



newsletter

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Save Money & Reduce Your Impact

Save and reuse containers. Why buy brand new Tupperware when a yogurt container will serve just as well? How about washing out empty spaghetti sauce jars and using them to store anything from nuts and grains in the pantry to nails and screws in the shed? You don't have to be a packrat, but it pays to be practical.

Line-dry laundry. Warm weather is approaching and it's time to start drying your laundry outside. Although, there are stories of New York City women who would line-dry in the winter and bring stiff, frozen clothes inside for a final warm-up by the radiator.

Grow a Victory Garden. Now's as good a time as any to tear up your front lawn and plant something edible instead. If you're busy or not much of a green thumb, just start small: container gardens on rooftops or balconies, growing herbs in your sunny kitchen window, or just a small garden bed with a few essentials to begin with. Getting to know the process of life that is all around you helps you appreciate your home and your habitat so much more. Even if you're not worried about a crisis, the act of eating your own organic, local food is both healthy and green.

Buy Used. Swap meets, thrift-stores, Craig's List, and KSL are all great places to find what you need. There's no stigma these days – it's considered practical and green. It's just a way of people cycling perfectly good objects back into the product stream where someone else who needs it more will find it. Give it a chance, you'll be amazed at what you find.

Toughen Up. We're no longer in the day and age of cranking up the heater in the winter and wearing shorts around the house. Wear sweaters, socks and slippers to stay comfortable as you lower the thermostat. This goes for summertime protocol as well: open windows and use window or ceiling fans. Only use A/C or your swamp cooler when necessary.

Work with what you got. Surely you've heard the phrase: "Use It Up, Wear It Out, Make It Do or Do Without." This doesn't have to be some kind of austere punishment, but rather a call to creativity. It's the concept of "touski," where you only have a few ingredients left in the fridge or a few clean items left in your closet and you put together the finest meal or outfit that you never would have thought of before. From now on, rather than assuming you need to buy something now, look around at what you have and see if you can figure out an innovative, even artistic, way to do what you need to do.

We all might have to tighten our belts a bit over the coming days, but it's really not a punishment; it's an opportunity to tweak our lifestyles to a more sustainable model.

<http://www.ecosalon.com/personal-sustainability-tips/>

Myco-diesel: Turning fungi into fuel



"Can fungi be made into fuel? A team led by Montana State University professor of plant pathology Gary Strobel is giving it a try. Strobel believes *Gliocladium roseum* (shown left), a fungus found in the forests of northern Patagonia in South America, may offer an alternative to fossil fuels. *G. roseum*, recently unearthed during tests on ulmo trees in the region, releases gases that contain a complex mixture of hydrocarbons that become explosive when burned. The discovery has been coined "myco-diesel," derived from the Greek word for fungus."

Read more at: <http://www.odemagazine.com/doc/61/myco-diesel-fungi-fuel/>

Composting



Composting your food scraps or lawn waste is a great way to improve the quality of your soil and reduce the amount of waste sent to the dump. "In 2006 yard trimmings and food scraps accounted for 25 percent of all Municipal solid waste created nationally."

The following websites provide good information on how to build and maintain your own compost bin.

1. <http://www.backyardgardener.com/compost/index.html>
2. <http://www.bluegrassgardens.com/how-to-build-a-compost-bin.htm>
3. www.treehugger.com/files/2007/07/green-basics-compost.php

Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2006