

The California Academy of Sciences is on the cutting edge of saving the planet and they have tons of green information to share. Here are excerpts from their "Sustainability Made Simple. Every day choices you can make to protect the planet's future."

Download a copy and keep it on your desktop as a handy reminder (www.calacademy.org/sustainable_future).

TRANSPORTATION

Choosing Your Mode of travel

1. Walk or ride your bike for short trips.
2. Use public transportation or car pool.
3. Consider purchasing a fuel-efficient or hybrid compact car.

Driving Habits

- 1 Conserve gas by observing the speed limit.
- 2 Turn off your engine rather than idling when you are still for more than one minute.

Heading Out of Town

- 1 Teleconference instead of making a business trip.
- 2 Take the train or bus instead of flying or driving.

ON THE MENU

Meat and Dairy

Industrial farming of livestock is very energy-intensive and is responsible for more global warming emissions than the entire transportation industry.

- 1 Look for free-range, grass-fed beef and organic dairy products.
- 2 Eat less beef by substituting chicken, seafood, and vegetarian meals.

Shopping

- 1 Cut down on processed foods.
- 2 Purchase local, seasonal, and organic foods.
- 3 Subscribe to a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program (www.localharvest.org/csa/)

Eating Out

- 1 Choose local restaurants over chains. They are more likely to operate sustainably.
- 2 Patronize local restaurants that buy local, seasonal and organic ingredients.
- 3 Bring your own reusable take-out containers from home.

AT HOME

Energy

- 1 Enroll in a green power program from your utility provider.
- 2 Have solar panels or wind power installed.

Lighting

- 1 Turn off all unnecessary lights.
- 2 Switch to compact fluorescents (CFLs). Dispose these CFLs at your hazardous waste facility because they contain mercury.
- 3 Install motion sensor lights.

Home Heating and Cooling

- 1 Install a programmable thermostat.
- 2 Keep your thermostat at 78° F in the summer and 65° F in the winter.
- 2 Program it for lower temperatures at night or when you are away.

Insulation

- 1 Replace single-paned windows with double-paned models.
- 2 Install modern, effective insulation in your home.

Electronics and Appliances

- 1 Turn off all electronics when not in use.
- 2 Unplug or shut off electronics using power strips.
- 3 Purchase Energy Star appliances.

Water Conservation

- 1 Reduce the amount you water your lawn and gardens. Water in the evenings or early mornings.
- 2 Install low-flow toilets or place jugs filled with water in your toilet tanks.
- 3 Install low-flow faucets and shower heads, reducing your water use by up to 50 percent.

Hot Water Conservation

- 1 Take shorter showers. Capture the cold water while you are waiting for the hot water. Use this for your plants.

- 2 Wash your clothes in warm or cold water only.

- 3 Keep your hot water heater to 120° F and wrap it in a thermal blanket.

ZERO Waste Purchasing

- 1 Purchase products with less packaging and recycle everything that you can. Compost food waste.
- 2 Always shop with your reusable bags.
- 2 Buy eco-friendly products.
- 4 Cut down on unnecessary purchases. Donate or sell unneeded items and buy used items. Freecycle!

Thank you, Tina Fowler for sharing this with my readers.

Kudos for the little things that add up. Raley's supermarkets has cut their use of cash register paper in half by printing the list of your purchases on both sides. I am totally impressed.

Earth Day celebrations

Vallejo will celebrate on Saturday April 18 from 9:00a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Vallejo's Farmers' Market in downtown Vallejo. Go to www.VALCOREcycle.org to donate, register for a free table or to volunteer.

Napa and Fairfield will hold events on Saturday April 25. Check www.recycle-guide.com for updates.

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.VALCOREcycling.org.

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