

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TO PROTECT AND REPAIR OUR ENVIRONMENT

Prepared by B. F. Snapp SGC, 3/2022

AT HOME:

Since WWII, more than ever, we have separated ourselves from the land, our food sources and the concept of truly using just what we need and what we already have, which is already more than enough, not what we want!

Practice Home Economics: Today's definition of Home Economics is having nutritional, health, financial, consumer and environmental literacy. **Each of those categories has greatly expanded over the last 50 years. In this case our home is under our own roof as well as our planet**

In order to make a difference in healing our home, OUR GOAL is to Repair, reuse, repurpose and refuse, say NO to what you may desire but really don't need - BUY QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY

Join with neighbors to find and share resources for repair, recycling (especially for the difficult items), places to donate, handymen, seamstresses, small appliance repair, etc. I have used Angi (formally Angie's list), and Thumbtack to locate services and googled "How to recycle xxxx?" Consider Freecycle.org or Nextdoor for *your* neighborhood. Use your library. Sign up for Libby through King County Public Library for ebooks, audible books, magazines and movies (Kanopy) Convert magazine subscriptions (that you can't find on Libby) and newspapers to e-subscriptions to keep consumption down and trees standing.

IN THE KITCHEN:

Plan and make meals at home, enough for leftover or the freezer for use later. Planning weekly meals makes a huge difference in kitchen efficiency. Instead of dashing to the store, make it fun by looking in your pantry and see what you create! If you can't figure it out, you can put a list on line and ask for recipes. These are energy saving actions as you won't be using as much energy to drive to the store, cook, wash dishes.

Reduce meat consumption. Beef and other meats have a HUGE draw on our planet's resources. Try Beyond Beef (my favorite) or Impossible Burger. Eat more vegetarian meals - "grow your own," learn what combinations make a complete protein. Involve the children!

Attend or create vegetarian cooking classes or learn together with friends

Learn to can: attend canning classes (on line) or watch videos. Do it with a friend!

Invest in a dehydrator!

Invest in a small freezer (not self-defrosting)

LIGHTING AND ELECTRONICS

Turn off lights when leaving a room, unplug TV's and small appliances when your leaving your main residence or other homes for a length of time. Change to LED lights and dimmers too! (recycle your lightbulbs!)

Consider ductless mini split heater/air conditioners to use in the rooms you actually use and not heat the entire house

Install smart thermostats

Install solar panels

Recycle, change to LED lightbulbs (change dimmers too)

Install tankless water heaters

Install induction stoves

Sign up for PSE's Green Power Program - for a nominal additional monthly fee, all your power can come from green sources. <https://www.pse.com/green-options/Renewable-Energy-Programs/green-power> ,<https://www.pse.com/rebates>, copy and paste link: 3905_wb_RebatesFlyer.pdf

Seattle City Light - <https://seattle.gov/city-light/residential-services/home-energy-solutions#solutionsforhomeowners>

Other Actions

Sign up for Ridwell to handle plastic film, styrofoam, batteries, lightbulbs, clothing and a myriad of other items. <https://www.ridwell.com>

Incorporate “green” environmental design into your residential and commercial ventures such as individual or community rain gardens at home or at your commercial locations i.e. condos, apartments or buildings

Install a rain garden

Install permeable pavers (non skid element to them?)

Consider incorporating rainwater use for toilets or watering garden, or install connectors that take grey water to your garden.

Invest in a rain water collection tank. <http://tank-depot.com/>

AT THE STORE:

Purchase items with minimal packaging - bring your own bags and containers to buy bulk, set the “tare” weight.

Use your own bags for shopping, (education opportunity) offer your extra bags to other shoppers to help them think about bringing their own bags next time

If you forget your bags in the car, reload the cart and load your items into your bags at the car, (education opportunity) “announce it” in a slightly louder voice that you will repack your items in your bags that you left in the car.

Use bamboo toilet paper. 27,000 trees are cut a day for TP. Ultrasoft tissue decimates our boreal forests. I use “**Who Gives A Crap**” bamboo toilet paper, **Reel bamboo toilet** paper gives back to those who don't have toilets.

Minimize use of all plastic! <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/11/897692090/how-big-oil-misled-the-public-into-believing-plastic-would-be-recycled>

Plastic Documentary: The Story Of Plastic, April 2020, Amazon 99¢, promo price as of 2/21/22

Do not keep up with the Jones's, use that money for...

IN THE GARDEN

DO NOT USE CHEMICALS AND INSECTICIDES!!!

Plant useful gardens for food, medicinal, pollinators, habitat, humus, air and shade. Create the green smell, air and feeling of the forest in your own yard. Even potted trees on decks create a nurturing, cleaner environment.

