

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS WEEK



REDUCE  REUSE  RECYCLE

Limit your Meat Consumption: Go **Meatless on Mondays!**

Did you know that the meat industry is responsible for approximately 20% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions? In fact, producing one calorie of meat requires nearly twenty times the amount of energy as one plant calorie! To make matters worse, producing meat also requires a huge amount of water. An estimated 1,800 to 2,500 gallons of water go into a single pound of beef. By comparison, soy tofu produced in California requires only 220 gallons of water per pound. As you can see, the impact of meat can really add up.

Join us in pledging to not eat meat once a week! You could even take it further by following the following steps over the course of a year:

- Eat one less burger a week, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for 320 miles.
- Skip meat and cheese one day a week with your family, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for five weeks – or reducing everyone's daily showers by 3 minutes.
- Skip steak once a week with your family, it would be the equivalent of taking your car off the road for nearly three months.

Need help figuring out how you and your family could stop eating meat?

Visit meatlessmonday.com for a collection of tips and alternative meal options to get you started.

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Trashless Tuesdays – 4 Easy Ways to Start

The average American throws away 4.5 lbs. of trash every day. That adds up to nearly a ton of waste per person per year. Added together, that's the same weight as 2.3 million Boeing 747 jets every year just in the U.S. Trash disposal has been proven to be harmful to environment, costs billions of dollars in taxes, and disproportionately impacts poor communities surrounding landfills and incinerators.

If everyone could go even one day per week without generating any trash, it could make a serious dent in the overall problem. Many people don't even think about the trash they make every day: the packaging their breakfast cereal and milk come in, the coffee cup from the drive through, the paper napkins at lunch, receipts and plastic bags from the afternoon shopping trip... It all adds up.

Here are a 4 simple ways you can reduce trash:

- Use Your Reusables – Employ those cute canvas shopping bags, lunch box, and insulated water bottles to their fullest. Go the extra mile and get some cloth napkins, reusable silverware and eco-friendly containers for your sandwich and chips.
- Buy Fewer Packaged Foods – While you may already be avoiding Lunchables and single-serve packages of snacks, take your aversion to packaging even further by avoiding fruits and veggies that come in plastic and bringing your own bags for produce and bulk bin purchases.
- Think Instead of Avoiding – Your first inclination may be to avoid shopping altogether on your trashless days (not a bad plan) but the better thing to do would be to look at your shopping with new eyes. Choose products with as little extra packaging as possible, and give preference to products whose packaging is recyclable.
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle — and Compost! – Whatever waste you can't totally avoid, redirect by sending it to the recycling bin or compost pile instead of the trash heap. Do your research ahead of time and figure out what—and where—you can recycle in your town.

Read an article on [Zero-Waste Living \(http://www.utne.com/environment/zero-waste-living-ze0z1306zpit.aspx\)](http://www.utne.com/environment/zero-waste-living-ze0z1306zpit.aspx).

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Water Conservation: **Water Down Wednesday** all starts with you!

The average American family uses more than 300 gallons of water per day at home. Roughly 70 percent of this use occurs indoors. Nationally, outdoor water use accounts for 30 percent of household use yet can be much higher in drier parts of the country and in more water-intensive landscapes.

Water conservation, using water efficiently and avoiding waste, is essential to ensure that we have adequate water today and into the future. Water is a finite resource and the supplies on Earth today are no more than what was here at the beginning of the planet. When it comes to conserving water, small adjustments can have a big impact.

Here are a few water-saving tips you can add to your routine:

- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save up to four gallons a minute. That's up to 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
- Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.
- Time your shower to keep it under five minutes. You'll save up to 1,000 gallons per month.
- Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and laundry.
- Be a leak detective! Check all hoses, connectors, and faucets regularly for leaks.
- Leave lawn clippings on your grass, this cools the ground and holds in moisture.
- Install water-saving shower heads and low flow faucet aerators.
- When ice cubes are leftover from your drink, don't throw them out. Pour them on a plant.

When it comes to conserving water, small adjustments can have a big impact.

Visit **Water Use It Wisely** (<http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/>) for over 100+ water-saving tips.

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Plant-a-Tree Thursday – Save the Planet

We commonly hear that trees are good for the environment and that deforestation, conversely, is bad for the planet. However, many people wonder how trees can help the environment.

Here are just a few of the ways that trees are a 'green' part of our world:

- Trees reduce CO₂. We hear a lot about our carbon footprint, but many people don't realize that the carbon in this equation is carbon dioxide, or CO₂. The same way humans breathe oxygen and exhale CO₂, trees breathe in CO₂ and exhale oxygen. This carbon dioxide becomes sugars that can then be eaten, burnt for fuel, or simply enjoyed in its leafy form. An adult tree can change 48 pounds of carbon every year into enough oxygen to keep two people alive.
- Trees reduce ozone levels. This effect is not just global, but local. In large cities, a reduction in ozone can mean milder temperatures and more breathable air.
- Trees reduce erosion. This is because their roots physically keep soil from washing away, but also because tree roots absorb and store water. A tree canopy can reduce the force of rain hitting the ground from a deluge to a gentle sprinkle, further preventing erosion.
- Trees can reduce heating and air conditioning costs. There is a reason trees tend to be clustered around homes. Homeowners want them there, not just for their shady beauty, but for their effect on temperature. It is well known that trees can absorb summer heat. They also provide shade that can cool a house and yard substantially. In cooler months, trees provide a windbreak and trap heat. A difference of just degrees can save a lot of energy over the course of a year.
- Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30%
- A mature tree removes almost 70 times more pollution than a newly planted tree.
- A single tree produces approximately 260 pounds of oxygen per year. That means two mature trees can supply enough oxygen annually to support a family of four!
- Water originating in our national forests provide drinking water for over 3,400 communities, and approximately 60 million individuals.
- One tree can absorb as much carbon in a year as a car produces while driving 26,000 miles.
- Over the course its life, a single tree can absorb one ton of carbon dioxide.

National Tree Benefit Calculator (<http://www.arboday.org/calculator>)



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Reduce Food Waste Friday: Waste Not, Want Not?

1 out of 9 people – more than 800 million people - suffer from hunger. 1/3 of all food produced for humans – more than 1.3 billion tons – is wasted. Food that is produced but not eaten adds 3.3 billion tons of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Food discarded in landfills immediately begins to produce methane gas, a greenhouse gas with more than 25 times the heat trapping capacity of carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gas harms our air, water, earth, and future generations.

Other ways you can prevent food waste:

- **Think.** Be a smart shopper and think about what you are buying and when it will be eaten. Wasting food is often a subconscious act – become aware of how much food you throw away. Plan meals and use shopping lists. Bring your leftovers home from restaurants in reusable containers.
- **Eat.** Become a more mindful eater. Eyes bigger than your stomach? Request smaller portions and become a leftovers guru.
- **Save.** Save your food, save your money and save the environment. Donate to food banks and become a conscious consumer.

Planning, prepping, and storing food can help your household waste less food.

Visit the [EPA \(https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home\)](https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home) for some tips to help you do just that!