

Ways you can protect our air

57. Use environmentally friendly gas cans with features such as cut-off valves to reduce harmful fumes.
58. Avoid the drive-thru lanes.
59. Don't idle in the carpool line—the emissions are bad or children and adults.
60. Report smoking vehicles to your local air agency.
61. Don't use your wood stove or fireplace when air quality is poor.
62. Avoid slow-burning, smoldering fires.
63. Burn seasoned wood—it burns cleaner than green wood.
64. Use solar power for home and water heating.
65. Use low-VOC or water-based paints, stains, finishes and paint strippers.
66. Purchase radial tires for your vehicle and keep them properly inflated.
67. Paint with brushes or rollers instead of using spray paints to minimize harmful emissions.
68. Ignite charcoal barbecues with an electric probe or other alternative to lighter fluid.
69. If you use a wood stove, use one sold after 1990. They are required to meet federal emissions standards and are more efficient and cleaner burning.
70. Walk or ride your bike instead of driving, whenever possible.
71. Join a carpool or vanpool to get to work.



Ways to use less water

72. Check and fix any water leaks.
73. Install water-saving devices on your faucets and toilets.
74. Don't wash dishes with the water running continuously.
75. Wash and dry only full loads of laundry and dishes.
76. Follow your community's water use restrictions or guidelines.
77. Install a low-flow shower head.
78. Replace old toilets with new ones that use less water.
79. Turn off washing machine's water supply to prevent leaks when away on vacation.
80. Fill a half gallon jug with water and place in the toilet tank to reduce water used in flushing.



Ways to protect our water

81. Revegetate or mulch disturbed soil as soon as possible.
82. Never dump anything down a storm drain.
83. Have your septic tank pumped and system inspected regularly.
84. Check your car for oil or other leaks, and recycle motor oil.
85. Take your car to a car wash instead of washing it in the driveway.
86. Learn about your watershed.

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Create less trash

87. Buy items in bulk from loose bins when possible to reduce the packaging.
88. Avoid products with several layers of packaging when only one is sufficient. About 33% of what we throw away is packaging.
89. Buy products that you can reuse.
90. Maintain and repair durable products instead of buying new ones.
91. Check reports for products that are easily repaired and have low breakdown rates.
92. Reuse items like bags and containers when possible.
93. Use cloth napkins instead of paper ones.
94. Use reusable plates and utensils instead of disposable ones.
95. Use reusable containers to store food instead of aluminum foil and cling wrap.
96. Shop with a canvas bag instead of using paper and plastic bags.
97. Buy rechargeable batteries for devices used frequently.
98. Reuse packaging cartons and shipping materials. Old newspapers make great packing material.
99. Compost your vegetable scraps.
100. Buy used furniture - there is a surplus of it, and it is much cheaper than new furniture.



For more information on SEQL
and to set up a SEQL Challenge
of the "100 ways"
check out our web site
www.seql.org

SUSTAINABLE
ENVIRONMENT
for QUALITY of LIFE

SEQL

100 ways you can improve the environment

100 ways you can improve the environment

In your home—conserve energy

1. Clean or replace air filters on your air conditioning unit at least once a month.
2. If you have central air conditioning, do not close vents in unused rooms.
3. Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120°.
4. Wrap your water heater in an insulated blanket.
5. Turn down or shut off your water heater when you are away for extended periods.
6. Turn off unneeded lights even when leaving a room for a short time.
7. Set your refrigerator temperature at 36° to 38° and your freezer at 0° to 5°.
8. When using an oven, minimize door opening while it is in use; it reduces oven temperature by 25° to 30° every time you open the door.
9. Clean the lint filter in your dryer after every load so that it uses less energy.
10. Unplug seldom used appliances.
11. Use a microwave whenever you can instead of a conventional oven or stove.
12. Wash clothes with warm or cold water instead of hot.
13. Reverse ceiling fans for summer (counter clockwise) and winter (clockwise) as recommended.
14. Purchase appliances and office equipment with the Energy Star label; old refrigerators use up to 50% more electricity than newer models.
15. Use compact fluorescent light



- bulbs—they use 75% less energy and last 10-13 times longer than ordinary bulbs.
16. Keep your thermostat at 68° in winter and 78° in summer.
 17. Keep your thermostat higher in summer and lower in winter when you are away from home.
 18. Insulate your home as best as you can.
 19. Install weather stripping around all doors and windows.
 20. Plant trees to shade your home and AC unit.
 21. Have a home energy audit done.
 22. Replace old windows with energy efficient ones.
 23. Connect your outdoor lights to a timer.
 24. Buy green electricity - electricity produced by low - or even zero-pollution facilities (NC GreenPower - www.ncgreenpower.org).



In your home—reduce toxicity

25. Eliminate mercury from your home by purchasing items without mercury, and dispose of items containing mercury at an appropriate drop-off facility when necessary (e.g., old thermometers).
26. Learn about alternatives to household cleaning items that do not use hazardous chemicals—consider alternatives like baking soda, scouring pads, water or a little more elbow grease.
27. Buy the right amount of paint for the job, but if you have leftover materials



- share with neighbors, charities or theater groups.
28. When no good alternatives exist to a toxic item, find the least amount required for an effective, sanitary result.
 29. If you have an older home, have paint in your home tested for lead. If you have lead-based paint, cover it with wall paper or other material instead of sanding it or burning it off.
 30. Use traps instead of rat and mouse poisons and insect killers.
 31. Have your home tested for radon.
 32. Use cedar chips or aromatic herbs instead of mothballs.



In your yard

33. Avoid using leaf blowers and other dust-producing equipment.
34. Use an electric lawnmower instead of a gas-powered one.
35. Leave grass clippings on the yard—they decompose and return nutrients to the soil.
36. Use recycled wood chips as mulch to keep weeds down, retain moisture and prevent erosion.
37. Use only the required amount of fertilizer.
38. Create a wildlife habitat by planting native or drought resistant plants.
39. Water grass before 7 am.
40. Rent or borrow items like ladders and chain saws that are seldom used.
41. Take actions that use non-hazardous



- components (e.g., to ward off pests, plant marigolds in a garden instead of using pesticides).
42. Put leaves in a compost heap instead of burning them or throwing them away. Yard debris too large for your compost bin should be taken to a yard debris recycler.



In your office

43. Copy and print on both sides of paper.
44. Reuse items like envelopes, folders and paper clips.
45. Use mailer sheets for interoffice mail instead of an envelope.
46. Set up a bulletin board for memos instead of sending a copy to each employee.
47. Use e-mail instead of paper correspondence.
48. Print in “draft” format to conserve ink.
49. Use recycled paper.
50. Use discarded paper for scrap paper.
51. Encourage your school and/or company to print documents with soy-based inks, which are less toxic.
52. Use a ceramic coffee mug instead of a disposable cup.
53. Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
54. Shut off electrical equipment in the evening when you leave work, including your computer monitor.
55. Recycle printer cartridges.
56. Ask your employer to consider flexible work schedules or telecommuting.

