

Top 20 Most Effective Environmental Actions

Eat Thoughtfully

1. Eat more consciously – eat less meat, choose local and go organic.
2. Grow your own fruits and vegetables by starting a small back yard garden. No yard? No problem - grow your own fresh herbs in a convenient window sill or patio box.

Eliminate Toxins

3. Rid your home of toxic cleaners and replace them with 'green' alternatives. Some examples of alternatives are: white vinegar, lemon juice, Borax, baking soda and there are number of bio-degradable soaps and cleansers readily available to consumers at many Calgary retailers.
4. Eliminate artificial fragrances which are produced by a cocktail of up to 100 synthetic chemicals and anti-bacterial products, many of which are known to contain Triclosan – an FDA regulated pesticide, which has been found in the breast milk of healthy mothers and in aquatic eco-systems.
5. Go pesticide free – dandelions are not dangerous.

Minimize Energy Use

6. Hang your clothes to dry. It can save you +\$100 per year on your electricity bill, prolong the life of your clothes, and acts also acts as a natural humidifier adding much needed moisture to our terribly dry air.
7. Sign up for an ecoENERGY audit – Albertans who participate are eligible for a provincial rebate.
8. Cut your phantom loads – Did you know your electronics still use energy when they are turned off? Save yourself up to 10% on your monthly electricity bill by unplugging them or turning off your power bar when not in use.
9. Support renewable energy – Sign up for Bullfrog Power with GCA's Promo Code (GC) and get one month absolutely free!

\$pend Thoughtfully

10. Shop locally, support eco-friendly businesses and buy fair trade products.
11. Look for recycled materials in new products – everyone likes recycling (okay, not everyone, but we're working on it), but if we don't support products that contain recycled content, the loop remains incomplete.
12. Buy less stuff – sounds simple right? Borrow from your friends, rent or look for second hand items first. Kijiji, Craigslist and Calgary's fabulous selection of thrift and consignment stores are great options.

Travel Lightly

13. Plan your vehicle trips to run multiple errands in one go and take the most efficient route to your destination(s).
14. Go Idle Free – Idling wastes fuel, damages engines and pollutes the environment.

Waste Less

15. Compost – It may sound dirty, but composting is a great way to give back to the Earth! Just save your kitchen scraps, dried leaves, and newspapers, throw 'em in a backyard composter, or a vermicomposter or bokashi, and in no time at all, you'll have nutrient rich compost to give your garden a helpful boost.
16. Optimize your recycling – Make sure you're not contaminating your recycling bin with things that don't belong. Check out the City of Calgary's website for accepted items.
17. Lug-a-Mug and Drag-a-Bag – You do not need another plastic bag cluttering up your house or another paper coffee cup destined for a landfill. It's super easy to do and a lot of businesses offer discounts for bringing your own carry out materials.

Use Water Wisely

18. Install a rain barrel – This is a great opportunity to capture water to re-use to water your garden, trees and grass.
19. Test toilets for leaks – Lots of older toilets leak water from the tank into the bowl and it doesn't seem like a big deal, but wasted water from a leaky toilet can add up to 28 bath tubs a month. Add food coloring to your tank and wait 5 to 10 minutes. If the dye appears in the bowl, you have a leak.
20. Go low flow – Replace your taps, showerheads, and toilets with low flow models (shower heads and aerators emitting 5.7 liters per minute). Your toilets can use up to 18 liters a flush, where as the low flow models use 3-6 liters per flush. Each device installs will save up to 10,000 liters of water a year.