

Turn your car engine off when waiting for someone.

Idling wastes gas and creates air pollution.

Say “thank you” to businesses that use sustainable packaging.

Positive feedback makes a difference!

Minimize the use of salt on your driveway and paths. Try sand or cat litter. Salt run off is polluting our waterways and harming plants and fish.

Put reusable bags in your car so they are handy when you shop.

Try a thrift or consignment shop either to donate to or purchase from. WPC’s thrift store is a fine place to start!

Adjust your blinds and curtains to help keep your home warm or cool. This saves energy.

Consider adding more “meatless meals” into your rotation. Meat, particularly beef, is environmentally stressful.

Seek additional recycling opportunities... Many townships and/or the county offer electronics, hazardous waste, paper shredding, and more.

Try to borrow instead of buying. Ask a friend or neighbor if they’ll share, try a clothing rental site, check out toy sharing programs.

Assign a glass to each family member and reuse it throughout the day. This reduces water and energy use.

Bring your own container for leftovers at a restaurant.

Many of the plastic containers they provide are not recyclable.

Avoid buying or using single-use plastic water bottles. Get your own reusable container, use glass or ceramic, or bring a large

Consider trying composting in your kitchen. This reduces water use for a garbage disposal and creates soil you can use in your yard.

Put a set(s) of reusable utensils in your car Then tell fast-food, takeout vendors you don’t need their utensil kit.

Donate unwanted books to your library or a used book store.

Carpool with a friend.

This saves gas and gives you social time!

Gift experiences instead of tangible items. We often treasure memories of time together long after that gifted sweater is gone.

Put a waterproof timer in your shower. Reduce water and energy use.

Take a hike. And while you’re there observe and appreciate nature. We’re more likely to protect the earth when we intentionally enjoy it.

Shop for local food items, in season. Shipping food thousands of miles wastes energy and creates pollution.

Check your Township/Trash Hauler’s Recycling Guidelines.

Items that can be recycled do change over time.

Identify and buy three native plants for your yard this year. This supports our insects and birds.

Use gift bags instead of single-use wrapping paper. Save and reuse bags you receive. If you have paper already, try saving it for re-use a second time.

Recycle alkaline batteries by bringing them to Westminster’s drop off box (near Café West.)

Lower your electricity use.

Turn off lights, place “continuous power” items (e.g. TV) on a power strip you can easily shut off.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Save energy and burn more calories!

Try a train! Leave the car locally and let the engineer do the driving. Much more relaxing.

Use a space heater in one room instead of raising the temperature for the whole house.

Try multi-use containers and wrap... net bags for fruits and vegetables, silicone reusable storage, beeswax food wrap.

Replace disposal razors with reusable ones. Consider an electric razor or safety razor.

Look around when you travel.

Consider what you can do to use sustainable transport, learn how that society has built in sustainability.

Try composting. There are several ways to approach it.

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>

Ask your friends. Have a friend with a hybrid or electric car? Ask them how they like it and what they've learned about it.**See (or rather don't!) the light (at night.)**

Turn off outdoor lighting, or use environment sensitive practices.

<https://en.cieletoilemontmegantic.org/pollutionlumineuse>

Ballooning challenges.

Balloons are deadly to shorebirds who mistakenly eat them. Helium is a non-renewable resource. Let's find some other decoration options.

Research eco-friendly products.

The Environmental Working Group provides a wealth of information.

<https://www.ewg.org/>

Put on a sweater, have a throw blanket available on the couch.

Make turning up the heat a last resort, not the first.

Consider a green burial,

which is a way of caring for the dead with minimal environmental impact.

<https://www.greenburialcouncil.org/>

Reduce your use of plastic wrap.

Cover a bowl with a towel or plate, use reusable beeswax wrap, use a glass container with lid.

Be "salt smart" during the winter.

Avoid polluting our streams.

<https://www.chesco.org/5807/Chloride-Modeling-in-Chester-County>

Plant native milkweed to help feed the Monarch Butterflies!

Monarchs are struggling...to help:
<https://www.fws.gov/initiative/pollinator/s/monarchs/help>

Avoid Styrofoam. It is very difficult to recycle and it has harmful chemicals that leach into food and water.**Learn how social justice and the environment are connected. Here is one resource:**

https://youtu.be/dREtXUiJ6_c

Cut the noise. Noise is a form of pollution and can create problems for people and animals, including ocean mammals such as whales. Try an electric leaf blower or mower.**Disposable diapers.** A single disposal diaper can take 500 years to decompose. They are the third largest contributor to landfills.**Consider how people used to live.** In what ways did people used to live that we might aspire to again?**Add an environmental organization to your charitable donation list.****Gotta have a Wawa...refillable cup!** Bring your own travel cup to Wawa, fill it with coffee and soda, and just tell the cashier how many ounces it is.**Reduce your use of aluminum foil.** Consider if it's really needed, use a silicone mat, place an aluminum pie plate over the roast instead.**Celebrate and say "thanks" to those groups who've worked hard to install native plant and pollinator gardens.****Use knowledgeable landscapers and arborists.**

The Ecological Landscape Alliance is a good resource for skilled vendors.

