stems
- 1 ½ cup orange peels
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 4 cups water

#### Directions

- Fill the glass jar with orange peels and rosemary. Pour white vinegar into the jar, just enough to cover the peels and herbs.
- Screw the lid on the jar tightly and place in a dark area for 2-4 weeks for the peels and herbs to infuse the vinegar.
- Remove from the cupboard and strain out the peels.
- Mix the vinegar mixture with 4 cups of water and pour into a glass spray bottle.



5. From [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) : California native plants are not only beautiful, they are naturally drought tolerant, help support local ecosystems and provide habitat for birds, butterflies and pollinators. Landscaping with native plants can also save you money.

Here are a few of the plants native to Orange County. For a complete list and tips on how to plant, go to the [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) website. California native plants are not only beautiful, they are naturally drought tolerant, help support local ecosystems and provide habitat for birds, butterflies and pollinators.

- Grasses: clustered field sedge, Canyon Prince wild rye, deer grass
- Succulents: Fingertips, chalk Dudleya
- mall shrubs/perennials: narrow leaf milkweed, California fuchsia, lilac verbena,
- desert mallow

[Calscape.org](http://Calscape.org) has an even more extensive list. Enter your address for specifics with photos of the plants. The site also offers help in finding a nursery that sells the plants.

6. You may have received a countertop compost bin from your waste management company. If you are hesitant to use it because of the potential for odor or bugs, here's a tip from Catherine Sharbaugh: keep a small container or bag in your freezer for food scraps and put it in your organic waste bin on trash day.

7. There's a great article in The New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/dining/climate-change-food-eating-habits.html>) about how our diets affect climate change.

It discusses the relative contribution of various types of foods on carbon emissions. Here is one fact from the article: Meat and dairy, particularly from cows, have an outsize impact, with livestock accounting for around 14.5 percent of the world's greenhouse gases each year. That's roughly the same amount as the emissions from all the cars, trucks, airplanes and ships combined in the world today.

In general, beef and lamb have the biggest climate footprint per gram of protein, while plant-based foods tend to have the smallest impact. Pork and chicken are somewhere in the middle.

The authors are not encouraging everyone to become vegan; they share simple ways to reduce our impact while still enjoying meat.