



## Your Actions Around the Home Make A Difference

### *Indoors:*

**Use Interior Paints With No or Low VOC Content** - Paints and varnishes are one of the major causes of air pollution in homes. Standard paints release low levels of toxins called Volatile Organic Compounds or VOCs. Next time you paint, use products that contain no or low VOC content in order to ensure a safe and healthy home.



**Install Low-flow Faucet Aerators** - Save money by installing low-flow aerators on your home faucets. Installing these aerators can decrease your water consumption by up to 50 percent; thereby, decreasing your energy use for hot water as well. These aerators are easy to install and cost only \$5.00 - \$10.00.

**Use Energy Saving CFL Bulbs** - Changing your most frequently used incandescent bulbs to energy saving CFL bulbs will reduce greenhouse gases and save you money. CFLs use about 75% less energy than a standard bulb and save \$30 or more over the life of the bulb.



**Capture Unused Tap Water** - When waiting for your tap water to get hot, capture the cold water and use it for your plants, or some other purpose. This will reduce your water usage and help alleviate pressure on shrinking water supplies.

**Consider a Tankless Water Heater** - Also called instantaneous or demand water heaters, these appliances provide hot water only as it is needed. Traditional water heaters produce standby energy losses that cost you money. You don't heat your house while you're on vacation, so why heat your water when you're not using it.

**Purchase a Reusable Coffee Filter** - For about \$10.00 you can buy a reusable coffee filter for almost any coffee maker. Sprinkle your used grounds around your garden for fertilizer or place them in your compost bin to avoid sending waste to the landfill.



**Unplug Unused Appliances** - Even when home electronics are turned off, they still consume energy when plugged into an outlet. To save money and energy, simply unplug appliances when they are not in use or plug several appliances into a power strip that can be easily turned on and off.

**Unplug the Old Fridge** - A "mostly empty fridge" is costing you \$188 per year to operate. Instead, put soda and beer in the basement to keep it cool. Unplug the fridge and recycle it.



## ***Outdoors:***

**Stop Washing your Car in the Driveway** - Wash your car on your lawn or at a commercial car wash. Few people realize that washing your car in the driveway is one of the most environmentally un-friendly chores we can do around the house. Soaps and pollutants that wash off your car go right into storm drains and eventually into rivers, streams, and creeks.



**Plant a Rain Garden** – Rain gardens allow water to slowly filter into the ground through native plantings rather than running off into the storm sewer. Rain gardens can cut down on pollution reaching creeks and streams by up to 30%.

**Include Native Plants in your Landscaping** - Choose native plants for your next landscaping project. Native plants are a good choice because they are adapted to the area's unique soil and climate conditions, need less maintenance, have greater survival rates, require less water, and provide food and habitat for native wildlife species.

**Plant Trees** – Planting deciduous trees on the south and west side of your home will keep your house cool in the summer and let the sun warm your home in the winter. Just three trees, properly placed around a house, can save up to 30% of energy use. Trees or shrubs planted to shade air conditioners help cool a building more efficiently.



**Prevent Runoff with Pervious Landscape Pavers** – Install permeable pavers in order to reduce storm water runoff by allowing water to seep back into the ground. Traditional concrete patios do not allow water to penetrate into the soil, but rather, divert the water (frequently polluted with sediment) to the nearest waterway.

**Get Rid Of Your Burn Barrel** - By law, only leaves, plant clippings, paper, cardboard and clean, untreated wood can be burned. Burn barrels emit acid vapors, carcinogenic tars, and "heavy metals" such as lead, cadmium and chromium, as well as unhealthful levels of carbon monoxide.

**Get the Most Out of Rainwater with Rain Barrels** - Collecting rainwater in barrels is an inexpensive and environmentally friendly way to water your yard or garden during dry periods. Gather water in these barrels during the spring for use later in the dryer summer months.



**Compost** - Don't flush your food wastes down the drain, compost instead. Composting is a natural biological process that converts organic material into a stable product. Composting saves money, water, helps feed your gardens and lawns, and keeps organic wastes out of the sewage treatment plants and landfills.

To learn more about sustainability and how you can get involved, please visit our website at [www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/SGB](http://www.ci.green-bay.wi.us/SGB)