

8

EASY TIPS TO GREEN YOUR LIFE

*From the Adas Israel
Green Committee*

Caring for the environment is a deeply Jewish value. Our sacred texts tell us that we are part of God's Creation and that we have a central role in caring for this planet—a planet that sustains billions of human beings and millions of species, all part of the sacred web of life on Earth. Among many Jewish teachings related to the Earth's resources, our tradition teaches the mitzvot of bal tashchit—not to waste, of tzaar baalei hayim—concern for the suffering of all living things, and of shmita—allowing the earth to rest and restore its productivity. So, what can you do to make your life greener?

1 SWITCH TO CFL BULBS

Compact fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs last up to seven years, produce about 75 percent less heat, and use only a third of the energy of regular light bulbs. If every home in America changed just one of its most frequently used light bulbs to a CFL, we would save \$600 million in energy costs and enough energy to light more than 3 million homes.

2 DONATE/RECYCLE STUFF YOU DON'T USE

Don't throw out things that can be reused or recycled. Bring your cell phones to Adas Israel, where they will be donated to 'Secure the Call.' Donate clothes you don't wear anymore to a charity. Donate your glasses to the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington. Donate old computer equipment to a charity or, if it isn't usable, recycle it through one of the local government recycling programs. It is amazing how much you can cut down on the trash that fills up those containers each week if you are thoughtful about it.

3 PAY ATTENTION TO PAPER: USE LESS AND BUY RECYCLED PAPER

Don't print out every memo or email you receive. Use two sided copying when possible. Reuse used paper for note taking or drafts or your child's art projects. And, don't forget to recycle that paper when you are done with it! Buy recycled paper that has at least 30 percent post consumer waste (the 100% recycled paper is even better) and that hasn't been bleached with chlorine.

4 USE REUSABLE GROCERY BAGS

Did you know that it takes one 15-to-20-year-old tree to make enough paper for only 700 grocery bags? Plastic bags are not biodegradable; San Francisco has banned them from grocery stores and pharmacies! Bring cloth bags with you every time you shop.

5 CHECK YOUR CAR'S TIRE INFLATION

This may not seem important, but under inflated tires waste up to five percent of a car's fuel. It is estimated that 50 to 80 percent of tires are under inflated. If we all checked our tires regularly, we could save up to two billion gallons of gas each year.

6 STOP THE JUNK MAIL

Millions of trees and billions of gallons of water are used each year to create junk mail and catalogs, most of which are not recycled. To stop the junk mail, go to the website of the Direct Marketing Association, www.dmchoice.org. You can stop catalogs by calling the company or registering at www.catalogchoice.org.

7 CUT DOWN ON ELECTRICITY USE

Unplug electronics when not in use. This includes your iPod and cell phone chargers. Skip the screen-saver. Turn off your computer and monitor when you aren't using them. Today's computers are made to handle 40,000 on/off cycles, so you don't hurt them by turning them off. The power used to boot up a computer is generally less than the energy used when it is left on for over three minutes. Better yet, install software that will do it automatically. Go to www.localcooling.com or look for EZ Wizard on the EPA website and download the software for free. Turn off lights when you leave the room. Install programmable thermostats. You will be protecting the environment and saving money at the same time!

8 BUY ENERGY STAR

The EPA has set standards for products in over 50 categories that are eligible for the Energy Star label. This includes washers, computers, heaters and a whole lot more. When you buy Energy Star rated equipment you will use less energy, save money and protect the environment. Go to www.energystar.gov to get information on specific products.