Make your "electric choice."

You can select a renewable energy source to provide your home electricity through the PA Power Switch program. PAPowerSwitch.com

Learn about ghost fishing gear and how it harms our ocean life.

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/resources/explainers/ghost-fishing-gear/>

Beauty is more a "beast" in the landfill. 70% of cosmetics wind up, unfinished, in the landfill. Think before you buy your next beauty item.**Learn about your laundry products.** They can contain chemicals that harm the environment.

<https://www.ewg.org/cleaners/categories/9-Laundry/>

Walk or bike more. Even within a shopping area, can you walk to a different store rather than turn on your car?**Design multi-use spaces rather than building bigger.** Smaller footprints save money, energy, and time in maintenance and care.**Purchase a reusable coffee filter** instead of using a new paper one every day.**Avoid dental floss coated in PFAs or other harmful chemicals.** Consumerreports.org and other sites have eco-friendly alternatives.**Update your knowledge of heat pumps, geothermal, and solar options.** These fields evolve rapidly.

Sign up for an educational e-newsletter. Yale provides a list of free options. yaleclimateconnections.org/2025/03/these-climate-newsletters-can-help-you-stay-informed/

Explore dishwasher detergent that is plastic free. There are easy to make homemade options. <https://www.thekitchn.com/diy-dishwasher-detergent-23747885>

Consider buying a carbon offset to help reduce the impact of your air travel.
<https://theimpactinvestor.com/marketplace/carbon-offsets/>

Use reusable cotton makeup pads instead of throw-away cotton balls.

If you have to water in your yard, do so in early morning or late evening when there will be less evaporation. Install a timer on your hose outlet.

Adjust your blinds to use natural light during the day rather than turning on a lamp.

Check your car tire pressure. Properly inflated tires provide for better gas mileage.

Put static cling “bird stickers” on your windows to keep birds from running into them, which can kill them.

Don’t litter! Do pick up litter you find. This keeps litter from going into our waterways and polluting them.

Always use a car wash, which saves water.

Try renting a special occasion item rather than purchasing something you’ll use infrequently.

Time your showers and challenge yourself to reduce your time by 15%. This saves water, energy, and money.

Try shampoo bars, reducing plastic packaging.

Install a rain barrel at your house, reducing runoff and the need to process water through your municipal sewer system

Use a broom to clear your walk instead of a leaf blower. It's quieter and reduces energy use.

Check out a book on sustainability at the WPC library. We have some for all ages.

Make your own cleaner...baking soda and vinegar can tackle a lot of tasks!

Keep your cat inside, to reduce birds being killed by them. Consider a “catio” as an alternative.

Use Household Hazardous Waste Events, don't pour hazardous chemicals on the lawn or in the drain. chestercountyswa.org/121/Upcoming-Household-Hazardous-Waste-Event

Reduce your fertilizer use, which can cause harmful algae blooms in our streams and ponds.

Use wool dryer balls rather than dryer sheets. This reduces chemicals and trash.

Increase use of your dishwasher on the eco setting...running the faucet to hand wash dishes uses more water and energy.

“Gift” an eco friendly item to friends and family each year.

Use natural mulch at your yard instead of dyed mulch. Think shredded leaves, shredded newspaper, tree chips.

Use a push mower instead of a self-propelled or riding one. Get a bit more exercise, save gas, reduce pollution.

Use bar soap rather than plastic-packaged body wash or liquid soap.

Use LED bulbs, which use much less electricity.

Adopt firefly friendly practices to keep those fun bugs lighting up the night!
<https://xerces.org/publications/guidelines/conserving-jewels-of-night>

Educate yourself on what your municipality, county, state and federal government are doing to help the environment. Pick one to start!

Reduce pesticide use in your garden.
<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/master-gardener/counties/chester/how-to-gardening-brochures>

Use the Library! How many of us really read a book a second time. Borrow it from the library or a friend and save money, paper, and energy.

Instead of “buy new”, adorn existing! An interesting scarf, jewelry, vest or cape can liven up an “old” but still serviceable outfit.

Air dry items. Go for a full air dry, or take your clothes from the dryer when they are still slightly damp and let them dry in the closet.

Talk with your friends! Ask about things they might be doing to be more sustainable. Studies show most people do care!

Adjust your mower height to 3” and leave the clippings. This helps your lawn and insects!

Reuse/re-purpose old jars and plastic containers to help organize your space.

Use old towels for rags, give old sheets, towels to the SPCA for use in their shelters.

Use rechargeable batteries. Americans throw away more than 3 billion single use batteries a year! Recycle alkaline batteries at WPC.

Recycle your electronic devices. Do a quick internet search of Township, County or local vendor programs for things from cell phones and TVs to computers and more.

