

Save Green by Going Green.

You don't need to build a home from the ground up to reap the benefits of an environmentally friendly home. Check out these ways to be green and save some green.

✓ Start in the front yard.

It's the envy of every neighborhood—the perfectly manicured front lawn. However, it requires constant attention, including watering, mowing with a gas-powered engine and fertilizing with chemicals. Consider replacing some grass with ground cover, decorative grass or eco-friendly grass that requires no fertilizing and grows well in sun and shade.

✓ Now go in the backyard.

Turn loose nature's secret weapon: animals. Install birdhouses to shelter your fine feathered friends who dine on pesky beetles and grubs. Put out egg cartons of green lacewings or praying mantises to eat the aphids.

✓ Color your world with all "green" paints.

New paints that are low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are now available in a wide range of designer colors. These paints are better for your lungs and the planet. Recycled paints can be purchased for \$5 to \$7.50 per gallon—they're a great deal compared to \$20 per gallon paints.

✓ Light up your world.

Replacing traditional light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs will save 5 percent on your annual electric bill. New premium fluorescents are now available everywhere; they cast a pure white or buttery golden light in your home and cost \$9 to \$12.

✓ Buy local, organic food.

Organic food is fresher because it is likely grown within a couple hours of your home. When you go organic, you'll reduce the amount of diesel fuel needed to ship food. You'll also reduce the fossil fuel consumed to create commercial fertilizers.

✓ Recycling dos and don'ts.

Everyone knows the basic items—paper products, glass, green clippings, plastic and aluminum. Unfortunately, not all plastics are recyclable yet. Plastic items with a 1 or 2 marked on their bottom qualify to be recycled. In addition, don't place light bulbs, broken glass or bits of food in your recycle bin.

efficiently light walkways and high traffic routes. They look great and cost you nothing after their initial purchase.

✓ Friendly high-tech.

LCD flat panel computer monitors use as little as one-third of the electricity of conventional tube-based models. When you shop for your next-generation TV, choose



✓ Have a cookout.

Outdoor grills use less energy than electric kitchen stoves. They keep heat out as well. Always use grills that burn propane or natural gas. These grills emit 5.6 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere per hour. A charcoal grill belches 11 pounds of the air-polluting compound for the same period of time. Consider eating on recycled paper plates made from bamboo and adding organic food to the menu.

an LCD or rear-projection model. They use less than half the energy of plasma televisions and have comparable picture quality.

Energy-efficient appliances can complete your new high-tech suite. ENERGY STAR® appliances consume far less electricity, and new front loading washers use much less water and detergent.

✓ Use solar power.

Install solar panels on your roof that will work with your conventional water heater. These panels cost between \$2,000 and \$4,500, and can reduce the need for conventional water heating by around two-thirds. These efficient panels cut around 12 percent off the average household's annual utility bill. Use solar powered outdoor lighting to

Old furniture, such as a couch or easy chair, can be easily reupholstered with neutral eco-friendly fabrics. Don't forget the throw pillows as well!





Going Green Pays Off.

Helping the environment and saving money are the perfect homeowner's combination. Any upgrade to your home that reduces your energy consumption will lower gas and electric bills, cut energy production and reduce your carbon footprint.

Transforming your residence into a green home can include several upgrades that will pay for themselves within a few years and continue to save you money in the future. Below is a list of energy saving measures, along with their initial cost, savings and rate of return.

- **Programmable thermostat** - \$115 initial cost, \$180 annual savings. Paid off in 7 months.
- **New shower heads** - \$180 initial cost, \$200 annual savings. Paid off in 11 months.
- **Heating system tune-up** - \$200 initial cost, \$180 annual savings. Paid off in 13 months.
- **Insulated walls** - \$750 initial cost, \$300 annual savings. Paid off in 2 years.
- **Low-E windows** - \$700 initial cost, \$300 annual savings. Paid off in 2 years.
- **Insulated ducts** - \$450 initial cost, \$180 annual savings. Paid off in 30 months.
- **New water heater** - \$150 initial cost, \$48 annual savings. Paid off in 3 years.
- **Tankless hot water heater** - \$450 initial cost, \$120 annual savings. Paid off in 3 years.
- **Dual-flush toilet** - \$150 initial cost, \$23 annual savings. Paid off in 6 years.
- **Solar water heater** - \$2,500 initial cost, \$280 annual savings. Paid off in 8 years.

Source: www.greenandsave.com



More Ways to Save Energy.

In addition to home upgrades, there are several practical ways to go green, save energy and lower your utility bills.

Reduce the workload of your heater and air conditioner. During winter, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower and wear more clothing. During summer, set the thermostat to 78 degrees or higher and use ceiling or table fans to circulate air.

Put your computer on sleep mode or stand-by when you're not using it and turn it off at night. If you don't use your computer often, turn it off when it's not in use.

Some electronics use energy even when they are off. Plug your TV and DVD player into a power strip and turn the power strip off when you're not watching television. Keep in mind that cutting the power to a VCR will force you to constantly reprogram it.