



HELP THE EARTH Twenty Things Anyone Can Do

- 1. Do not buy bottled water.** There are less health restrictions on it than tap water. Carry your own refillable container. In 2006, more than 17 million barrels of oil, not including the oil needed for transportation, was used to produce bottled water, releasing 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide, a major global warming gas. 1,500 bottles per second end up in the garbage. Recycle the bottles. <http://www.sierraclub.org>
 - 2. Do not accept stores' plastic bags. Carry your own fabric bags.** Making plastic bags requires the energy of 4 million barrels of oil a year. 100,000 birds and marine animals die each year from eating plastic. Plastic bags have been banned in San Francisco 2007, Los Angeles 2010, & many other places including Bombay 2001 and Bangladesh 2002. They were found to be the main reason for the latter's 1988 and 1998 floods, submerging 2/3's of the country. Bags choked the drainage systems. <http://www.earthresource.org>
 - 3. When eating in a restaurant, bring your own leftover container,** which helps you eat less, makes two meals out of one, plus saves using the restaurants' Styrofoam or plastic containers each time. 27% of all U.S. food produced each year is thrown away, 48 million tons, 163 lbs. for each person, enough to feed 49 million people.
 - 4. Recycle waste.** Put non-meat, non-dairy food scraps in your garden, compost pile or compost bin. Separate waste into bags of clear glass, colored glass, (lightly rinse out and take caps off), aluminum, tin cans, (rinse out and take labels off), plastic, newspapers, magazines, phone books, and cardboard. Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a traditional light bulb for four hours. Do curbside recycling, or take waste to the free, drop-off center. Recycling instructions: <http://www.sunsetwaste.com/images/new/muskrec2008.pdf>
- Community Recycling Services
1970 Port City Blvd.
Muskegon, MI
773-8407
- 5. Change incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs.** CFL bulbs use 75% less energy and last ten times longer. CFL bulbs contain mercury and require careful disposal. Do not put them in the trash. Home Depot takes burned out CFL bulbs.
 - 6. "Think before you print."** Save to a flash drive or email to yourself. Operate paperless when possible. Each year Americans use about 600 lbs. of paper per person, or 100 million trees.
 - 7. Check labels.** Buy and use recycled paper for printing, toilet tissue, facial tissue, paper towels, etc. About 27 million trees are used each year for paper towels alone. Use cloth when possible. Ask stores to carry recycled paper products.
 - 8. Turn off lights and machines when not in use.** Set your computer screen to sleep mode when not in use, rather than a screen saver. Doing so can save \$25-\$75 per desktop a year. Laptops use 90% less energy than desktops with rechargeable batteries and other energy saving features.

9. **Take your name off junk and catalog mailing lists.** Each person receives an estimated 34 lbs. of junk mail a year. Directions to stop junk mail: <http://www.nativeforest.org/>
10. **Buy local foods.** Muskegon Farmer's Market, 700 Yuba, 722-3251, May-December Tues, Thurs, Sat. 6 am – 3 pm; Sweetwater Local Foods Market at Hackley Health at the Lakes, 6401 Prairie Street, ½ mile south of the Lakes Mall, exit US 31 at Pontaluna Rd., 231-893-3937. Summer/fall in parking lot, winter in lobby every other weekend. Visit markets in Muskegon Heights, Grand Haven, and other cities as well.
11. **Do not eat fast food or grocery store meat and poultry from CAFOs,** Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. The United Nations states, the meat industry generates more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks combined. See the film "Food, Inc.," and <http://michigan.sierraclub.org/issues/greatlakes/articles/cafofacts.html>
12. **Do not idle your car engine over one minute,** unless at a light. Idling wastes gas, estimated at 2 billion gallons a year in the U.S. It pollutes the atmosphere with unhealthy emissions. Idling is illegal in 42 states and Europe. Avoid drive-through businesses with long idling. Also, the weight of a full tank of gas gives you less efficient gas mileage. Fill up when necessary.
13. **Support local, state and national businesses.**
14. **Recycle clean Styrofoam packaging material,** such as blocks and peanuts, at NuPac Solutions, Inc., 2850 Lincoln, across from Cannon Foundry, Norton Shores, 231-755-1662. They do not accept food containers, even if washed.
15. **Do not throw cigarette butts out car windows, on the ground or in waterways.** The butts contain many toxic chemicals which get into waterways, contaminating groundwater and drinking water. Land and marine animals can die from eating them. Several trillion butts are thrown away each year, the leading litter in the world.
16. **Bring your own cup, plate and utensils to work** to avoid using plastic and Styrofoam daily. Americans use 57 billion lbs. of plastic a year. Only 3% is recycled. Fourteen billion lbs. of trash are dumped in the oceans each year. More than 46,000 pieces of plastic waste are in every square mile of ocean, killing over 100,000 marine species a year.
17. **Stop recreational balloon launches.** Balloons and strings end up in lakes and waterways where birds and aquatic life ingest them and die.
18. **Big shade trees** outside a home can reduce the temperature inside by 10-20 degrees, saving about \$200 a year in electricity.
19. **Support political candidates** who have a sustainable environmental agenda, and watch their actions. See "Project Vote Smart" <http://www.votesmart.org/>
20. **Buy juice in bulk and refill metal containers** for children rather than juice boxes. Some juice boxes are very difficult to recycle.

Compiled by Darlene A. DeHudy, Muskegon Community College Librarian

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