



Green Living

It hasn't always been easy to be green, but, in some ways it is getting easier, as the marketplace and local governments catch up to consumer/citizen calls for environmentally responsible options. At the same time, being green is also becoming a more involved undertaking, as the specific impacts of increasing numbers of products and activities are measured and new alternatives emerge. Take a quick run through the suggestions below. See how many actions you have already taken to help and find a few more environmentally friendly choices that you might want to make.

Reading Habits and Mail

- Use local libraries more and share books and subscriptions among friends and colleagues.
- Contact publishers of the magazines and newsletters you read and ask them to use forest-friendly paper if they do not already do so.
- Send a "Stop Junk Mail" letter to get off some of the main consumer mailing lists. Send a postcard or letter that includes your name, home address, and signature to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512, or register online at www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist
- Call 888-567-8688 to stop getting most credit card junk mail.
- When you fill out a form or place an order, always write, "Do not rent or exchange my name" so that your ad-

dress will not be shared.

- Avoid filling out product warranty cards; warranties are valid whether or not you return a card. Avoid entering contests, as they are primarily a means to gather names for promotional purposes.
- Contact the organizations, magazines, and companies that you want to hear from and ask them not to share your name.

Personal Care and Clothing

- Avoid fabrics that are wood-based, such as rayon, acetate, and triacetate. Opt for organic cotton, linen, or hemp. Find companies that sell forest-friendly clothing through Co-op America's Green Pages: www.green-pages.org.
- Choose personal care products with a minimum of packaging and (preferably) a seal certifying that they have not been tested on animals. For a shopping guide to personal care products and cosmetics not tested on animals, go to www.leapingbunny.org, or look for Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics' (CCIC) "leaping bunny" logo on products in stores, catalogues, and online.

Home and Food

- Free up space in your home without adding to your local landfill by donating unwanted items that are still usable. www.freecycle.org is a grassroots movement for giving and getting

things free, locally, via free postings.

- Buy foods locally grown and produced. www.localharvest.org
- If you eat animal-based foods, buy those labeled with the "Certified Humane Raised and Handled" logo, indicating that Humane Farm Animal Care certifies that the product, "Meets the Humane Farm Animal Care Program standards, which include nutritious diet without antibiotics or hormones, animals raised with shelter, resting areas, sufficient space and the ability to engage in natural behavior." www.certifiedhumane.com/
- Switch to reusable shopping bags. www.reusablebags.com
- Entertain with tree-free, biodegradable, compostable tableware when you cannot use washable tableware. www.sinlessbuying.com
- Purchase cabinets, bookcases, or other major wood products second-hand when possible, and when purchasing new, look for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label to ensure that the product meets high environmental and ethical standards. Find suppliers of these products at www.certifiedwood.org
- Reduce the paper used in your financial transactions by using direct deposit, automatic bill paying, and online banking. Use recycled paper checks; contact Message! Products www.messageproducts.com.
- Use fabric napkins, cloth towels and rags, and handkerchiefs whenever possible, rather than paper napkins, paper towels, and tissues. Use toilet tissue with recycled content.
- Replace disposable batteries with rechargeable batteries, and replace standard light bulbs with long-life bulbs. www.realgoods.com
- As with personal care products, for a

shopping guide to household products not tested on animals, go to www.leapingbunny.org, or look for Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics' (CCIC) "leaping bunny" logo on products in stores, catalogues, and online.

Office Practices

- Ask your local office supply store and copy shop to stock tree-free or recycled paper with at least 50% post-consumer waste. www.conservatree.com or www.rethinkpaper.org
- Contact the National Waste Prevention Coalition's Business Junk Mail Reduction Campaign to help stop junk mail at work. www.metrokc.gov/nwpc
- Donate equipment you are replacing or no longer use if it is still in working order. Dispose of non-working items according to local guidelines for safety.

Gifts and Greetings

- Give non-material gifts, such as a donation to a charitable organization in someone's name, a gift of your time or talent, or tickets to an event. Alternative Gifts International offers charitable options: www.altgifts.org
- Give gifts that have more thought and meaning and less material and cost.
- Use greeting cards with 100% recycled fiber with at least 15% post-consumer content, made by Recycled Paper Greetings. Find a retailer near you: www.recycledpapergreetings.com
- Send electronic greeting cards and help environmental organizations at the same time via www.care2.com
- Reuse wrapping paper or put gifts in reusable bags or boxes. Use fabric, magazines, or calendars to wrap gifts. Or, try plantable, seeded wrapping paper, which is made with recycled cotton and other recycled materials and embedded with flower seeds. When the paper is torn and planted, the seeds bloom into wildflowers that

attract butterflies. www.plantablepaper.com

Print and Web Resources

Real Goods Solar Living Sourcebook, 12th Edition, the ultimate source on renewable energy for those who want to harvest sunlight, wind, or falling water to power your current home or one you plan to build. \$35. Phone 800-869-3446 or visit www.gaiam.com.

National Green Pages, 2005, highlights 2,000 businesses, co-ops, and organizations to help meet your needs for products in a humane, sustainable way. \$7.95. phone 315-474-1132.

The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices, by Warren Leon and Michael Brower, provides concrete advice for consumer decisions that have the biggest impact on the environment, particularly transportation, food, and household operations. Union of Concerned Scientists, www.ucsusa.org

New American Dream provides a thorough web-linked overview of practical actions you can take to reduce your toll on the planet: www.newdream.org

Union of Concerned Scientists provides credible information on food, vehicles, energy, the environment, and more: www.ucsusa.org

Green Pages Online enables you to search for environmentally responsible businesses in all regions and product categories: www.greenpages.org/

WoodWise offers the *WoodWise Consumer Guide*, an online guide to practical ways of being a conscientious steward of wood and paper: www.woodwise.org 🌿

Send us your suggestions for books, reports and web sites that WT readers might like!

Wildlife Tracks Mission and Goals: Over 5,000 wildlife and habitat protection organizations nationwide are working to stop the rapid disappearance of wildlife and the destruction of their habitat. *Wildlife Tracks* combines the power of information, the power of networking and the power of people to strengthen local, state and national grassroots movements to preserve and restore wildlife and the ecosystems they need for their survival.

Goals:

- To expedite the exchange of experience and information between wildlife and habitat organizations, while increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their efforts.
- To empower the grassroots by sharing the successful efforts to preserve wildlife and ecosystems and to inspire them to expand their vision and strategy to achieve long-term solutions.
- To assist in building responsible and credible organizations by providing information and guidance.

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