



for gentle care



SHOPPING - PRINT ADS
Print ads, inserts and special sections all searchable online.

Home and Garden

search

[Home](#) › [Lifestyles](#) › [Home & Garden](#)

Spring greening: 50 simple ways to be environmentally responsible

By [Cindy Sutter \(Contact\)](#)
Tuesday, May 8, 2007



Using a push mower saves energy and helps air quality, especially if your gas-powered mower is an older model.

Tightly curled bright green buds are popping out on every tree branch. Fat robins hop along the ground looking for tasty worms. Every now and then, a heady, floral smell wafts through the warm air.

Even urban concrete and brick lovers can't help but notice. It's spring. What better time, then, as the natural world's annual renewal is so with us, to take a look at our own environmental practices? City dwellers and suburbanites alike can make the biggest difference on their own little patch of terra firma. Here are some ideas from the folks at the Center for Resource Conservation and Eco-Cycle:

In the garden

Make your landscaping projects with use materials. Check out lumber and other materials at the ReSource yard.

Learn to compost your kitchen waste. Adding compost to flower and vegetable beds makes soil more fertile and helps retain moisture.

STORY TOOLS

[E-mail story](#)
[Comments](#)
[iPod friendly](#)
[Printer friendly](#)

MORE HOME & GARDEN

[Gardening Q&A: What's best for Colorado yards?](#)
[O'Meara: Groundcovers for gardens](#)
[O'Meara: Tough plants deserve respect](#)

SHARE AND ENJOY [?]



Use compost tea, available at Eco-Cycle and the Boulder County Farmers' Market or organic fertilizer instead of chemical fertilizers.

Get an irrigation audit — free from the Center for ReSource Conservation.

Put mulching blades on your mower. Grass clippings act as natural fertilizer to the lawn and don't take up landfill space.

Tune up your gas-powered lawn mower and change the oil filter.

Use gas-powered appliances after 5 p.m. on hot days to help prevent ozone buildup.

Avoid even small spills of gasoline; use a funnel to fill the mower.

Buying a new mower? Consider a push mower or electric. Rechargeable electrics mean you can now ditch the cord. Recycle the old one, drained of oil and gas, at Eco-Cycle drop off centers.

Don't use lawn appliances with two-stroke gasoline engines. They create a disproportionate amount of pollution. Buy an electric weed whacker or use a hand tool.

Water before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m. to prevent evaporation.

Plant a tree, but make sure it's a water wise one appropriate to arid Colorado. The city of Boulder is offering a limited number of climate-appropriate trees for \$50.

When planting anew, pick native and xeric plant varieties that don't use much water once established. The Center for Resource Conservation sells a xeric garden in a box at wholesale cost, \$55 to \$110.

Buy long-lasting clay pots for container gardens.

Resources

Eco-Cycle

www.ecocycle.org: for list of closest

Mother's Day
is May 13

Pay your tribute to her and tell her why you think she's the best.

Share a special moment with mom

brought to you by:
STURTZ & Copeland
florists & greenhouses

Recycle Your Waste Oil

Recycle your waste oil and refine it into a high grade lubricator.

www.oilskim.com

Green Machines Sales, LLC

New/used recycling system solutions Cost-effective recycling systems

www.greenmachinesales.com



Crosswords, Sudoku & more!



Movie Times & Movie Reviews



Get Your Broncos Gear Here! at the FanShop

Recycle plastic lawn furniture and pots with a No. 2 designation. Black plastic pots cannot be recycled, but should be re-used. Ask the nursery where you purchased them if they will reuse them. Many farmers at the farmers' market will take them back.

Use drip irrigation for your vegetable or flower garden.

Pull weeds rather than using chemicals, and promote overall health in your lawn to keep weed growth in check.

In the home:

Get an energy audit through Center for Resource Conservation.

Use passive measures to keep your house cool: shades down during the day, windows open at night.

Consider a swamp cooler instead of air conditioning.

