

Green Tips from CORNelius T. Green



Live the Green Life with CORNelius T. Green! - Sept, 2010

In honor of our eco-friendly playground that was installed in 2008, we try to bring you information on how to help our environment and community go green.

All Washed Up

The average American home washing machine is used 416 times a year. It should pay off economically and environmentally to learn a few tips about using washing machines efficiently:

Electric washers and dryers can consume as much as 25 percent of the electricity used at home, including hot water for the wash • As much as 90 percent of the energy consumed by washing machines heats the water • Reducing water temperature reduces energy consumption. Few fabrics need to be washed in hot water these days. With today's detergents, many lightly soiled clothes can come clean even in cold water. Cold-water washing saves energy • Conventional washing machines use about 15 percent of the water in homes that have them. Each wash cycle uses 32 to 59 gallons, as much as two showers • New-generation resource-efficient clothes washers save energy, water and wastewater, and save you money in the long run.

Simple ways to save energy

Experiment with cold-water wash and rinse cycles. For nearly all clothes, the results will be as good as hot-water wash and warm rinse and you'll cut your energy use by half.

Set the water level in the washing machine to suit the size of the load. You'll save both water and energy.

Try washing on a "delicate" setting instead of "regular." The motor won't work as hard.

Oct., 2010 -

Refuse store bags! When you buy one or two items at a store, carry them out in your hands; or take a reusable bag with you to carry the items you buy. And don't forget to take your old plastic and paper bags back to the grocery store for reuse or recycling. Most grocery stores have convenient paper and plastic recycling bins located near the entrance.

Use durable goods longer. Durable goods are sturdy things like furniture or household appliances that can (and should) be used for many years. You can save money and reduce waste by keeping these items longer and repairing them when they break, rather than buying new ones.

Use durable items rather than disposable items whenever possible. For example, select reusable razors rather than the disposable one that you can only use a few times and then have to throw away.

Say NO to junk mail! Call toll-free numbers in unwanted catalogs and ask to be removed from mailing lists. Whenever possible, use the Internet to obtain (and pay) bills, news, catalogs, stock reports and other information that usually comes to your house in a paper format. Reducing paper reduces waste.

Start a compost or vermiculture to transform your household garbage (food wastes, coffee grounds, etc), into a rich earth-like material that can be added to a garden to help plants grow. Grass, leaves, paper, and some other types of food can naturally decay and turn into compost, and that compost can then be put to good use in your garden. You can also help your family replace lawns with mulched gardens that are just as pretty, but are better for our environment.

Nov 2010 -

CORnelius says:

Recycling reduces the need for landfills, but it also does much more. By recycling, you are conserving natural resources, such as trees, metal ores, minerals, oil, and water. You are also reducing the amount of pollution and greenhouse gases released into the environment, and you are conserving energy. Recycling can be fun and easy, and by recycling, you are helping yourself and your community, and you are setting a good example at the same time.

Motor Oil

- Motor oil never wears out; it just gets dirty. Oil can be recycled, re-refined and used again, reducing our reliance on imported oil.
- Certified Used Motor Oil Collection Centers pay 16¢ a gallon for used motor oil.
- Motor oil that is poured onto the ground or dumped down a storm drain pollutes groundwater and the Bay.
- Used motor oil can be refined into fuel oil. One gallon of oil, when reprocessed, can generate enough energy to meet the electricity needs of your home for half a day.

Other Facts

- Recycling all of your home's waste newsprint, cardboard, glass, and metal can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 850 pounds a year.
- Recycling generates jobs and revenue.
- 75% of our trash can be recycled.

Dec 2010 -

Have a Green Christmas

Look for reuse and recycling opportunities as you replace appliances, electronics and computers.

Discarded cell phones may be donated for Domestic Violence Programs through your cell services provider.

Discarded electronics (computers, copiers, fax machines, printers, monitors) may be donated to a local nonprofit, parent-teacher association or the Louisiana Corporate Recycling Council's computers for schools program, 225.379.3577. Parts that cannot be refurbished can be sent for dismantling.

Appliances may either be donated or sent for recycling.

Outgrown toys and clothes and furniture may be donated to organizations like Salvation Army, Paralyzed Veterans, or Volunteers of America.

Look for ways to avoid creating garbage. Rather than wrapping gifts for the youngsters, hide the presents, and turn Christmas into a treasure hunt. Create your own recyclable wrapping paper by using the Sunday comics, magazines and wrapping paper recovered from previous events.

Practice "pre-cycling" by taking recycling or reuse into consideration when you buy. How do you do this? Simple. Consider an artificial tree that does not have to be discarded or recycled and is not a fire hazard. You can buy a live tree and plant it in your yard after the holidays. If you buy a cut tree, plan your decorations to minimize flocking, tinsel, and decorations that will have to be removed before recycling. Check with your local solid waste officials, recycler, or waste company to determine local requirements. Trees that have lights, ornaments, excessive tinsel, spray or flocking or include stands or plastic bags simply add to the garbage collection.

