

The OC-WEC Board wishes all our member a
Safe and Fabulous Summer!

Make Your Household **GREEN** this Summer with these 10 **GO GREEN** Tips



Change a Light Bulb

Installing a compact fluorescent bulb (CFL) is the quickest, easiest way to save energy -- and money. Unlike incandescents, CFLs convert most of the energy they use into light rather than heat.

Good for Your Piggy Bank: They consume about 75 percent less electricity and last up to 10 times longer (10,000 hours as opposed to 1,500). Replace one 75-watt incandescent bulb with a 25-watt CFL and save up to \$83 over the life of the bulb.



Unplug Things That Glow

Anything that has an LED (light emitting diode) that glows even after you turn it off continues to draw power (that you pay for). Your TV, cell phone charger, and printer are likely culprits. Unplug the offenders from wall sockets and plug them into power strips instead. When you leave a room, flip the strip switch to cut the flow of electricity.



Good for Your Piggy Bank: Unplug appliances and electronics that glow and you could save \$200 a year.

Recycle Your Electronics

Americans tossed out a whopping 5.5 billion pounds of electronics -- TVs, stereos, cell phones, and computers -- in 2005, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The result? Millions of pounds of chemicals and heavy metals ended up in the ground



even though it's easier than ever to recycle electronics. The Consumer Electronics Association created mygreenelectronics.org to help people find a recycling resource in their area. The site also provides a list of electronics, from laptops to baby monitors, that are easier on the environment and your energy bill.

Good for Your Piggy Bank: The average American household has three cell phones stashed in a drawer. Sell unused cell phones to greenphone.com. You'll receive about \$35, and the phones will be refurbished and resold. If 1 million people recycled one cathode-ray tube TV this year, we'd keep 4 million pounds of lead out of the ground.

Audit Your Energy

It's easier to save energy when you know exactly how much and where you're using it. Investing in a home audit takes a couple of hours and pays off with a list of things you can do to curb consumption. Find an auditor through your utility company (at low or no cost), or hire one (\$450-\$650). A list of auditors certified by the nonprofit Residential Energy Services Network, is at resnet.us (click on Consumer Information).



Good for Your Piggy Bank: On average, an energy audit shows how to save up to 30 percent on utility bills.

Support Local Farmers

If your food could talk, it would tell quite a tale. Typical grocery store produce travels nearly 1,500 miles before it ends up on your plate. All this traveling burns fossil fuels and results in carbon emissions - a fancy term for pollution. Buying from local farmers means you're not only getting the freshest food possible, you're saving energy.



Good for You: To find farmers nationwide, visit localharvest.org, sustainabletable.org, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture at www.ams.usda.govfarmersmarkets/map.htm.

Fix That Drip

When you next fill your water glass, think about this: We each use about 100 gallons a day, enough to fill 1,600 glasses. Household water consumption has increased by 200 percent since 1950, even though the population has grown by only 90 percent. As a



result, more than 36 states are expected to face water shortages in the next six years. Stemming the flow is as easy as fixing a leaky faucet or toilet; a dripping faucet can waste up to 74 gallons a day, a leaking toilet up to 200 gallons a day.

Good for Your Piggy Bank: Repair a leaky toilet and you can save \$30 a year, which may not sound like much until you realize it means 73,000 gallons.

Let Your Grass Grow

Spending less time tending to your lawn actually makes it greener -- in every sense of the word. Most grass species fare best when they're kept at least 2 1/2 inches tall. The length creates more surface area to absorb sunlight, which creates thicker turf and deeper roots, which means you won't need to water as often.



Good for Your Piggy Bank: Save money by letting grass clippings remain on your lawn; it adds nitrogen to the soil and discourages weed seeds from germinating. You'll need less fertilizer and herbicide. Plus, leaving clippings on lawns means less in landfills; in 2005 Americans disposed of more than 12 million tons of yard waste.

Look for the Label

When it's time to replace a household appliance, choose a product with an Energy Star label. Sponsored by the EPA and the Department of Energy, the Energy Star program rates products from light bulbs to kitchen appliances. Energy Star labels guarantee that



products are energy-efficient. For example, a battery charger labeled with the Energy Star logo will use 35 percent less energy than a

standard one. You may even be eligible for a tax credit when you purchase an Energy Star product. Information at energystar.gov.

Good for Your Piggy Bank: A household with Energy Star products uses about 30 percent less energy than the average household -- an annual savings of about \$570.

Do Full Loads

Whenever you wash just a few clothes or dishes at a time rather than waiting for a full load to accumulate, you're wasting water, power, and money. The average American family of four washes about 540 loads of laundry a year, which consumes up to 21,000 gallons of water, and more than 150 loads of dishes, which uses about 1,500 gallons. Most of the energy consumed by washers goes toward heating the water -- about 90 percent in the clothes washer and 80 percent in the dishwasher. Combining half-loads, choosing short cycles, and using cold or warm rather than hot water in the clothes washer racks up savings.



Good for You: Wash two fewer loads of clothes and one fewer load of dishes a week and save up to 4,500 gallons of water a year.

Work the Critters

Your backyard ecosystem is as intricate as any wild patch of land, and it pays in many ways to enlist its creatures on your side. Birds eat many insects; they just need a water



source and trees and shrubs for cover and nesting. Many insects are beautiful -- and beneficial. Ladybugs aren't just cute; they are voracious eaters of aphids.

Good for You: To understand which backyard insects are garden friends, visit garden.org and click on Pest Control Library for photos.