

Sustainability Begins at Home

Sustainability is generally defined as the ability "to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
(United Nations Brundtland Commission, Our Common Future, 1987)

- Buy products locally and with minimal packaging. Tell your government and the manufacturers to do the same.
- Use reusable products. A reusable shopping bag. A reusable water bottle.
- Reduce or eliminate paper product use. Paper towels and napkins can be easily replaced with cloth towels and napkins. A weekly trip through the washing machine and you're good to go.
- For those paper products you do use like facial tissues and toilet paper, consider buying a product with recycled paper content.
- Take your own mug with you to your favorite coffee shop. They may even discount your drink if you do so.
- Don't drink bottled water. The plastic bottles are only minimally recycled (approx. 30%), the water quality is often times unregulated, and the cost of bottled water is 100s of times higher than tap water. Tap water is wonderful in our area and if you don't like the taste, get a tap mounted or fridge water filter.
- Use compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) and turn all lights off when not using them. Did you know that incandescent bulbs will essentially be banned as of January 2012?
- Turn off and unplug appliances, computers, etc. when not using them. The energy vampire effect is significant.
- Reduce your junk mail by contacting the businesses that send the catalogs and the Direct Marketing Association. It will likely take at least 3 months to see an impact, but your mail carrier will thank you.
- Recycle everything you can including:
 - Cardboard (put out with your recycling in Lower Merion)
 - Dry cleaner hangers (return to the dry cleaner)
 - Plastic bags (return to the grocery store or put in your recycling)
- Consider buying alternative forms of electricity including wind (through PECO) and solar photovoltaic systems. The State and Federal government have new programs to make solar systems for electricity and hot water more economically reasonable. Up to 65% rebate/refund toward the installation of these systems.
- Walk, ride your bike, or use public transit when possible.
- Compost your food scraps. Of the landfilled/incinerated waste in the US, 20% is food waste and another 15% is yard waste.

This information is typed in an eco-friendly font, which reduces toner use by 20%. Look closely and you will see small dots within the text where toner is not printed.
(the font is Spranq Eco Sans and is available at the link noted below)

Sustainability



Links

Energy Audits

http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/energy_audits/index.cfm/mytopic=11160

Energy Saver Tips

<http://www.energysavers.gov/>

Stop Global Warming

http://www.stopglobalwarming.org/sgw_actionitems.asp

Buy Local

<http://brynmaurfarmersmarket.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.buylocalpa.org/>

<http://www.lancasterfarmfresh.com/>

The Consumers Handbook for Reducing Solid Waste

<http://www.epa.gov/osw/wycd/catbook/index.htm>

Light bulbs

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr_cfls

Bottled water

http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW/faq/pdfs/fs_healthseries_bottledwater.pdf

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserva/materials/plastics.htm#facts>

<https://www.aquaamerica.com/pages/AdvancedWaterQualityReportSearch.aspx>

Energy Vampires

<http://blog.epa.gov/blog/2008/10/27/qotw-what-are-your-energy-vampires/>

Water Saving Fixtures

<http://www.epa.gov/watersense/water/simple.htm>

Programmable Thermostat

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=thermostats.pr_thermostats

http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/space_heating_cooling/index.cfm/mytopic=12720

Rain Barrel

<http://www.phillywatersheds.org/rainbarrel/>

Reusable Shopping Bags

<http://www.reusablebags.com/>



Junk Mail

<http://www.reduce.org/>

<http://www.donotmail.org>

The Story of Stuff

<http://www.thestoryofstuff.com>

Earth 911 (recycling and other good information)

<http://www.earth911.com/>

Recycled paper tissues & toilet paper

<http://www.nrdc.org/land/forests/gtissue.asp>

ecofont

<http://www.ecofont.com/en/products/green/font/download-the-ink-saving-font.html>

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or ideas.

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