

## In the Yard

- Start a backyard composting pile or use a composting bin to process organic wastes from your kitchen and yard. Finished compost can be used as a soil amendment to improve soil quality in gardens or flowerbeds or as a top-dressing for lawn areas.
- Leave grass trimmings on your lawn area to add nutrients back into the soil.
- Plant perennials instead of annuals. Make sure hoses and sprinklers don't leak. Don't let water run continuously when washing your vehicle.
- Use a broom to clean off sidewalks instead of hosing them off with water.



## At the Office

Save Paper and Save Money!!!

- Make double-sided copies.
- Circulate one copy of a memo rather than issuing one copy to every employee.
- Post announcements on bulletin boards or e-mail announcements to employees.
- Use the back of old letterhead for copies of drafts & internal documents.
- Compose, edit, and submit for approval all documents on computer prior to printing.
- Make documents available on-line.
- Use e-mail and voice mail instead of memos whenever possible.
- Use the telephone instead of fax whenever possible.
- Use the backs of used paper for phone messages.
- Use a central filing system.
- Update distribution lists.
- Reduce the size of business forms.
- Use only targeted direct mailings.
- Use reversible "two-use" envelopes for items that require a response.
- Post a list of paper saving tips at each copy machine.
- Request that your office be removed from catalog and junk mailing lists.



*Please share this  
Green information  
with family and friends*

For further information regarding  
"Green" initiatives, please contact:

CHARLES COUNTY

Department of Public Facilities  
301-932-3599 • 301-870-2778  
[www.charlescounty.org/recycling](http://www.charlescounty.org/recycling)



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# IT IS EASY BEING GREEN



## What exactly does “Being Green” mean?

“Being green” refers to environmentally conscientious people who have chosen to make changes in their lives to help aid in the preservation of our planet. These changes can include such things as reducing, reusing, and recycling, as well as purchasing recycled and energy-efficient items.

“Being green” helps to insure the conservation of precious natural resources such as metals, minerals, and fossil fuels. Some natural resources are non-renewable. The burning of fossil fuels, such as oil and coal, emits tons of greenhouse gases (gases that trap heat) into the atmosphere. On the other hand, renewable energy is 100 percent clean and uses resources that are sustainable and do not negatively impact the environment. Examples of renewable energy are solar (sun), hydro (water), and wind power.

## What can I do to “become green”?

It's easy! You can begin by practicing the 3 R's:

### Reduce!

Waste prevention, also known as source reduction, means consuming and throwing away less. This includes purchasing durable, long-lasting goods and items that use less packaging. Reducing is the preferred method of waste management and goes a long way toward protecting the environment by preventing the generation of waste in the first place.

### Reuse!

Repairing, selling, or donating items to community groups such as the Reuse Barn (located within the Bargain Barn in Hughesville) reduces waste, helps the environment, and benefits our community. Reusing items is better than recycling because no energy in reprocessing is wasted.

### Recycle!

Recycling is the process of making new things out of old things; it turns materials that would otherwise become waste into valuable resources. When new items are made from old items, considerably less energy is used than when they are derived from raw materials. Consequently less air pollution occurs, and valuable landfill space is saved.



## Green “Numbers”

- ◆ It takes approximately **500** years for an aluminum can to break down!
- ◆ Recycling **1** aluminum can saves enough energy to run a 100-watt bulb for **20** hours, a computer for **3** hours, and a TV for **2** hours!
- ◆ Plastics require **100** to **400** years to break down in a landfill!
- ◆ Just **5** 2-liter plastic bottles can produce enough fiberfill to make a ski jacket!
- ◆ More than **60%** of the waste found on beaches is plastic bottles!
- ◆ It takes approximately **1** million years for a glass bottle to break down!
- ◆ Preventing **1** ton of paper waste saves between **15** to **17** mature trees!
- ◆ By recycling **1** ton of paper, enough energy is saved to heat an average home for **6** months!
- ◆ Compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFL's) use up to **75%** less energy than incandescent bulbs and last up to **10** times longer.
- ◆ There is an average of **4** milligrams of mercury (enough to cover the tip of a ballpoint pen) in **1** CFL and about **500** milligrams in **1** mercury thermometer!
- ◆ A leaky toilet can waste about **200** gallons of water every day!
- ◆ The average bathroom faucet flows at a rate of **2** gallons per minute!
- ◆ A full bath tub requires about **70** gallons of water!
- ◆ A **5** minute shower uses from **10** to **25** gallons of water!

## Other “green practices” include:

### At the Store

- Use cloth or mesh bags to hold your purchases when shopping.
- Return hangers to dry cleaners for reuse.
- Purchase items in concentrated form, bulk, or economy sizes that use the least amount of packaging.
- Purchase items in containers that have other uses.
- Purchase high-quality, long-lasting products.

### At Home

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient long-lasting compact fluorescent light bulbs.
- Use rechargeable batteries whenever possible.
- Donate unwanted items (e.g., clothing, equipment, furniture, appliances).
- Repair older items rather than purchasing new ones.
- Use cloth towels, napkins and rags instead of disposable paper products that cannot be recycled.
- Repair leaking faucets.
- Don't leave water running while brushing teeth or washing hands.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Wash only full loads of dishes and laundry.
- Avoid using disposable cups, plates and cutlery.
- Save bows, tissue paper, gift bags, and newspaper to wrap gifts in the future.
- Donate back-issues of magazines to schools for use in school projects or to a doctor's office for patients to read.
- Use the backs of old envelopes for store lists or phone messages.
- Use thermoses and reusable containers for the food in your packed lunch.
- Request that you be removed from catalog and junk mailing lists.

