GREEN AT HOME

Sustainability is about making smart choices.

SMART & CLEAN

1. Never dump anything down the storm drain or on the street - prevent pollutants from draining into our rivers and streams.
2. Clean up after your pet.
3. Get regular tune-ups, regularly check your tire pressure and air filter and check for and fix leaks. A well maintained car produces fewer green house gas emissions.
4. Reduce green house gas emissions by giving your car a break. Take public transportation, car pool, walk or bike whenever possible.
5. Use cleaning supplies that do not use hazardous chemicals. Use low VOC paints, stains, finishes and paint strippers.
6. Pick a green dry cleaner that uses environmentally friendly products. Many dry cleaners use a toxic chemical known as perchloroethylene.

SMART ENERGY USE

7. Replace the bulbs in your most frequently used light fixtures with compact florescent light bulbs.
8. When buying products for your home look for the Energy Star label.
9. Turn off lights and electronics when not in use and un-plug lamps, appliances, computers and other electronics when not in use to save energy.
10. Conserve energy by moving your thermostat up 2 degrees in the summer and down 2 degrees in the winter. Get a programmable thermostat so that less energy is used while you are not at home. Also, regularly change or clean air filters and make sure areas in front of vents are not blocked by furniture, paper or other items that could block flow.
11. Set your water heater thermostat at 120 degrees.
12. Seal your home by caulking and weather stripping doorways, windows, attics and basements. Insulate your home with 1 foot of insulation in the attic floor.

SMART WATER USE

13. Install a low-flow showerhead and keep showers under 5 minutes to save water and energy.
14. Insulate your water pipes- get hot water faster. Do not run water while you brush your teeth, shave or wash your car.
15. Run the dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer with full loads only to save energy and water.
16. Purchase WaterSense appliances and fixtures.

SMART LANDSCAPING

17. Don’t over water your landscape. Watering deeply and infrequently will promote root growth and drought tolerance. Add a rain sensor to your automatic system. Use a rain gauge to measure rainfall.

18. Homeowners with automatic sprinkler systems are most likely to overwater. Stop watering if water is running off surface and/ or puddling- the soil is not absorbing water. Do not overspray onto pavement.
19. Maintain mulch layer around trees and shrubs. Do not use rock which increase heat.
20. Use rain barrels. Collect air conditioner condensate.
21. Plant a tree to improve air quality. If you plant shade trees on the south and western side of your home you can also save energy in your home.
22. Minimize or eliminate pesticide and fertilizer use. Widespread pesticide use can worsen problems by killing beneficial predators as well as targeted pests.
23. Leave grass clippings on the yard to return nutrients to the soil. Use organic garden products.

REDUCE THE GARBAGE STREAM

24. Recycle and purchase products made from recycled materials.
25. Reduce your waste by purchasing products with less packaging, products that you can reuse and products that use recycled materials. Also, maintain and repair durable products instead of buying new ones.
26. Bring cloth or canvas bags to the store with you instead of using paper or plastic bags. Use reusable products and containers instead of aluminum foil, cling wrap, disposable plates and utensils and paper towels and napkins.
27. Look at the new list of recyclables picked up by the city.
28. Reduce your mail by sending e-cards and e-vites, enrolling in e-billing programs, reading magazine and newspaper subscriptions online and reduce junk mail by taking your name off mailing lists.
29. Take a mug to work instead of using disposable cups.
30. When packing your lunch, eliminate disposable products such as paper bags, paper napkins, plastic bags and plastic utensils. Instead, pack a lunch box with reusable dishware, silverware and cloth napkin or towel.

IDLING MYTHS

i.

Idling is not an effective way to warm up your vehicle. Once a vehicle is running, the best way to warm it up is to drive it, even in cold weather30 seconds of warming up your vehicle is enough. Today's vehicles are designed to be driven almost immediately.

ii.

Many components of a vehicle (including the wheel bearings, tires and suspension system) will warm up only when the vehicle is moving.

iii.

Idling is a problem year-round.
A recent study revealed that, on any given day in August, Canadians idle their vehicles for a combined total of 46 million minutes per day – equivalent to one vehicle idling for 89 years. The problem is worse in winter, but there's never a good time to waste fuel and generate greenhouse gas emissions by idling your vehicle.

iv.

"Idling is good for your engine." **FALSE**
-Excessive idling can damage your engine components, including cylinders, spark plugs and the exhaust system.

v.

"Shutting off and restarting your vehicle is hard on the engine and uses more gas."

FALSE
-Frequent restarting has little impact on engine components. More than 10 seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting the engine.

Idling Realities

NOT IDLING will let us breathe more easily; help us spare our climate and air; reduce engine wear and tear; and save money.

Resources:

- Climate Change – What You Can Do At Home
  http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/actionsteps.html
- 100 ways to save the environment
  http://www.seql.org/100ways.cfm
- Take Action!
  http://www.stopglobalwarming.org/sgw_actionitems.asp
- 10 Cool Climate-Saving Actions
  http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/action/solutions.php
- Energy Star - @ Home Tips
  http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.es_at_home_tips