Recycle oral care products at Westminster. Toothbrushes, empty toothpaste tubes, floss containers can all be dropped off.

Before making a purchase, ask, “Do I really need this?” Perhaps you already have something you can repurpose, or you can borrow it from elsewhere.

Go with a cold-water wash for laundry. It's fine for most situations and saves energy.

Reduce chemical use. There is abundant advice on the internet about reducing fertilizer, bug sprays, and more.

Ask your elected official! There is a lot of activity at both the federal and state level. Ask your elected official what policies they support.

Buy a used book instead of new. This saves you a lot of money and keeps from cutting down more trees.

Watch a program about the environment. Single Use Planet is one that is currently available on line.

Buy items with less packaging! Does that broccoli really need a tray and plastic wrap on it?

Donate used furniture to Community Warehouse Project or Good Will.

Fix It, don't toss it! Try a local Repair Café for instruction and help for basic repairs.

Donate your used glasses! Local Lions Clubs have collection boxes in the Chester County Library in Exton, in Walmart, and in other local stores.

Repair before replace. Buttons can be sewn back on shirts, patches put on holes, and You Tube is a goldmine of repair instructions!

Read the directions! Most times you do not need to use a “full dispenser” for dishwasher detergent or laundry cap/cup.

Try reusable paper towels. These work well, reduce trash, and reduce the demand on our natural resources.

Change your outdoor lighting practices! Outdoor lighting negatively affects bats, birds, fireflies and our ability to see the stars!

Check out expanded plastic bag/film opportunities at your local grocer.

<https://plasticfilmrecycling.org/> provides a list of items and locations

Use bar soap instead of body wash... this reduces the number of plastic containers in your home.

Go “paperless” for receiving and paying bills.

Don't default to AI! Artificial intelligence use is very energy intensive. You can set your devices to stick with a regular internet search.

Consider a homemade cleaner – vinegar and water can work miracles!

Re-use durable medical equipment. Need a walker, cane, commode or more? Check this out: <https://e-clubhouse.org/sites/avong/>

Recycle your sneakers!

Visit: www.SneakerImpact.com to order free packing to ship them clean sneakers from you and some friends.

Take a look at your sponge.

Some sponges have polyester blends, which can release plastic into the water with each use. Natural alternatives exist.

Ditch the meal kit. Learn to prepare your own fast and easy meals reducing shipping, packaging, and cost!

Turn down the house heat when you're leaving for an hour or more.

Volunteer for a clean up event.

Plan your errands to reduce car trips. This saves time, gas, and wear and tear on the car.

Kick the Keurig habit. Keurig use produces a lot of plastic trash. Look for more sustainable coffee alternatives.

Share your bulbs and seeds!

Pass along your abundance to neighbors and friends. Particularly great for native plants!

Avoid food and personal care products with palm oil.

Thousands of acres of land are being destroyed to create it.

Encourage your municipality or HOA to adopt sustainable practices. Many municipalities have environmental advisory groups. There are HOA specific toolkits.

Plan food use so that first to spoil is first to be eaten!

Have produce that often goes bad before eaten? Plan your meals to use it soon after purchase.

Ask vendors you use regularly to adopt sustainable practices...

e.g. change takeout packaging to cardboard, provide straws or plastic utensils on request.

Use both sides of your printer paper!

Invest in quality products that will last.

Consider using e-books and audio books.

Say a polite “no thanks” to freebies-promotional items.

Businesses produce thousands of logo-imprinted items that get thrown away. Consider if you will use the item.

Just say “no” to extra sports paraphernalia. Team participation trophies, extra shirts or bags, signs are all likely to end up in the trash.

Don’t toss your (cigarette) butt just anywhere! Cigarette butts have toxic chemicals that spread through our water and soil when they are simply tossed on the ground.

“Bee” good! Learn what you can do to help these key pollinators.

Thebeeconservancy.org

Educate your grandchildren.

Help them understand how food is grown, how the environment is all linked, and what they can do to help.

Gift food or a meal. Time is a precious commodity...give a friend some homemade soup, a casserole or invite them for a meal as a gift.

Check out a Farmer’s Market.

This will help you buy local, seasonal merchandise. Remember to bring your own bags!

Add a bird feeder or bat box to your yard. Research what you can do to help them thrive.

“Green” your pet through sustainable pet toys, compostable waste bags.

Switch to loose-leaf tea! It's very elegant and more sustainable! Tea bags often contain plastic.

Use a reusable lunch box/bag instead of a brown paper bag. Even better, buy the bag from a thrift store.

Leave the Leaves! Letting fall leaves stay in your yard provides key insect habitat. Check out homegrownnationalpark.org for more

Plant an Oak! Considering a new tree for your yard? Consider an oak! One of the most helpful to native insects and birds.

Visit a local arboretum, garden, or natural land property. Get inspired by the beauty and educated on sustainability.

Be a role model! There is always an opportunity to do more, but please share steps you have taken to live more sustainably. This inspires others!