

# 40 THINGS



## you can do to save the planet

EPA's mission is to protect human health and the environment. To honor the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, we invite you to join us by taking individual action—here are 40 things we can each do to reduce greenhouse gases and help save the planet:

### AT HOME

- 1 Stop junk mail (opt out)
- 2 Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights—and turn them off when not in use
- 3 Buy local, sustainably produced food
- 4 Adjust your thermostat—up in summer, down in winter
- 5 Install water saving fixtures in bath and kitchen
- 6 Buy Energy Star certified appliances ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))
- 7 Install solar panels or switch to renewable energy sources
- 8 Shop at thrift stores and buy used or refurbished products

### AT SCHOOL

- 9 Perform an energy audit of school buildings
- 10 Teach students how to make eco-friendly choices
- 11 Start a recycled materials art program
- 12 Create a compost bin for food scraps—and recycle cans, bottles and paper
- 13 Create an organic vegetable garden
- 14 Reduce or recycle toxic chemicals in school laboratories
- 15 Help students volunteer for local habitat restoration projects
- 16 Rent college textbooks instead of buying them

### ON THE ROAD

- 17 Drive a more fuel efficient car, or join a car share
- 18 Walk, bike, carpool or take transit as much as possible
- 19 Reduce your air travel and use e-tickets instead of paper
- 20 Go easy on the accelerator, use cruise control, and keep your car tuned up and tires well inflated
- 21 Make sure your mechanic recycles used automotive oil and coolant
- 22 Choose a green hotel, eco-tours and other earth-friendly travel choices
- 23 Ask hotel staff not to replace your towels and sheets every day
- 24 Bring a reusable water bottle

### AT WORK

- 25 Print less, use 100% recycled paper and print double sided
- 26 Reduce commuting by working from home when possible
- 27 Use environment-friendly cleaning supplies (e.g. Green Seal approved)
- 28 Buy EPEAT certified computers and monitors ([www.epeat.net](http://www.epeat.net))
- 29 Use video and telephone conferences to reduce travel
- 30 Green your meetings—replace paper handouts with e-documents, recycle waste
- 31 Start a composting program and set a goal of zero waste
- 32 Organize co-workers to carpool or bike to work

### EVERYWHERE!

- 33 Get involved—exercise your rights to promote sustainable choices
- 34 Switch to reusable items, such as bags and lunch containers
- 35 Turn off lights, appliances and electronics when not in use
- 36 Bring your own reusable mug when you go out for coffee or tea
- 37 Buy recycled and recyclable products, eliminate plastic and styrofoam
- 38 Compost your food/organic waste
- 39 Recycle paper, glass, plastics, electronics
- 40 Keep reusable shopping bags handy and use everywhere you shop

  

if **everyone** did just one thing...

### DO JUST ONE THING FOR A YEAR... AND IT ADDS UP

If one person drinks tap water instead of one liter of bottled water each day, it would save the energy equivalent 1.6 Kilo-watt-hours per day, 46 gallons of gas per year, or 0.41 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

If all 49 million people in the Pacific Southwest Region did the same, it would save the equivalent of 2.3 billion gallons of gas per year—the amount used by 3.8 million cars, or 20 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

If everyone in the USA did the same, it would save the equivalent of 14.2 billion gallons of gas per year—the amount used by 24.1 million cars, or 126 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.\*

\*This is an estimate of the greenhouse gas savings for bottled water produced and used locally. For bottled water from distant locations, the carbon footprint may double! The calculation assumes that the water is bottled using electricity with the U.S. average carbon emissions.

[Sources: Gleick & Cooley, "Energy Implications of Bottled Water," Pacific Institute, Oakland, Calif., 2009; U.S. EPA, Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator ([www.epa.gov/rdde/energy-resources/calculator.html](http://www.epa.gov/rdde/energy-resources/calculator.html))]

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