

TIPS FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE



People who live green at home are likely to practice similar habits at work. Incorporating sustainability into your lifestyle means becoming aware of the impact of your choices in food, products, and energy use. Focus on the small steps you can take at home, at work, and in your community. You can start by calculating your environmental footprint (www.footprintcalculator.org/home/en).

Here are a few actions you can take to do your part to live smart.

Make sustainable food choices.

Production, processing, packaging, and transportation of food is highly dependent on the use of fossil fuels and chemical fertilizers. These can greatly harm human health and the health of the environment. As a consumer, you have power to make a difference by considering the impact of your choices. Opting for local, healthy, environmentally responsible food helps promote both personal health and the overall health of the community. Choose foods that:

- » Do not harm the environment
- » Support and preserve rural communities
- » Are healthy and nutritious
- » Are free of added toxins
- » Are grown locally

Use alternative transportation.

Pollutants released by vehicles greatly increase air pollution levels and have been linked to adverse health effects, including premature mortality, cardiac symptoms, exacerbation of asthma symptoms, and diminished lung function. To minimize the damaging impact of our current transportation choices, try adopting more sustainable methods of travel.

- » Walking and bicycling
- » Public transportation
- » Carpools and vanpools
- » Telework and alternate work schedules

Make green updates at home.

Sustainable homes are not only better for the planet but offer opportunity for great cost savings. Here are some tips for saving energy:

Make sure your home is well-insulated to conserve energy and spend less on heat and air conditioning.

- » Use a programmable thermostat to time your heat and air conditioning for when you are in your home.
- » Weatherproof your home. Caulk, seal, or weather-strip outside openings to prevent air leaks.
- » Conserve water by installing aerating and low-flow faucets and showerheads. Choose garden plants that don't have a high demand for water.
- » If you are looking for a major upgrade, tankless and on-demand water heaters can save up to 30 percent of energy compared to standard natural gas tank heaters.

Recycle electronics.

Electronics impact the environment and human health. Fabricating and shipping electronics use water and energy, and often create industrial waste. The disposal of electronics results in a massive amount of waste going into landfills. Toxins commonly found in electronics can leak into the soil or release into the air through burning. Check for special programs in your area to recycle:

- » Batteries
- » Old laptops or phones
- » Printers, keyboards, and other computer accessories
- » Televisions
- » Wires and plugs