

**Turn your car engine off when waiting for someone.**

Idling wastes gas and creates air pollution.

**Bring your own container for leftovers at a restaurant.**

Many of the plastic containers they provide are not recyclable.

**Check your Township/Trash Hauler's Recycling Guidelines.**

Items that can be recycled do change over time.

**Say "thank you" to businesses that use sustainable packaging.**

Positive feedback makes a difference!

**Avoid buying or using single-use plastic water bottles.**

Get your own reusable container, use glass or ceramic, or bring a large

**Identify and buy three native plants for your yard this year.**

This supports our insects and birds.

**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.

**Consider trying composting in your kitchen.**

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

**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.

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

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

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

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

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

**Lower your electricity use.**

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

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

**Carpool with a friend.**

This saves gas and gives you social time!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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.

**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.

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

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

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

**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.cieetoilemontmegantic.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](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](http://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](http://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/](https://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](https://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](http://www.SneakerImpact.com) to order free packing to ship them clean sneakers from you and some friends.

**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.

**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.

**Take a look at your sponge.** Some sponges have polyester blends, which can release plastic into the water with each use. Natural alternatives exist.

**Ask vendors you use regularly to adopt sustainable practices...**e.g. change takeout packaging to cardboard, provide straws or plastic utensils on request.

**Check out a Farmer's Market.** This will help you buy local, seasonal merchandise. Remember to bring your own bags!

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

**Use both sides of your printer paper!**

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

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

**Invest in quality products that will last.**

**"Green" your pet through sustainable pet toys, compostable waste bags.**

**Volunteer for a clean up event.**

**Consider using e-books and audio books.**

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

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

**Say 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.

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

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

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

**Leave the Leaves!** Letting fall leaves stay in your yard provides key insect habitat. Check out [homegrownnationalpark.org](http://homegrownnationalpark.org) for more

**Share your bulbs and seeds!** Pass along your abundance to neighbors and friends. Particularly great for native plants!

**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.

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

**Avoid food and personal care products with palm oil.** Thousands of acres of land are being destroyed to create it.

**"Bee" good!** Learn what you can do to help these key pollinators. [Thebeeconservancy.org](http://Thebeeconservancy.org)

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

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

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

**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!