Plant trees for summer shade. As our planet warms, they shade your house and yard keeping air conditioner use at a minimum. Mimosa's are great, the bees and hummingbirds love them, they don't leaf out until June when you need the shade to cool your house keeping the use of air conditioning down.

Put up a Bat Box to keep pesky insects down naturally. Wild Birds Unlimited, Audubon, <http://batsnorthwest.org/>

Don't over clean your gardens, Create habitat, leave something for the bugs, birds and soil.

Like the days of Victory Gardens, Consider a "food forest" when planting or replanting. Visit Beacon Food Forest: <http://beaconfoodforest.org/> Have fun discovering **companion plantings** to keep insects down

Consider a roof or deck garden

Manage your water runoff with in ground or above ground rain gardens - <https://www.12000raingardens.org>

Invest in a rainwater collection tank: <http://tank-depot.com/>

Replace gas powered tools with electric, elbow grease and family assistance

PETS and ANIMALS

Bell your cats to lower their impact on our declining bird population - <https://abcbirds.org/?s=cats> In the lower 48 alone, scientists have calculated that cats kill 1-4 billion first per year, as well as 6.3 billion - 22.3 billion small mammals and hundreds of millions of reptiles and amphibians. (Nat. Geo)

If your cat must go outside, use a bib collar (Cat Bib brand)

Keep bird feeders CLEAN and filled!! Make sure ground under feeders is cleaned up regularly to prevent salmonella. **This applies to birdbaths too.**

Greenest: Flush your dog doo down the toilet so it gets processed properly and doesn't run into our waterways <https://www.thepamperedpup.com/what-to-do-with-dog-poop/> **Do NOT flush cat poo down the toilet!** Unlike dog poo, cat poo cannot be flushed due to toxoplasmosis in the feces that is extremely harmful and is not removed by waste treatment methods! Cat poo has toxins that are detrimental to marine life!

Plant for Pollinators - especially for shoulder seasons, late fall and late winter. With climate change, seasons and migrations are impacted. <https://xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center/pnw>

Transportation - Trains, Planes and Automobiles

Trains are here, more are coming, use them! Great CO2 reduction

Other than not flying, there is no sustainable flight at this point

Book nonstop flights, more legs = more greenhouse gas (take off and landing)

Larger seats, charging your phone and multiple legs have the greatest energy use. **Consider economy seat and vegetarian meals**

Take a bus or train when possible, can have a CO2 reduction of up to 90%

Use FLYGRN to book flights, they provide free carbon offsets for your flights

Book: "Hidden Impact" by Babette Porcelijn, about how we can reduce our CO2 impact

Bottom line: Reduce your air time

Automobiles

Be cognizant of your gas and energy use. Buy a used electric or hybrid vehicle (Prius C, Kia Niro)

Support politicians that support renewable energy

EDUCATION, FUNDRAISERS, ORGANIZATIONS, VOLUNTEER

Educate yourself and others: Attend lectures, join webinars and watch movies about environmental issues. There are any number of selections on National Geographic (Disney+), PBS, Netflix, Amazon, Smithsonian, Curiosity Stream, TED Talks

USE "OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR" Educate our and grandchildren children, the planet we leave them is their future.

Attend fundraisers (online or in person) **and/or donate to organizations** that support the improvement of our environment. Support what interests YOU!

Volunteer locally and/or on vacations - google "volunteer vacations" (post fire tree planting, clean ups, restorations)

AND LASTLY, E-mail your politicians often! This is the fastest, MOST effective method for being heard and has a much greater impact than most of us realize <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/WA>

Postscript:

Children - just a tiny touch on a big subject

Encourage your son or daughter to use cloth diapers, or pay for your grandchild's diaper service, keeping one use diapers out of landfills! (Diaper Stork is who we use in Seattle.)

Use consignment shops for children, also craigslist for those short use items

Feminine (and masculine) products to keep adult diapers, pads and panty liners out of our landfill (Here are some suggestions, I'll let you follow up if interested)

Menstruation: instead of tampons, menstrual cups: Lily Cup, Lunette, Diva Cup; reusable pads like LunaPad; biodegradable bamboo pads and panty liners by Saathi (price shown in Indian Rupees)

Period panties - Knix, Bambody, also good for light incontinence

Incontinence panties - Speax, Confitex (female and male), LivDry

**Bottom line:
DON'T GIVE UP!**

**Despite the daunting news about the state of our world,
stay positive, be proactive, help others...**

**Be a voice, be an example, educate others, reach out to those in other
states, get active, be political, VOTE...
every bit of your effort helps!**