Jan. 2011 -

New Year's Recycling Resolution Ideas

The start of a new year brings a fresh slate. The years keep falling by, and with them opportunities for change. With any New Year's resolution, you have to keep focused. How many of you go to the gym during the first week of January to find it packed with people who have set their new fitness goals? And how crowded is the gym by the end of January? Does it seem like less and less people actually stick to their resolutions?

Even if your resolution is to finally clean out the garage, you're going to come across some opportunities to recycle. Finally moving to a new house/apartment/condo? Even more chances to donate and recycle! Here are some ideas to get you started on your green New Year's resolutions. To keep recycling resolutions, start with some easy ways to reduce waste.

What About That Stuff You Got For Christmas? Recycle Christmas cards by sending them to a children's charity or use them to make a holiday star or gift tags for next year's presents. Make space for your new stuff- hit up Craigslist, eCycler, and The Freecycle Network to give away or sell your old items. Need something? These sites are also great for good deals on used items.

Around the House and Garden: Use a small compost container on your counter to utilize your kitchen food waste- give fruit and vegetable peelings a second chance to add nutrients to your garden. Buy more organic foods from local farmer's markets.

If you need to buy new, buy Fair Trade goods or items made from recycled materials to help close the recycling loop. Global Exchange and Uncommon Goods are good places to shop around.

Donate any unused paint to a local theater company or to Habitat for Humanity for use in their Restores.

Refuse and Reduce: When you're at the checkout counter, simply say that you don't need a bag because you remembered to bring a reusable one. If you're taking food home to go, say that you do not need a ton of plastic forks or chopsticks- take them out of the bag for the restaurant to provide to someone actually eating on the go.

Feb 2011

EASY RECYCLING TIPS

1. Find a convenient place to collect recyclable items. Most things come from the kitchen, making it a good spot to set up a recycling center.
2. The great thing about recycling is that it lets you put your favorite old containers, bins, or baskets to use. Assign containers for glass, plastic, and aluminum. To avoid messes, choose solid containers for storing items such as glass jars or cans that may have a sticky residue.
3. Take leftover plastic bags back to grocery stores where they are collected and reused to make plastic lumber.
4. Check the bottom of plastic items to identify what type of plastic they are. If the type is not recycled at your local center, consider ways to reuse the container.
5. Save water and time when recycling cans and bottles. You no longer need to rinse them out or remove their labels.
6. Recycle junk mail or reuse it as scratch paper. To opt-out of certain junk-mailing lists, go to opt-out.cdt.org.
7. Newspapers, magazines, and white paper can all be recycled as long as the paper is clean and dry. Plastic wrap, stickers, or rubber bands should be removed, but staples and plastic window envelopes are OK.
8. Recycle worn-out rechargeable batteries like those used in cell phones, computers, or power tools. Go to www.rbrc.org to find a drop-off location in your area.
9. Divvy up recycling duties among family members and sort items on a daily basis.
10. Print out this list of commonly recycled materials. Post it where you recycle for easy access.

March 2011

Question of the Month - How can I find a place to recycle things such as TV's, VCR's, old Monitors, etc?

Try visiting recyclespot.org

Although putting used or unwanted items out for the trash may seem to be the easiest solution, it isn't always the best solution. Many items can be reused even if they are old or in need of repair.

Search recyclespot.org to find places to recycle, donate, sell or buy used items throughout the Kansas City region.

April 2011

When landscaping and gardening, think native species, which are hardier and require less water and weeding. Mulching prevents weeds and conserves water. Water your lawn early in the morning to prevent evaporation while watering. Plants will have time to dry out which prevents mold and mildew.

May 2011 - Spring Cleaning

Before you start any cleaning, you have to decide you are willing and able to let things go.

Use old t-shirts, socks, towels, etc. are great for cleaning.

Before you start dusting let's work on getting rid of a few items. Go room by room, figure out what items you don't really need or use. Put them into two major piles: trash and giveaway/sell. Once you've gone through every room, get rid of the trash and either sell or donate the remaining items left in the pile. [Craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org) and [Freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org) are also great ways to get your old items to someone new.

Take items to a second hand store so that they may be used by others and don't end up in a land fill.

Use non-toxic, natural cleaners. Remember, elbow grease is your friend here. Another tip is use Mother Nature. Open your windows and air out your home. A fresh breeze blowing through can remove odors and keep cleaning smells at a minimum.

Start a Garden! Think of the healthy benefits that growing your own food creates!