When you replace appliances, buy energy efficient ones.

Buy an insulating blanket for your hot water heater. If replacing, consider a tankless heater.

Use a low-flow showerhead.

Make sure your dishwasher is full before running a load. Let dishes dry, rather than using the drying cycle.

Use warm and cold water to wash your clothes rather than hot.

Put up a clothesline and use it on warm days.

Don't drink bottled water. The packaging and transportation make it a big waste of resources. If you don't like the taste of tap water or are concerned about its quality, buy a filter.

Take cloth bags to the grocery store rather than using plastic. Keep them in your car.

Recycle plastic grocery and newspaper bags at the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials.

Use cloths or sponges instead of disposable wipes or paper towels for most cleanups.

Do not flush prescription drugs. Squirt glue into the bottle or wet clumping cat litter and seal the pills in the bottle to prevent leakage in the landfill.

Use environmentally friendly cleaners. Make your own or buy natural products.

Use water-based paints, stains and sealants.

If you must use a solvent-based product, don't use it on an ozone alert day and use it in the evening.

Plan big painting and stripping projects for spring and fall, so vapors won't react with the heat to create ozone.

Look for eco-friendly products such as linoleum flooring when remodeling.

Use recycled building materials when possible, and donate materials such as old windows when you remodel.

Avoid spray paints. They are often solvent-based, and the spray can become airborne.

Tightly cap all solvents.

Do not put solvents, pesticides, oil or any other hazardous waste into the landfill. Wait for special days at Eco-Cycle to recycle hazardous wastes.

Donate old clothes and working appliances to local thrift stores.

Take old computers, cell phones, televisions, stereo components, game systems, ink cartridges and DVD players to Eco-Cycle rather than adding them to the landfill. A small fee is required to recycle some items.

Take torn but clean clothes, hardcover books and athletic shoes to the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials.

Stop junk mail and credit card solicitations. Visit www.ecocycle.org to find out how.

drop-off center and more information

Center for Hard-to-Recycle Materials (CHaRM)

303-444-6634

Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Center for ReSource

Conservation: for information on energy and irrigation audits, trees, garden in a box

1702 Walnut St., Boulder

303-441-3278

www.conservationcenter.org

ReSource yard

2665 N. 63rd St., Boulder

303-419-5418

e-mail: info@resourceyard.org

Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday

www.ozoneaware.org



© 2007 Daily Camera and Boulder Publishing, LLC. .

Please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [User Agreement](#).

Comparison Shop for **Digital Cameras** and **Appliances** at **Shopzilla & BizRate**
uSwitch.com compares **gas & electricity, home phone, mobile phones, broadband, credit cards, loans and car insurance**

Look for products that use recycled material.

Buy products with the least packaging. Buy spices and flours in bulk and put in your own containers.

Compact fluorescent lightbulbs. You've heard of them. Now do it.

At work

Planning the company picnic or an outdoor event? Get a Zero Waste kit from Eco-Cycle complete with compostable plates, silverware and bowls. Take the bag of waste to the ChARM facility for industrial composting. Kits can be customized and are made to serve 25 to 150 people.

If you eat lunch at your desk, bring your own silverware rather than using plastic. Use a water bottle or glass rather than paper cups for drinking.

If you get takeout often, consider bringing your own container and asking the restaurant to fill it.

Contact Camera Staff Writer Cindy Sutter at 303-473-1335 or sutterc@dailycamera.com. tainer gardens.

Comments

Posted by loomail on May 9, 2007 at 9:34 a.m. ([Suggest removal](#))

seriously, are you short on copy editors over there?

Post your comment

(Requires free [registration](#).)

Comments are the sole responsibility of the person posting them. You agree not to post comments that are off topic, defamatory, obscene, abusive, threatening or an invasion of privacy. Violators may be banned. [Click here for our full user agreement](#).

Username:

Password:

([Forgotten your password?](#))

Your Turn: