

CLUB HEADQUARTERS

A Green Summer

The City – and other resources – offer plenty of tips for being easier on the environment this summer.

By Yvonne Liu, Office of Finance

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average American recycles 408.8 pounds a year, composts 138.7 pounds a year, and disposes 1,131.5 pounds of trash a year. Summer is the best time to make worthwhile changes to increase our contribution and improve our environment. For many, summer is the season for buying or remodeling a home, landscaping the yard or just entertaining.

Did you know that recycling paper, compared to plastic and glass recycling, costs the least environmentally and monetarily? It's good to know.

Green Considerations for a Home Purchase

After you've found the right location, here are some items to look for in your new home that could mean long-term savings in energy and water use:

- Double pane thermal windows keep the heat and the cold out.
- Ceiling fans can greatly decrease the hot temperatures in the house from rising.
- Low-volume toilets can save from zero to 25 gallons a day.
- Draught-tolerant plants can mean less watering and cheaper upkeep costs.
- A well-insulated roof and walls can maintain the interior temperature from falling or rising as quickly as the wind changes. If you are interested in a green roof, go to www.fypower.org/news/?p=458 where you can download a Green Roof Guide.
- If the previous owner has installed a tankless water heater, that is an added bonus. For a Tankless Water Heater Buying Guide, go to www.tanklesswaterheatinguide.com/
- If there is a pool, make sure it is covered.
- Awnings and patios can shade the house from too much sun. To cool off hot patios, try growing hanging vines over it.
- Lastly, if your dream home doesn't have solar panels, you can plan for it. Just be aware that



Ivan Forbes, Retired City Employee and Club Member, has built a home that puts energy back into the DWP's power grid.



There are many ways we can all be greener!

solar panel roofs can cost between \$15,000 and \$30,000 even after rebates and income tax credits. For more information on solar panel roof rebates, go to: www.wholesalesolar.com/california.html

Home-Improvement Ideas

Use this checklist and survey your home. Bring this list with you on your next trip to Home Depot or any home improvement center. Just think, even the most difficult change may not only bring instant savings to your utility bills, but also instill a new habit that your family and children may pick up for many years in the future.

- Use only as much water on your lawn as you need to. Studies show that the average homeowner uses more than four times the actual amount of water needed to keep a lawn healthy and green – wasted water that runs off of property and into storm drains. Use the watering calculator and watering index found at www.bewaterwise.com to learn how much you should water. This could save 750 to 1,500 gallons a month.
- Fix leaky faucets, plumbing joints and your sprinkler system. This saves 20 gallons a day for every leak stopped.
- Replace your showerhead with a new high-efficiency showerhead; install water saving faucet aerators in your bathroom and kitchen. Free showerheads and aerators are available at any DWP customer service center.
- Install a new "smart" sprinkler controller that applies just the right amount of water for your

landscape, based on your plants and garden and local weather conditions. In one study, these new controllers were shown to save 40 gallons per day.

- Replace a portion of your lawn with beautiful native and California Friendly plants. Saves 1,000 to 1,800 gallons a month depending on your climate.
- Replace your old washing machine with a new, high-efficiency model. This could save 20 to 30 gallons per load. Learn how you can receive a \$250 rebate from the purchase of a new eligible high efficiency clothes washer.
- Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher. This saves 300 to 800 gallons a month.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks. This saves 150 gallons or more each time.
- Shorten your showers. Every minute of your shower uses 2.5 gallons of water. So, a one- or two-minute reduction can save up to 375 gallons per month.
- Don't water the sidewalks, driveway or gutter. Adjust your sprinklers so that water lands on your lawn or garden where it belongs -- and only there. This saves 500 gallons a month.
- Don't use the toilet as a wastebasket. This saves up to 200 gallons a month. Downloaded from www.ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp001257.jsp
- Use rechargeable batteries. Having rechargeable batteries at home can save you several trips to the corner store and thereby save you gas, time and money.

For more ideas, go to: www.bewaterwise.com/

If you want an energy and water efficiency guide that goes through green ideas room by room, use this one provided by LADWP: www.ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp000820.jsp

Landscaping and Composting in the Backyard

Trees in the backyard can also help keep the house cool. If you plan to plant trees, the DWP gives away free shade trees: www.ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp000747.jsp

Even if you are not a resident of Los Angeles, you can learn from the Website by clicking on DWP Home Tree Guide.

Starting a compost bin is probably the most efficient way to reduce our daily contribution to the landfills. It could turn the worst soil into dark, rich soil within a year, and without the use of chemical fertilizers.

The Public Works/Bureau of Sanitation's Solid Resources Citywide Recycling Division

(SRCRD) develops and implements effective and cost-effective source reduction, recycling, and reuse programs and policies. The office fosters public/private recycling partnerships and helps to promote new markets for recyclable materials.

Residents can learn about backyard composting, worm composting, types of compost bins, grass cycling, and other smart gardening techniques at the City's free backyard composting workshops. In addition to the workshops, special discounted compost bin sales events are held throughout the year.

There is a workshop and bin sale schedule available for the current year:

www.lacity.org/SAN/solid_resources/composting/index.htm

Your guide to home composting:

www.lacity.org/san/solid_resources/pdfs/composting.pdf

Entertaining

Once your compost bin is in place, you are ready to party. Hosting a low-waste or zero-waste event starts as easily as emailing invites (evites.com) and encouraging your guests to carpool. Second, reduce single use decorations, party favors and tableware. For example, think colorful biodegradable streamers, fresh flowers and reusable ribbons. Instead of balloons to mark your house or party location, hang an occasion appropriate flag or windsock or a theme related beach towel.

Making a craft using whatever beads, buttons and leftover materials can entertain kids. If crafts require organizing too many items, have a book exchange where children swap old books with each other. Older children are often sated by party favors of candy and toys. Have children decorate their own paper cups and plant a pansy from a tray of pansies to take home.

Also, think green, clutter-free gifts when you are giving gifts. The Club Store offers many amusement park tickets that are perfect choices for clutter-free gifts. For example, a trip to the Los Angeles Zoo or Legoland can delight any young child, and movie theatre tickets will keep the older ones happy.

For compostable tableware made from plant materials including corn starch and potato starch, check out ecoproducts.com, ecowise.com and worldcentric.org. Remember to put out a recycling bin and a compost bin so your guest can help separate the trash.

Make your party memorable not by the mountain of trash left behind, but by the fun of using green ideas together.



Youth participants in recent Rec and Parks camp programs enjoy using the new Compostable food service materials, which are environmentally friendly.