

April 2020 – An Earth Day Celebration



This list is compiled and shared with you by the *Social and Environmental Justice* team at Federated Church, Chagrin Falls. We invite you to find as many ways as you can to help the environment and appreciate/cherish God's world.

It is a gift that we need to take care of!

100 things you can do to become more Environmentally Friendly!

Take steps to conserve and reuse resources. Start small and do your part by changing some daily habits. Then, once you've made your own lifestyle more environmentally conscious, engage in other activities to help others do the same! Donate your used goods, don't buy what you don't need.

Most of all, don't worry if you don't achieve all of your goals. Remember, each effort you take contributes to waste reduction and sustainability.

IN YOUR HOME:

- Stop running water while brushing your teeth.
- Don't keep the water running while doing dishes.
- Run the dishwasher only when you have a full load.
- Use a washable ceramic cup in the bathroom instead of paper cups.
- Limit showers to 5 minutes or only fill the tub $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ full to bathe.
- Check for and fix water leaks.
- Use cold water for wash/rinse cycles whenever appropriate.
- Wash and dry full loads.
- Set your water heater to a maximum of 120° degrees.

- Use a clothesline to dry laundry if permissible in your area.
- Use paper products made of 80-100% recycled paper (or maximize post consumer content if available).
- Install low flow plumbing fixtures.
- Look for cleaning products that are environmentally friendly or use vinegar, baking soda, etc. to make your own.
- Use washable cloth napkins instead of paper.
- Use washable plates and flatware instead of disposables.
- Put leftovers in reusable containers, not single use plastic bags.
- Avoid plastic wrap; try using beeswax wrap.
- Make sure you actually eat those leftovers.
- Cut down on consumption of processed foods.
- Don't buy individual servings of food.
- Carry your lunch in a reusable bag.
- Decline plastic straws - carry your own reusable one.
- Use dish cloth for kitchen clean-ups, not paper towels.
- Turn off lights when you leave a room.
- Use a power strip for TV, computer, radio so they can be completely turned off easily.
- Change to LED bulbs and dispose of them properly (they contain electronics). LED bulbs cost more initially but use considerably less energy and last longer than other bulbs.
- Dispose of CFL bulbs properly (Home Depot). They contain mercury and should not be placed into trash.
- Use low VOC (volatile organic carbon) water based paint, stains and finishes.
- Paint with brushes and rollers instead of sprayers to minimize harmful emissions.
- Replace old, drafty windows or install storm windows.
- Insulate your home.
- Adjust temperature settings in your home. Heating to 60 - 65° in winter, air conditioning to 78° in summer.
- Consider opening windows and/or using a fan in summer.
- During winter, add an extra layer of clothing and perhaps an extra blanket.
- If you use a fireplace or wood stove, use seasoned, dry firewood. It burns cleaner than green wood.

- Recycle household items to minimize the amount of trash you produce. Make sure to check the recycling rules and regulations in your community.
- Freeze food before it goes bad.
- Freeze the peels of your onions, carrots, garlic, and celery ends to make a vegetable stock that you can use.
- Turn old t-shirts into “new” cleaning rags.
- Open blinds and/or curtains to let in more natural light.
- Use bath water (gray water) to water plants.
- Opt for bar soap instead of body wash.
- Implement a “one-in, one-out” rule to replace products once they’re consumed.
- Cut tubes open to get all of the product out.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOME:

- Collect rainwater in a rain barrel for watering plants.
- Get outside daily for sunshine and fresh air.
- Landscape with native plants.
- Pick up litter when you see it and dispose of it or recycle it properly.
- Follow your community recycling rules to ensure maximum benefits. Don’t be a “wish-cycler.”
- Carry and use reusable water bottles.
- Use reusable cups at local coffee houses.
- Avoid buying/using single use plastic water bottles.
- Take reusable bags into stores to carry out your purchased goods.
- Use reusable produce bags for bulk fruits and vegetables. **ADDED BONUS** - produce can then be washed/rinsed in the bags.
- Buy in bulk when possible to reduce the amount of packaging. About 30% of what we discard in packaging material.
- Never pour anything into storm sewers.
- Have your septic system pumped and inspected regularly.
- Use electric lawn mowers and yard tools instead of gasoline.
- Borrow or rent items you only need for brief or occasional use.
- Wash your car on the lawn instead of the driveway to trap contaminants from entering stormwater systems **OR** use a commercial car wash facility.
- Keep the tires on your car properly inflated.

- Maintain your car engine for maximum fuel efficiency.
- Check to see if you can work from home a day or two a week to reduce emissions.
- Purchase and use rechargeable batteries.
- Use traps for pests instead of poisons/pesticides.
- Dispose of household hazardous waste properly. Check on community waste collections or consult your county solid waste management district.
- Make sure to dispose of or recycle electronic waste properly. Again, check with your community.
- Minimize outdoor lighting.
- Use “shine down” fixtures and/or motion sensors to improve dark skies.

FOR THE GREATER GOOD:

- Try to change your eating habits to include less meat and dairy. Domestic meat and dairy production requires vast amounts of natural resources.
- Observe Meatless Mondays (www.meatlessmonday.com/favorite-recipes).
- Look for products from more sustainable sources such as local farms, farmer’s markets or CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture).
- Buy locally produced food/eat with the season.
- Plant a tree.
- Plant a garden.
- Learn to compost.
- Start or make use of a COMMUNITY GARDEN.
- Brew coffee in a regular pot or French press instead of using disposable pods. Also, use a reusable filter instead of paper ones.
- If you have a coffee maker that uses pods, use refillable pods.
- Use a mug or reusable cup instead of paper.
- Opt for paperless billing.
- Print documents as little as possible.
- Travel wisely by walking or biking when close to home.
- Combine errands into one trip instead of multiple trips.
- Carpool or commute to work/school.
- Utilize public transportation whenever possible.
- Shop for items that can be repaired or mended.
- Use local repair shops.

- Consider reading newspapers, magazines online.
- Consider purchasing a hybrid or electric car for your next vehicle.
- Reduce idling time to no more than 30 seconds.
- Use electronic correspondence instead of paper when feasible.
- Contact your local officials and ask them to support environmental conservation and renewable energy AND support policies that hold companies accountable for environmental promises.
- If you can; donate money to an environmental cause.
- Join an organization that represents a cause that you are passionate about and contribute by volunteering.
- Support companies with ethical practices.
- Consider buying clothes or household items from thrift stores or consignment shops OR Trinkets and Treasures!
- Donate your used household items so that they can be reused by others.
- Check with the UCC website for additional information (subscribe to *The Pollinator*) - <https://www.ucc.org/pollinator>.
- FINALLY, unplug at least once a day to enjoy nature and the environment around you.