

Tips for Sustainable Living

Transportation

Slow down – One of the best ways to save gas is to simply reduce your speed. As speed increases, fuel economy decreases exponentially. Try driving the speed limit for a few days, you will save fuel and not get to your destination much later.

Check your tire pressure – Under-inflated tires are one of the most commonly ignored causes of poor fuel economy. Tires lose air due to time (about 1 psi per month) and temperature (1 psi for every 10 degree drop); under-inflated tires have more rolling resistance, which means you need to burn more gas to keep your car moving. Get a reliable tire gauge and check your tires at least 1 time per month. Be sure to check when the tires are cold since driving the car warms up the tires and increases tire pressure. Proper tire pressure for your vehicle should be shown in the driver's side door jamb.

Check your air filter – A dirty air filter restricts the flow of air into the engine, which harms performance and economy.

Accelerate with care – Jack-rabbit starts are an obvious fuel-waster. Accelerate moderately so the transmission can shift up into the higher gears. If you have a manual transmission, shift early to keep the revs down, but don't lug the engine. Keep an eye well down the road for potential slowdowns. If you accelerate to speed and then have to brake right away, you are wasting fuel.

Remove excess weight from your car – Periodically clean out your car. It doesn't take much to add extra weight to your car, and the more weight your vehicle has to move, the more fuel it burns.

Downsize – If you're shopping for a new car, it's time to re-evaluate how much car you really need. Smaller cars are inherently more fuel-efficient, and today's cars are roomier than ever.

Use the cruise – driving at a constant speed will save fuel. Vehicles use considerably more fuel getting up to speed compared to keeping a vehicle moving at a constant speed. Even fluctuating your speed up and down on the highway by 10 mph will waste a considerable amount of fuel.

Don't drive – Consider joining a carpool, vanpool, ride your bike or take public transportation. Ask your agency about getting the eco-pass.



CDLE ~~Bro~~wn Green Bag
Lunch Sessions!

Energy

Compact fluorescent light bulbs – Change out incandescent bulbs with CFL's. These bulbs will last twice as long and save up to 75% of the energy of an incandescent bulb.

Use Power Strips – Plug home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players, into power strips; turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use (TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power).

Thermostats – Set your thermostat comfortably low in the winter and comfortably high in the summer. Install a programmable thermostat that is compatible with your heating and cooling system.

Dish Washing – Only run your dishwasher when it is full. Turn the drying cycle on the dishwasher off and let the dishes air dry.

Clothes Washing – Use cold water on your wash cycle whenever possible. Also, consider hanging your clothes up to air dry rather than using the dryer.

Energy Star – Look for the Energy Star label on home appliances and other products. Energy Star products meet strict efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and US Department of Energy.

Heating and Cooling – Replace furnace filters regularly. During the heating season, keep draperies and shades on your south facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill from cold windows. During the cooling season, keep the window coverings closed during the day to prevent solar gain.

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

Look for the E-star label

Complete the loop and buy recycled – look for products that are made from recycled material. Remember that C.R.S. 24-103-207 states that all state agencies are required to obtain 50% of their paper purchases with at least 30% recycled paper content.

Buy products with reduced packaging – Look for products that don't come in a lot of packaging as well as packaging that is easily recyclable.

Look for safer paints, cleaning and other chemical products – In summary, when buying products, consider the following environmental criteria:

Minimize

- ▲ Heavy metals (e.g. lead, mercury, cadmium)
- ▲ Ozone depleting chlorinated compounds (e.g. CFCs)
- ▲ Organic solvents (e.g. chlorinated and aromatic hydrocarbons)
- ▲ Reactivity, corrosiveness, flammability, irritation potential
- ▲ Carcinogens, mutagens, teratogens
- ▲ Acute and chronic toxicity
- ▲ Substances that can bioaccumulate
- ▲ Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- ▲ Phosphorous

Favor

- ▲ Post-consumer recycled content
- ▲ Reusability/repairability
- ▲ Reduction in packaging
- ▲ Energy Efficiency
- ▲ Use of renewable energy sources
- ▲ Biobased products
- ▲ Biodegradability upon disposal



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

Waste Reduction/Recycling

Reusable products – Use reusable products whenever possible. Not generating the waste in the first place is the best option. Use things like reusable coffee cups and shopping bags. Most coffee shops and grocery stores will give you a discount when using these products.

