

SUSTAINABILITY TODAY NEWSLETTER

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ABOUT US

The Texas Tech University Recycling Center is housed within the Student Housing Services. The center has been in operation for over 6 years and has continually grown year after year.

Today the Recycling Center collects all forms of recyclables from plastics, glass, foam, cardboard, paper, aluminum, tin, electronics, and anything in between! The money collected goes back into the students through Sustainability Scholarships!



HOME

This week's newsletter is focused on tips for being sustainable around your home. Home is where the heart is and by utilizing some of these sustainability tips, you can see some of your utility bills reduced which saves you money all while doing your part to help our environment!

The Bigger Picture

There are over a billion homes in the world and about 100 million or so of those homes are in the United States more than 7 million homes in Texas and a little over 92,000 homes are located in Lubbock County alone. It should be no surprise to you that the home is where we accumulate most of our waste since we spend the majority of our time at home.

The average person generates about 4.5 pounds of trash every single day! Over the course of your lifetime, you will generate 600 times your average adult weight. So it is easy to see how quickly that trash adds up and what can we do to keep some of that trash out of the landfill.

Believe it or not, this waste is not the biggest impact on our planet. In our American homes we use at least twice as much water and energy per person than anyone else in the world! Being from West Texas, we are all aware of how little water we have and in order to sustain our growing population, we are going to need 22% more water in 2025 than we need today.

Energy for the home is mostly used for heating and cooling the home. This energy is usually natural gas but can be some other form of energy such as electricity or propane.

"People don't realize how little it takes to change our world for the better." –Ellen DeGeneres



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average person drinks in a lifetime!

Microwave: Keep your microwave clean and you'll be able to maximize its energy. This means less electricity used, less money spent, and less time cooking.

Stove: Use the right-size pot on your stove burners. You could save about \$36 annually for an electric range or \$18 for a gas range. Five percent of the energy bought and used per person in the United States is for preparing and cooking food!

Brushing Your Teeth: Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth. You'll conserve up to 5 gallons of water per day! Throughout the entire United States, the daily savings could add up to 1.5 billion gallons!

Shaving: Instead of letting the water run when you brush your teeth, brush while you're waiting for the water to get hot for your shave! You could save time AND money on water, up to 1,825 gallons of water per "brushaver" each year! This is enough water to fill your bathtub more than thirty-five times.

Junk Mail: Rid yourself of junk mail—or at least recycle it! The average U.S. household receives 1.5 trees' worth of junk mail each year, and many of those trees are thrown right into the trash. If you want to reduce the amount of junk mail you receive, you'll need to register with the Mail Preference Service. It costs a buck, but you can do it easily online at www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist. For the junk mail you continue to receive, remember to toss it in the recycling bin in your building instead of throwing it into the garbage. If all Americans recycled their junk mail, \$370 million in landfill dumping fees could be saved each year!

Phone Books: Recycle them! Telephone books make up almost 10 percent of waste at dump sites!

THE SIMPLE STEPS

1. Take a shorter shower. Every two minutes you save on your shower can conserve more than ten gallons of water. And that adds up: if everyone in the country saved just one gallon of water from their daily shower, over the course of a year it would equal twice the amount of freshwater withdrawn from the Great Lakes everyday. The Great Lakes are the world's largest source of freshwater.

2. Set your thermostat a degree higher for air-conditioning and a degree lower for heating. You could save \$100 per year on your utility bill. Keep adjusting and you'll save even more. If every home in America turned the dial, we could save more than \$10 billion per year on energy costs, enough to provide a year's worth of gasoline, electricity, and natural gas to every person in Iowa.

3. Recycle! If everyone in America simply separated their recyclable products like paper, plastic, glass, and aluminum from the trash and tossed them into a recycling bin, we could decrease the amount of waste sent to landfills by 75%! Currently, it takes an area the size of Pennsylvania to dump all our waste each year.

TIPS FOR THE HOME!

Dishwasher: Run full loads in your dishwasher and save energy, and don't pre-rinse before putting them in. Do both and you'll save up to 20 gallons of water per dish load, or 7,300 gallons over a year. That's as much water as the

Washers: Set warm wash and cold rinse cycles, and save 90 percent over the energy used when machine washing in hot water only. Together, all U.S. households could save the energy equivalent of one hundred thousand barrels of oil in a day by switching from hot-hot to warm-cold cycles!

Dryers: Clean your dryer lint screen, and don't overload the dryer. You'll save up to 5 percent on your electricity bill. If everyone did it, we'd save the energy equivalent of 350 million gallons of gasoline per year! Better yet: use a clothesline when possible!

Water Heaters: Wrap your water heater in an insulating blanket to store heat. Then set your thermostat no higher than 120 degrees to conserve energy. You could save 25 percent of the energy used in your home by making these changes. If everyone did this, U.S. households would save more than \$32 billion per year in energy costs!

Car Wash: Washing your car in a commercial car wash is better for the environment than doing it yourself. Commercial car washes not only use significantly less water per wash—up to 100 gallons less—but they often recycle and reuse rinse water. If every American who currently washes a vehicle at home chose instead to go to a professional car wash—just once—up to 8.7 billion gallons of water could be saved, and some 12 billion gallons of soapy polluted water could be diverted from the country's rivers, lakes, and streams.

Lawn Care: Cut your grass so it's two inches high, and leave the clippings on the lawn. You'll spend less time mowing and raking, and you won't have to water your lawn as much. Forty percent of water in summer is allocated to outdoor usage when rates are highest. Also, less lawn care usually means using fewer chemicals that will leach into runoff water and damage local fish and bird habitats.

Outdoor Lighting: Turn off your outside lights when they're not needed. If possible, use timers or motion sensors. The average household spends about \$13 per year per 100-watt bulb on electricity.

Fun and Games

Each newsletter we will also bring you a fun game or trivia to help you remember to go green!

Starting with this newsletter we will have a trivia questions. Answer all of the trivia questions correctly by sending an email to housing.gogreen@ttu.edu with 'Trivia Answer' in the subject line and you will be placed in a drawing for a prize! Answers are due one week after the newsletter is sent out and winners will be notified via email.

Remember, if you print this newsletter, use both sides of the page and once you are done with it, make sure it finds its way to one of the many recycling bins located throughout campus!

1. On average, how many aluminum soda cans are used in the United States each year?
 - a. 90 million
 - b. 80 billion
 - c. 120 million
 - d. 3 billion
2. What percentage of monetary purchasing goes to packaging materials?
 - a. \$1 for every \$10 spent
 - b. \$1 for every \$50 spent
 - c. \$1 for every \$100 spent
 - d. \$1 for every \$1,000 spent
3. How much energy does recycling just one aluminum can save?
 - a. Enough to power a microwave for 30 minutes
 - b. Enough to power the average American home for 4 days
 - c. Enough to power a computer for 15 minutes
 - d. Enough to power a TV for 3 hours