



Living Green

Earth Day

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What is Earth Day? Earth Day began in 1970 as a grassroots protest to what was happening to the environment. The story of the demonstration was carried in news stories around the country and the response was overwhelming. The first Earth Day had over 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools/communities that participated. The tradition has been carried on ever since.

Now, Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd nationally and thousands of events take place all across the country. Schools, environmental organizations, businesses and whole communities get together to celebrate and help the environment. An

organization called “Earth Day Network” even sponsors huge day long demonstrations in major cities across the country. It is an opportunity for everyone to come together and do their part to help protect our environment. So this year, celebrate Earth Day by going green and choosing a way to help the environment. It can be as simple as carpooling that day or you can go out and pick up trash along the street! It is a day to take a moment and recognize the environment and what everyone can do to help. For more information on Earth Day and what you can do to help go to <http://ww2.earthday.net/~earthday/>.



Money Saving Green Tips:

- 1.) Insulate your water heater!
- 2.) Use fluorescent bulbs instead of incandescent!
- 3.) Set your washer to cold!
- 4.) Service your furnace every 2 years to save up to 10% on heating bills!

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint at Work

1. **Turn off the lights.** The energy savings from 10 million employees turning off unneeded lights for 30 minutes a day is enough to illuminate 50 million square feet of office space.
2. **Get off mailing lists you don't need!** -Almost half of all catalogs are never opened, yet nearly 62 million trees are destroyed and 28 billion gallons of water are used to produce them every year.
3. **Put your monitor to sleep**—contact the Tech dept. to set your monitor settings
4. **Make your printer's toner last**—When printing rough drafts or documents for internal purposes, change the printer's settings to economy mode and avoid color if possible.
5. **Recycle and reuse office supplies** Reusing the plastic dishes and cutlery you use is an easy way to cut down on waste at work. Better yet, pack your lunch in reusable containers and pocket your hard-earned dollars!

Shining a Light on Fluorescent Bulbs—

Taken from <http://green.msn.com/>

Compact fluorescent light bulbs, long touted by environmentalists as a more efficient and longer-lasting alternative to the incandescent bulbs that have lighted homes for more than a century, are running into resistance from waste industry officials and some environmental scientists, who warn that the bulbs' poisonous innards pose a bigger threat to health and the environment than previously thought.

Fluorescents — the squiggly, coiled bulbs that generate light by heating gases in a glass tube — are generally considered to

use more than 50 percent less energy and to last several times longer than incandescent bulbs. The bulbs — known as CFLs — follow strict government guidelines. But while the bulbs are extremely energy-efficient, one problem hasn't gone away: All CFLs contain mercury, a neurotoxin that can cause kidney and brain damage.

The amount is tiny — about 5 milligrams, or barely enough to cover the tip of a pen — but that is enough to contaminate 6,000 gallons of water beyond safe drinking levels, Stanford

University environmental safety researchers found. Even the latest lamps promoted as “low-mercury” can contaminate more than 1,000 gallons of water beyond safe levels. As long as the mercury is contained in the bulb, CFLs are perfectly safe. But eventually, any bulbs — even CFLs — break or burn out and are thrown away. If a bulb is broken, the mercury can cause contamination of you, and the environment once it is trashed. To safely get rid of a broken bulb follow the below guidelines...



Cleaning Up a Fluorescent Bulb...

Before cleanup: Vent the room

1. Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
2. Shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one.

Cleanup steps for hard surfaces

3. Carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
4. Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
5. Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes and place them in the glass jar or plastic bag.
6. Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

Cleanup steps for carpeting or rug

3. Carefully pick up glass fragments and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
4. Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
5. If vacuuming is needed after all visible materials are removed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken.
6. Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

Disposal of cleanup materials

7. Immediately place all cleanup materials outside the building in a trash container or outdoor protected area for the next normal trash.
8. Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic

bags containing cleanup materials.

9. Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states prohibit such trash disposal and require that broken and unbroken lamps be taken to a recycling center.

Future cleaning of carpeting or rug

10. For at least the next few times you vacuum, shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system and open a window prior to vacuuming.
11. Keep the central heating/air conditioning system shut off and the window open for at least 15 minutes after vacuuming is completed.

“I think there’s going to be hundreds of millions of [CFLs] in landfills all over the country,” said Leonard Worth, head of Fluorecycle Inc. of Ingleside, Ill., a certified facility

TIPS FOR RECYCLING

Wash out all dishes and bottles that go into the recycling bin. Left-over food and drink debris can contaminate the entire container. This causes all the recyclable items to be thrown away and cancels out everyone else's effort to recycle!

All lids need to be removed from bottles before recycling. Taking off the lid is essential for the item to be recycled. But don't worry, all labels are ok for recycling and do not need to be removed!

Would you like to be a part of the GreenTeam or have a question?

Please e-mail Bob Keenan at bkeenan@steamboatsprings.net for



Would you like to contribute to the GreenTeam Newsletter? Forward thoughts, ideas and articles to Sarah Vale @ svale@steamboatsprings.net