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Everyday Green Tips

Everything Old is New Again

As the old adage goes, one person's junk is another's treasure. You can turn your junk into a valuable commodity by "recycling" it in innovative and useful ways:

§ **Share appliances with your neighbors**

How often do you really use that steam carpet cleaner, shop vacuum, leaf or snow blower, circular saw or sewing machine? Chances are, many of your household appliances lie dormant until that time once or twice a year you pull them out for some special project. Why not start an appliance sharing program with some of your neighbors? You'll save money, stretch scarce storage space and promote good will.

§ **Hold a yard sale**

You'll find plenty of relics that need a good home (yours not being one of them). Invite neighbors to bring along their vintage items, make it a community event and get ready to barter the day away! Give proceeds to your favorite charity or buy tree saplings to plant in your yard

§ **Donate to your local non-profit thrift shop**

Someone somewhere will always find use for what you no longer need or want. Many local governments have created partnerships with Good Will, the Salvation Army, Purple Heart and other charities that encourage community residents to bag their donated goods and leave them for easy pick-up.

Earth Day Begins at Home

There are plenty of ways you can make every day Earth Day. Improve your own small part of the planet by considering these suggestions for spring-cleaning, garden preparation, and home improvements.

§ **Reduce paper use**

Use rags instead of paper towels; cloth napkins instead of paper ones. Buy post-consumer recycled paper and recycle it when you've used it.

§ **Repair instead of replace**

Reupholster furniture. Resole your shoes.

§ **Plant for the planet**

Strengthen your garden's resistance to pests by planting resilient plants, by rotating the fruits and vegetables you plant, and by attracting friendly bugs to prey on the pesky ones.

Fresh Air

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the air within homes and other buildings can be more seriously polluted than the outdoor air. Research indicates that people spend approximately 90 percent of their time indoors. It's also true that, unlike so many other forms of pollution, indoor air pollution is relatively easy to correct.

To keep your air as fresh as possible, consider these tips:

§ **Circulate the air.**

Wherever possible, select offices whose windows open _ and crack them open every now and then. If you install new carpeting or cabinets at home or in the office, open windows and turn on fans until the new smells dissipate. Make sure that copying machines and other equipment are located in

rooms that are properly ventilated.

§ **Ask smokers to smoke outside.**

It is not unreasonable to ask visitors to your home to take a smoking break out of doors. Many offices have already instituted a smoking policy that minimizes nonsmoker exposure to environmental tobacco smoke; if yours hasn't, broach the topic with your office manager.

§ **Speak up.**

If you or others at your office are experiencing health or comfort problems that you suspect may be caused by indoor air pollution, discuss the issue with your supervisor. Talk with your own physician and report your problems to the company physician, nurse, or health officer so that they can make appropriate recommendation.

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