

There are a lot of people doing little things that are making a big impact on the health of our planet. Here are a few interesting eco-bites.

Researchers at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) estimated that if people always used the revolving door at just one campus building, the warm or cool indoor air saved would prevent the release of 14.6 tons of carbon dioxide per year. This is equivalent to heating five single-family homes for one year.

According to the Car Care Council (www.carcare.org), 147 million gallons of gas vaporizes into the air each year due to loose, damaged or missing gas caps. Check yours today.

The Daily Grist reported that there was a big drop in our electricity use last year. "U.S. electricity consumption, especially household consumption, has typically grown by one to two percent a year. But in 2008 in markets from Colorado to Minnesota, household energy use dropped anywhere from three to nine percent." Utility companies are rethinking their business plans.

Those of us who have shunned buying water by the bottle and have filtered our own water now have an option to recycle those filters. Beginning early this year Brita (owned by Clorox) will partner with Whole Foods to collect these filters. The plastic container will be remade into recycled toothbrushes while the activated carbon will be regenerated for alternative use or converted into energy. Full details will soon be available at www.brita.com.

If you use your wood burning fireplace, you may want to sign up for Spare the Air Alerts. The Bay Area Air District will send you an email or call you on days that burning wood would affect our air quality. Sign up at www.sparetheair.org or call 1 800 430-1515. They also issue Summer alerts for high pollution days.

Green tip: Keep the outdoors outside

Up to two-thirds of the dust in houses is tracked in on shoes. The dust contains everything from soil and pesticides to abrasive sand, mold, road grime and bacteria. Once these particulates are inside the home, they can be difficult to get rid of. By using a door mat or leaving shoes by the door, you can minimize the amount of contaminants tracked inside and will have a cleaner home with fewer pollutants and less exposure to potential health hazards.

Confidential Paper Shredding

The City of Vallejo is sponsoring a paper shredding event on Saturday, January 17 at VALCORE Recycling from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will be charge of \$5 per twenty pounds (maximum: 100 pounds).

VALCORE Recycling Board Member Jane Bogner's "A Sorted Affair" is published every other week in the Times-Herald. For recycling information call VALCORE Recycling at 645-8258 or visit www.VALCORErecycling.org.

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