

TEN THINGS TO DO NOW TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT AND SAVE YOU MONEY

- 1. Change a Light Bulb.** Choose a frequently used light fixture in your house. Remove a 60-watt incandescent bulb and replace it with a 13-watt CFL with the Energy Star label to get nearly the same amount of lumens. You will save yourself \$38.00 in electricity costs over the life of the bulb and the burning of 500 pounds of coal to provide the electricity. If every American household replaced one incandescent bulb with a CFL, the prevented greenhouse gases would be equivalent to the annual emissions of nearly 800,000 cars.
- 2. Carry Your Own Shopping Bag.** Plastic bags are handed out at the speed of one million per minute. Most are not recycled. The petroleum used to make 18 plastic bags could drive a car for one mile. Most individuals use more than 200 bags annually. With 301-million people in the U.S. the amount of oil we consume in plastic bags is enough to drive over 3 billion miles. What a waste! Remember to take a tote bag with you when you buy groceries this week.
- 3. Recycle!** Take recyclables, particularly corrugated cardboard, paper and metals to the County Collection Center. The County is paid for the recycled materials. Money earned from recyclables can be used for other important county services, such as public education. Read the new VPPSA pamphlets on recycling for other items.
- 4. Change the Thermostat.** In winter turn down the thermostat a few degrees and put on a sweater. In summer turn it up and keep the air circulating with fans. For the long-term, install a programmable thermostat. For every two degrees you change your thermostat you save 4% on your bills and reduce emissions accordingly.
- 5. Audit Your House.** A super-efficient house can cut your bills and emissions by 66%. The average home in the U.S. creates twice the CO₂ of a car over the course of a year—about 22,000 pounds. Do you have sufficient insulation? How about the weather-proof seal around your windows? Is your old water heater wrapped? Do you need to plant a deciduous tree for a summer sun block?
- 6. Eat Local.** To reach your plate, a typical meal from the super market travels 22,000 miles. Purchase as much locally grown food as you can. Support your Mathews Farmers' Market. Grow your own. Share with the neighbors. A California lettuce shipped to the East Coast devours 40 times its caloric value in fossil fuel to produce and ship. We can do better!
- 7. Eat Less Meat.** One pound of meat requires eight times the energy to produce as one pound of vegetable protein. A wholesome diet of local vegetables, fruits and whole grains is better for the environment and better for you. As a start, cut out one meat meal a week.
- 8. Reduce Lawn Size.** Mowing your lawn for one hour with a gasoline riding mower produces emissions worse than driving 34 miles in a car. Lawns have little value other than holding the soil over a septic tank drain field. Turn that unnecessary lawn area into ground covers and native perennials, bushes and trees. Change your perception of a garden. Go native and help the wildlife. Plant a raised bed vegetable garden in a spot where you once grew grass! Plan now to make one small change this spring.
- 9. Catch the Water From Your Roof.** Impervious surfaces—roads, concrete walks, roofs-- are growing exponentially. That means rain water is washing across surfaces and carrying pollutants into the Bay (NPS or Non-Point Source Pollution). Make room on your property to catch rain water and allow it to soak into the ground. Collect water from your roof in a rain barrel or a rain garden. Attend one of the rain barrel making workshops this spring. Ask at the Visitors' Center for the dates.
- 10. Compost.** Nature recycles. Join her. Carry your coffee grounds, egg shells, banana peels and vegetable trimmings to a compost area in your yard. The worms will thank you. Our grandfathers did it. So can we. Design a small compost area.

SOME WEBSITES FOR INFORMATION ON GREEN LIVING

LIGHT BULBS www.energystar.gov Energy Star is the EPA's designation of efficiency; Note on CFLs with mercury: Virginia is still working on the recovery system. See www.lamprecycle.org for latest list of collection services by lighting companies. IKEA stores handle CFL collection. In the meantime, for local disposal, wrap and dispose of bulbs in regular trash.

PLASTIC BAGS www.enviroliteracy.org www.planetark.org

RECYCLE INFORMATION www.vppsa.org www.coopameric.org www.earth911.org ,
www.deq.virginia.gov

ELECTRICITY USAGE IN VIRGINIA Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy – includes maps of wind resources in Virginia www.dmme.virginia.gov , Dominion Virginia Power www.dom.com www.eia.doe.gov www.eesi.org (renewable energy fact sheets) www.eere.energy.gov/consumers/tips/ www.energysavers.gov

WIND POWER www.windpowerexpo.org

SOLAR POWER www.lowimpactliving.com ,

METHANE POWER [www.jgpress.com/archives/ free/000570.html](http://www.jgpress.com/archives/free/000570.html)

TIDAL ENERGY www.sustainablehawaii.com www.wnyc.org www.freepatentsonline.com

GREEN BUILDING, LEED designation www.ncgreenbuilding.org www.usgbc.org (LEED rating system) www.buildinggreen.com www.thegreenhomeguide.org

RAIN GARDENS www.dof.virginia.gov (search rain gardens) www.ext.vt.edu (Educational Programs & Resources; Natural Resources & Environmental Management; Urban Water Quality; Management: Rain Garden Plants www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/natvripa.pdf Complete listing of plants

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife www.audubon.org

NATIVE PLANTINGS www.wildflower.org/collections www.VNPS.org

RAIN BARRELS www.longwood.edu/cleanva/rainbarrels.htm

CARBON OFFSETS www.carbonfund.org www.nativeenergy.com www.carbonneutral.com

CARBON FOOTPRINT www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html

FUEL ECONOMY www.fueleconomy.gov

COMPOST www.compostguide.com

OTHERS www.e3living.com www.grist.org www.vanaturally.com