Get yourself a few indoor plants. Houseplants have been proven to improve indoor air quality. A couple of well chosen houseplants and your Spring cleaning freshness will last a lot longer.

June - 2011 - End of the Year

Adopt-A-Highway

The MO Adopt-A-Highway program began in 1987. More than 4,000 groups and 40,000 volunteers in the program are focused on making Missouri's roadsides cleaner and more attractive for our residents and visitors. Adopter groups include commercial and private enterprises, civic and non-profit organizations, families and individuals.

Adopters perform about \$1 million a year in litter cleanup and beautification efforts. Every area kept free of litter by adopters allows MoDOT to devote resources to other much-needed tasks.

Adopters now have four options: Pick up litter, mow, beautify the roadside through landscaping or grow native wildflowers and grasses on the roadsides. MoDOT provides adopters with a certificate of appreciation, a safety training video, safety materials, and a sign with the group's name posted on each end of the adopted highway section. MoDOT will provide trash bags and will also pick up and dispose of the bags of collected litter.

Grow Native Adoption Option: Groups can adopt a section of right of way solely for roadside native wildflowers and grasses. This option requires a group to plant Missouri native wildflowers on the roadside of their selected section and maintain their plantings. The plants used must be native to Missouri.

To find out what the requirements are or for more information call 888-ASK MODOT (275-6636) & ask for the Adopt-A-Highway coordinator or email aah@modot.mo.gov.

Sept - 2011

Being healthy and happy is a part of being green! Grandview Elementary is introducing the "Active & Healthy" program. A new program made possible through a grant that was awarded last spring. It will change the way kids stay active at recess, while still incorporating a ton of fun! The program creates activity zones, where students can choose from a number of activities. The zones are designed to provide more physical activity during recess. There will also be short classroom activities implemented as well. The program is currently slated to begin in October. Stay tuned for additional information.

Oct - 2011

Things Kids Can Do To Go Green and Reduce Environmental Impact

When low on supplies, ask mom for green school supplies. Going back to school and going green can go hand in hand! Kids can get green school supplies that will make a difference at prices that will make mom happy. Your green school supplies also provide an opportunity to share your thoughts on the environment with other students and teachers who notice that they are a little different.

Walk, carpool, or take the bus to school. Less carbon emissions and less smog comes from less burned fuel. We have to use gasoline to run most of today's cars - so, let's use as little of it as we can! When you share a ride with others, it means fewer people have to use gas, and when you walk or bike there is no fuel burned at all...except maybe your breakfast ;-)

Turn off the water while showering and brushing teeth. Most people let the water run while soaping up or brushing, but that wastes water. Run the water to get your towel and body or toothbrush wet, and then wash or brush with the water off. It saves water AND time because you end up focusing on getting clean and getting out of there!

Turn off lights and appliances/electronics when not in use. Kids who aren't environmentally conscious don't usually think about turning off lights and appliances because kids in general aren't cost conscious. That means kids waste stuff. (Don't worry - your parents did it when they were kids, too.) Kids who reduce, reuse, and recycle know that wastefulness is not good, and one thing they do not waste is energy. Although cleaner energy is becoming more common, no energy should be wasted. When you're not using lights or appliances/electronics (TV, computer, video games, etc.) TURN THEM OFF! Let mom and dad unplug them from the outlets as they see fit for safety.

If parents recycle, allow kids to sort. The family that recycles together stays together! If mom and dad recycle, ask them if you can sort if you already don't. Sometimes parents don't realize how much you care. Going green is a lifestyle, so get in on the day-to-day activities by doing your part.

Nov. 2011

Last month we looked at things kids can do to help with the green movement, here are some more tips for kids to try...

Hand-wash dishes or only run the dishwasher for full loads. Most people don't realize it, but dishwashers use considerably more water to wash a load of dishes than the traditional sink method does. A LOT MORE. So, to conserve water, it's best not to use the dishwasher at all. If you do, use eco-friendly dishwashing detergent and only run the washer when it is completely full. If it's not full or if you can, choose to wash dishes in the sink instead, of course, with eco-friendly dishwashing liquid.

Reduce waste by curbing use of disposables. It's easy to use throwaway cups, plates, wrappers, and utensils, but it only creates more waste for landfills. Also, disposable paper products like facial and bathroom tissue and paper towels and napkins also end up in the trash. We can save more trees by using less paper products, and we can keep more plastics and styrofoam out of the landfills by using less throwaway utensils and containers. Also, eating less often at fast-food restaurants cuts down on your usage of these items, too.

When you have to use them, use less. When you don't have to use them, DON'T.

Ease up on the video games. Playing video games on both computers and systems uses a LOT of energy! That's why your system or computer feels hot afterwards! You can save on energy by simply doing homework or going outside to play instead of posting up in front of the TV or computer screen. This activity uses more electricity than regular TV or computer usage, so it should be kept to a minimum.