Reduce the amount of junk mail you receive by writing to:

**Direct Marketing Association
Mail Preference Service
P. O. Box 643
Carmel, NY 10512
Phone: (212) 790-1400**



Ask that your name(s) be eliminated from mailing lists. Be sure to include the following information: Your full name and any variations that may be used by direct marketers, the date, your mailing address, your signature, the following statement: "Please remove my name and address from your mailing list." Or see their web site: <http://www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist#moreinformation>

Packaging – Look for products with the least amount of packaging. Packaging can account for up to 10% of the price of the product you are purchasing. Purchase products in bulk to limit the amount of packaging used.

Recycling – Recycle everything that you can. Most areas in the Denver Metro area collect items in a single stream (glass, aluminum, plastic, paper, cardboard, etc.). This makes recycling much more convenient for the customer.

Quality purchasing – Purchase high quality products when possible so you will not have to replace them as frequently.

Paper reduction – Always ask yourself "Do I need to print this document?" If you do need to print, be sure to print on a duplex printer (printing on both sides of the paper). Use track changes to edit documents electronically. Use the print preview option to only print the pages you need instead of the entire document. Give paper a second chance by using the back side for notes or to supply the fax machine with paper. Expand the size of margins on your document to eliminate excess pages. Store documents electronically rather than printing and filing. Put limits on how many copies each division in your organization can use per month. Post information on line for citizens to access rather than sending hard copies.

Composting – Start a composting bin at your home. Consider getting your cafeteria at work to implement a composting program. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is currently piloting a program at their offices.

Water

Irrigation Tips

- ▲ Water in the early morning or late evening to minimize evaporation (watering between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm in Denver is prohibited).
- ▲ Avoid watering driveways and sidewalks.
- ▲ Utilize micro-irrigation (such as soaker hoses).
- ▲ Convert a portion of your lawn to native grasses and xeriscape plants.
- ▲ Consult a WaterSense irrigation partner for advice on in-ground sprinkler systems.
- ▲ Denver water currently provides a \$25 rebate for a rain sensor (\$50 for a wireless sensor) and 25% of the purchase price for an Evapotranspiration (ET) Controller. An ET controller automatically adjusts the amount of water applied to your landscape based on weather conditions. See www.denverwater.org for more details.
- ▲ Water trees and shrubs, which have deep root systems, longer and less frequently than shallow-rooted plants that require smaller amounts of water more often.
- ▲ Use mulch around shrubs and garden plants to reduce evaporation from the soil surface and cut down on weed growth.
- ▲ Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage movement of water to the root zone.
- ▲ Raise your lawn mower cutting height – longer grass blades help shade each other, reduce evaporation, and inhibit weed growth.

In the Bathroom:

- ▲ Before you lather up, trade up your current shower head to a water-efficient shower head such as the Waterpik® EcoFlow®, which helps reduce water consumption by up to 40%. Water-conserving shower heads are inexpensive, easy to install, and can save a family of four up to 17,000 gallons of water a year.
- ▲ Avoid letting the water faucet run while you brush your teeth, wash your face, or shave and you can save up to 4 gallons of water a minute. That's 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- ▲ Two of the highest uses of water in the house are the shower and toilet. When possible, take showers instead of a bath and consider washing your face or brushing your teeth while in the shower.
- ▲ Purchase a low-flow or dual flush toilet. Denver Water offers \$125 rebates for High Efficiency Toilets (see www.denverwater.org for more details). Or place a plastic 2-liter bottle filled with water in the tank of your conventional toilet (be sure it does not interfere with operation of the toilet's flush mechanisms).
- ▲ Save water in the shower. Turn off the water while you shampoo and condition your hair and you can save more than 50 gallons a week.
- ▲ Fix leaking faucets and toilets that flush themselves. Research has shown that an average of 8% (or more) of all home water is wasted through leaks. Fixing a leak can save 500 gallons of water each month. A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons per day! To detect leaks in the toilet, add food coloring to the tank water. If the colored water appears in the bowl, the toilet is leaking. Toilet repair advice is available on www.toiletology.com/index.shtml
- ▲ Check with your local government agencies and utility companies for rebates on water-saving fixtures.

In the Laundry Room and Kitchen:

- ▲ Wash only full loads of laundry or use the appropriate water level or load size selection on the washing machine.
- ▲ Consider purchasing a high efficiency washing machine which can save over 50% in laundry water and energy use. Denver Water offers \$150 rebates for high efficiency clothes washers.
- ▲ When you replace your dishwasher, replace it with an energy star model that uses less energy and less water.
- ▲ Scrape, rather than rinse, dishes before loading into the dishwasher; wash only full loads.
- ▲ Keep drinking water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cool.
- ▲ Wash fruits and vegetables in a basin to avoid keeping the faucet running. Use a vegetable brush.
- ▲ Do not use water to defrost frozen foods; thaw in the refrigerator overnight.