



Earth-Friendly Budget Tips

Looking for ways to trim your budget? Some of the simplest acts can have a significant impact—on both your wallet and the earth. Here are 10 tips that can get you started today!

What you can do

1. **Buy compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFL).** They cost a little more upfront, but CFLs save in energy costs and last longer than standard lightbulbs. A single 60- to 100-watt bulb can save you \$30 to \$36 in energy costs over the life of the bulb. If every household in the U.S. replaced one light bulb with a CFL, it would prevent enough pollution to equal removing one million cars from the road.
2. **Turn off lights and unplug appliances when not in use,** or use a "smart" power strip that senses when appliances are off and cuts energy use. The reason? Some appliances continue to use electricity even when they are off, which are referred to as "vampire" or "phantom" appliances.
3. **Do some household maintenance.** Check your hot-water heater to make sure it is set at 120 degrees (many are set higher, which requires more energy and raises the risk of scalding). Change the air filters in your ventilation system. Vacuum the coils behind your refrigerator to make sure it is operating as efficiently as possible. Insulate your home, water heater and pipes.
4. **Use alternative modes of transportation** that save on gas, such as carpooling, biking, public transportation, and walking. Avoiding just 10 miles of driving every week would eliminate about 500 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions a year.
5. **Use the Energy Star program** to find energy efficient products for your home. The right choices can save families about 30% (\$400 a year) while reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. For more information, go to: www.energystar.gov
6. **Skip the bottled water.** Bottled water is expensive and creates large amounts of waste. Instead, use reusable water bottles, and purchase a water filter for your home.
7. **Use less water and look for the WaterSense label** to identify water-efficient products and programs. For more information, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/>
8. **Remember the three Rs.** Reduce how much you purchase, reuse what you can, and then recycle as much as possible.
9. **Purchase non-toxic home cleaning products, or try making your own.** To learn more about common household products and your family's health and safety, go to <http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov>.
10. **Buy locally grown and produced foods.** The average meal in the United States travels 1,200 miles from the farm to your plate. Buying locally will save fuel and keep money in your community.

For more budget tips and tools, contact your Employee Assistance Program via the toll free number or website listed below.



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