Green Christmas - Dec. 2011

No time of the year is more emotional than the holiday season, whether you're bursting with the joy of baking and caroling or overwhelmed with the stress of shopping and wrapping. But even with all those other factors weighing on your mind, it's possible to put a green spin on your holidays; simple tips and easy substitutions mean you can come through this season of indulgence without leaving a massive carbon footprint.

Start with your gift list, where going green can mean anything from simply buying fewer gifts. Look for recycled paper goods, like cards and wrapping, or get creative and make your own versions of both. Green your Christmas dinner with seasonal, local ingredients and organic turkeys. Then look for earth friendly greens for your home by choosing fresh wreaths and pesticide-free trees trimmed with energy-slashing LED lights. Put the money you saved on your electric bill toward a donation to environmental charities and let your greenbacks support green projects.

---source: planetgreen.discovery.com

Christmas is associated with an abundance of food and gifts. Many gifts are not truly appreciated by the receiver (when last did you wear that purple and orange sweater that great-aunt Maude gave you)? So often, gifts are given merely for the sake of giving, and little thought goes into giving something that will be appreciated or even made use of. This is a tremendous waste of resources. Gas used in traveling to stores to buy gifts results in higher CO₂ emissions; landfills overflow with unwanted items; etc.

Consider giving a gift certificate or gift that will give back to the local community.

Avoid wrapping paper by using reusable bags that the recipient can make use of at a later stage. Metallic gift wrap should be avoided, as it is difficult to recycle. Besides, it's what's inside the gift that counts, not the wrapping. If you choose to forego wrapping gifts, they can be hidden, and a treasure hunt or gift hunt can be played instead.

Consider doing a toy swap with neighbors a few days before Christmas. Kids don't care if the toy is new or used. It will be new to them, which is what is important. Should batteries be needed for gifts, consider giving rechargeable batteries with a charger along with the gift.

Avoid using packing peanuts to package gifts, as these are toxic to the environment. Rather use recycled paper to stuff inside boxes.

---source: naturalnews.com

Additionally, save back those bows and ribbons and gift tags for reuse next year. Another idea to try is reusing the Sunday Comics section as wrapping paper for a fun and colorful wrap.

Feb. 2012

Winter check list:

- Compost yard waste.
- Service gas-powered lawn equipment.
- When planning your spring garden, design for low water use.
- Check roof gutters and downspouts.
- Avoid unnecessary engine idling
- Burn only dry wood.
- Never use burn barrels.
- In winter cleaning, use least-hazardous products.

March 2012

Get into the spring groove with these eco friendly tips

Spring brings many things: budding flowers, April showers, birds chirping and mops mopping. Yes, besides the new signs of life popping up all around you, spring also brings upon the ritual of spring cleaning. It's a dirty task, but somebody has to do it, or the mess of the last few winter months will continue to cultivate in your home. Instead of making a bigger mess this spring, make a few smaller changes that will be great for your home and green for the environment. Here are 5 tips that you can follow to have an eco friendly spring cleaning experience:

1. V is for vendetta and vinegar - Vinegar wages a personal vendetta against germs in your house this spring! This acidic liquid can be added to baking soda to make a natural drain cleaner, and it can be added with salt to make a pasty chrome sink cleaner. Want to learn other eco-friendly uses for vinegar? Check out the website below.
2. Become friends with your windows - This means to release them from the bonds of locks and to open them up. Let them enjoy the cool spring air as it comes into your home, and give them a good, clean scrubbing. Your windows will look great and you'll be reducing your energy bill.
3. Switch from paper to cloth - Reduce your household paper waste consumption by using cloth dish rags or pieces of old clothing to wipe counters and other surfaces. Instead of using wads of paper towels, you can use the rags to clean what you need to. Then the rags can be washed and reused over again. Click on the picture to access a cool blog post on how to make cleaning rags from old clothes.
4. Sweep in sustainable style - Spring brings pollen, buds, loose dirt and other wonders from nature that get tracked into your home and on your porch or deck. Instead of using a vacuum and consuming energy, grab a green broom that will sweep away the mess! Try a Dinuba Broom, which is made with 100% recycled plastic bristles and sustainable wood.
5. Get rid of clutter with recycled storage units - Organization plays a big role in spring cleaning, especially inside your home. You can organize what's inside your home (after you've cleaned and de-cluttered it) with a recycled storage unit.

May 2012

When landscaping and gardening, think native species, which are hardier and require less water and weeding. Mulching prevents weeds and conserves water. Water your lawn early in the morning to prevent evaporation while watering. Plants will have time to dry out which prevents mold and mildew.

Aug./Sept. 2012

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