

Earth Day Going Greener Challenge

**indicates higher impact actions*

Speak Up!

- Register to vote and be prepared to vote by mail
- * [Research](#) politicians for the upcoming election to see which have concrete plans to combat climate change. Put pressure on them to come up with policies if they don't already have them. Share and use this information when you **go to vote**.
- * Build a coalition for greener policies at your workplace or other community you're a part of, ex. Go for a [Green Business Certification](#), or become a [Creation Justice Church](#).
- * Put pressure on local energy companies and other potential polluters to become carbon neutral or to do it sooner. Ex. Sign this [petition](#) by NC Warn or write a letter to Duke Energy to become carbon neutral before 2050.
- Sign the [petition](#) from Mayor Schewel's supporters to negotiate greener practices with Duke Energy

Make your Home Greener!

- Choose a utility company that generates at least half its power from wind or solar and has been certified by [Green-e Energy](#).
- *Check your energy usage on your bill and try and bring it down for the next month by weatherizing, getting more efficient household devices, and making lifestyle shifts (ex. Adjusting your temperature comfort with clothing before the thermostat).*
- Research the devices in your house that use lots of energy and see if they need replacing and/or if you can make them more efficient.
- Use a clothesline instead of a dryer when it's warm out.
- Reduce water waste: take shorter showers, turn off the tap while brushing your teeth, etc. If possible switch to WaterSense-labeled fixtures and appliances.
- Swap out your bulbs. If you haven't switched over to LEDs, just remember, they use 80% less energy and save you \$125 apiece over the course of the bulb's life.
- Pull your plugs: Unplug fully charged devices and rarely used devices or plug them into power strips and timers, and adjust your computers and monitors to automatically power down to the lowest power mode when not in use.

Make your Lifestyle Greener!

- What you eat:
 - * Go [vegetarian](#) (or [vegan](#)) for a week (or one day a week for 7 weeks), or longer if you can.
 - Mix up the [milks](#), swapping out cow's milk for oat milk saves thousands of gallons of water.
 - * Pay attention to your [perishables](#)- give yourself a challenge to let no food go to waste for a week.
 - When possible buy local, ex. Farmer's markets
- Around your house:
 - Plant a garden and make a salad from it. Live in an apartment? Try container gardening or investigate community gardens or yardshares.
 - Start composting in your house.

- Pick up trash (with gloves and send in a picture)
 - Mindful computer use: ex. Use Ecosia as your search engine, turn off or go into sleep mode when not in use, use the green/slow option for deliveries when possible
 - Make a [basic bee hotel](#), or do a little [research](#) and do something more detailed.
 - Plant a tree and/or a garden of [bee friendly plants](#)
- Out and about:
 - *Instead of flying on a work trip see if you can participate online.
 - *Instead of flying somewhere for vacation do a trip by car or by train
 - *Avoid single person car use for a month: bus, bike, telecommute, or car-pool
 - Keep your tires inflated to save gas in the long run
 - Make a habit of using reusable items like water bottles, lunch containers, and bags
 - Watch this [video](#) on fast fashion and plan how you can adjust your shopping habits
 - Ask restaurants to not include plastic utensils or napkins when ordering takeout, encourage restaurants to use compostable containers for take out.
 - Buy used when possible.

----draft idea?.....Earth Day Going Greener Challenge

1. **Reflect then choose 1-3 actions** that you feel most called to take for the week, holding the tension between what is most impactful/challenging and what is manageable/sustainable for you.
2. **Be bold and courageous**, climate change is serious and change needs to happen on an individual and especially systemic level to heal it. That being said, participation not perfection is the goal. Customize your actions based on what you think you can be successful at while still pushing yourself, adjust to make it more or less challenging as you go.
3. **Invite and cheer on others**, share what you are figuring out, failing on, and recovering from in conversation with others, at work, on social media, etc. For example the UCC has an ongoing ministry on caring for creation and we can tweet what we're up to under #loveofcreation.