



# Eco-Tips

*There are many ways to take action on protecting and preserving our natural environment. It is important to recognize that every effort counts, big or small. Getting involved is the first step towards protecting the diversity of life on Earth. Many of the tips below will help protect our environment and save you money too!*



## Earth:

- Trees are essential to the planet and to humans. Plant a tree and reap the many benefits!
- Get a green bin and start collecting organic waste.
- Avoid waste by using reusable cloths and rags instead of paper towels to clean.
- Instead of using chemicals and paper towels to wash your windows, try 125 ml vinegar (1/2 cup) and 1L water (4 cups) and a squeegee.
- If space is limited, try growing organic vegetables in containers or window boxes.
- Have a garage sale to help recycle your unwanted items. Someone's trash is another's treasure.
- Just because you throw something away doesn't mean that it's gone for good. You have only moved it to a landfill. So instead of throwing something in the garbage, recycle it! Old homework papers, cardboard and newspapers are examples of things you can easily recycle.
- Donate electronic equipment to specific recycling groups or recycle them. This will help reduce pressure on landfills.
- When buying wooden fencing and garden furniture, consider whether the wood is from a well-managed forest. Deforestation is a serious problem in some areas of the world, leading to loss of topsoil and flooding, among other problems.
- When boating, avoid stirring up bottom sediment with propellers. Keep personal watercraft out of shallow areas that are critical habitat for spawning fish, aquatic plants and aquatic invertebrates.



## Energy:

- Your appliances need a tune-up too; clean all filters and coils.
- When replacing hard-to-reach light bulbs, such as exterior porch lights, switch to energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. You won't have to change them for up to seven years!
- Use your window coverings to help warm or cool your house.
- Make your home more energy efficient through improved insulation, caulking and weather-stripping. The less energy you use, the less impact you have on the environment.
- Install and use a programmable thermostat. For every 1 °C you lower your thermostat, you can save 2% on your heating bill. A reduction of 3 °C at night and when you are away during the day provides optimal savings and can reduce your greenhouse gas emissions by half a tonne.
- When buying a new appliance, choose an energy-efficient one.
- Kids! Energy efficiency can be practiced at home, at school and during recreational activities—in fact, practically anywhere and anytime in our day-to-day activities. This may be as simple as turning off the lights when leaving a room, or bicycling to school instead of asking mom or dad for a ride. Encouraging energy efficiency reduces the use of fossil fuels, thus reducing emissions of harmful pollutants into the Earth's atmosphere.

## Air:

- Use potpourri instead of aerosol-based sprays.
- Compost your leaves and brush. Burning them will increase carbon dioxide emissions.
- Buy a push lawn mower. It's good exercise and reduces carbon dioxide emissions.
- Don't blow your leaves—rake them instead. Your ears and your neighbours will thank you, and you will reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
- Make sure your car is properly tuned up and your tires are at the right pressure to ensure optimal fuel efficiency.
- Encourage carpooling when possible! Put a map up in the office to encourage carpooling and make it easier for riders to connect.

## Water:

- Use a broom rather than a water hose to clean walkways, driveways and sidewalks.
- Collect and use your rainwater for your lawn and plants. It's free and better for your plants.
- Avoid cleaners containing phosphates. When they get into rivers and lakes they cause algae blooms, robbing the water of oxygen and ultimately killing aquatic life.
- Fix that leaking hose and dripping nozzle. It will help keep your shoes and shirt dry and save water.
- Keep the septic system working smoothly! Pour 250 mL baking soda down any toilet or drain once a week. Baking soda creates a favourable pH environment for optimal bacterial action.
- Install water-saving showerheads.
- Don't leave the water running when you brush your teeth, shave, wash dishes or clean vegetables.