

GREEN EARTH

2014



Go Green in the Kitchen

There's eating green, cooking green, cleaning green and buying green. But when you combine and implement all of those methods into your daily kitchen routines, then you are truly living a green lifestyle.

Employing energy-efficient cooking with equipment made from sustainable materials not only is important to your overall health, but also to the well-being of the environment. Green living is in your purchasing habits, too, and can affect the food you eat, the appliances you use and even the flooring you use in your kitchen. Fortunately, there are easy steps to take one at a time that will help build your kitchen into a green gourmet of sorts.

ENERGYSTAR

When looking to purchase a new refrigerator, dishwasher or freezer, look for the EnergyStar label to get the most bang for your buck. The logo is placed on all qualified products that meet specific standards for energy efficiency mandated by the federal government. These products exceed those minimum standards for efficiency and quality can lead to big savings on energy and costs for you in the long run. According to energy.gov, EnergyStar-qualified refrigerators are 20 percent more energy-efficient than non-qualified models.

GREEN COOKING

The stove is one area of wasted energy use in the kitchen. Especially on many new models, preheating is a thing of the past. You can conserve that 10-15 minutes of heating time by placing your roast in the oven immediately, and also by turning off the oven five to 10 minutes early and letting the residual heat finish off your dish. Also, consider using the microwave for smaller items that don't require the oven. EnergyStar estimates that you can reduce cooking energy by as much as 80 percent when using the microwave instead of the oven.

GREEN CLEANUP

Read the list on the back of your current cleaner. If you can pronounce all of the ingredients that went into making that bottle of cleaner, then you are probably using a safe product. If your dishwashing liquid, detergent or surface cleaner is comprised of petrochemicals, then you should consider the alternatives on the market. Many companies specialize in producing natural, plant-based cleaning products that are healthy for you and your family to breathe, touch and be around. There are also many recipes for DIY cleaning products using household ingredients such as vinegar and baking soda that can combine to form an all-purpose, non-toxic cleaner.



Rain Barrels for Conservation

Water conservation is at the forefront of economic concerns for groups such as the Environmental Protection Agency.

According to the U.S. Geological Society's Water Census, daily per capita water use in the U.S. is 98 gallons for domestic use. This includes both indoor and outdoor use. One efficient way to conserve some of that wasted water is by using outdoor rain barrels, designed to collect and maintain harvested rain for later use. They reduce main water use, have a positive impact on both your wallet and the environment and help enhance your self-efficiency.

USAGES

Stored water may be used for watering gardens, agriculture and washing cars. The EPA urges against using rain barrels for drinking, especially when other water supplies are available, inexpensive and of good quality. It takes much effort to ensure that stored water remains uncontaminated and properly filtered.

But, by using simple ground rainwater tanks that can be hooked up to your home's gutter systems, you can store hundreds of gallons of water per year that can make a big impact on optimizing your outdoor activities.

INEXPENSIVE INSTALLATIONS

Rain barrels, if used on a



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small scale for outdoor use, are rather inexpensive to purchase and install. Most of the time, a homeowner can install multiple barrels without professional assistance. Simply remove the bottom portion of your gutter where you will be placing the barrel and install the barrel underneath your

exposed gutter. The barrel will catch all of the rainwater and melted snow that your gutter sends into it. Many rain barrels come equipped with a hose-hookup at the bottom, making for easy water transfer to water your garden, wash your car or spray down your home.

OTHER IDEAS

The U.S. Geological Society estimates that if all U.S. households installed water-saving features, water use would decrease by 30 percent, saving 5.4 billion gallons per day. This would also result in an annual savings of more

than \$4 billion. Consider installing water-saving features in your faucets, showers and washing machines – these are the three domestic areas that we rely on for most of our water use. They are also the areas that produce the most waste because of leaky, underperforming systems.



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Earth-Conscious Gift Ideas

Have an Earth enthusiast among your family and friends? Green gifting has taken center stage, as buyers are opting for more unique options that help people lower their carbon footprint.

And just because they are creatively crafted doesn't mean they have to be overly expensive. With a little research and open-mindedness, you can find that perfect green gift for even the quirkiest of recipients.

SEEDS OF LOVE

One of the least expensive, yet most thoughtful gift ideas

can be seed packets for your friend or family member's garden. Some specialty companies will even print personalized messages or pictures on the sides of the packets for a special touch. Opt for a perennial flower that comes up every year for an annual reminder of your gift and friendship. Seeds can also be just part of a larger gift basket filled with garden-related

items. No matter how you package them, seeds are a way of offering a sustainable gift that can keep on giving.

ORGANIC WINE

If available in your area, a nice bottle of local, organic wine can help bolster your gift-giving reputation. Purchasing an eco-friendly option also helps support

local business owners who brew, package and distribute the wine themselves. And with plenty of variety on the market, you should be able to find a bottle for any taste.

CHARITABLE DONATION

What better way to help support the favorite charity of

your friend or family member than by placing a sizeable donation in their name? Charities often will provide a certificate of appreciation or a documentation showing exactly how the donation was used. So no matter if the donation is \$20 or \$200, your special someone will take pride in the fact that their name is official attached to their favorite cause.

What is Earth Day?

For more than 40 years, Earth Day has brought people together based on their love for the planet and their dedication to keeping it as healthy as possible.

The worldwide environmental event was born on April 22, 1970, in San Francisco and has grown in popularity and support every year since its inception. It is the largest, most celebrated initiative aimed at promoting clean living, green initiatives and environmental laws. It is important for all ages -- young people in particular -- to celebrate Earth Day. So pass on your passion for the planet to a child, even if it is not Earth Day. We are counting on the younger generation to continue protecting nature and the environment.

THE IDEA

The idea for Earth Day came to founder Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after he witnessed first-hand the damaging impact of the 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, Calif. He set out to engage people young and old on the issue of water and air pollution, hoping to force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. According to earthday.org, Nelson, U.S. Rep. Pete McCloskey of California and national coordinator Denis Hayes then built a staff of 85 supporters to promote events across the land that culminated in 20 million Americans taking to the streets, parks and auditoriums on April 22, 1970.

THE RESULTS

Earth Day had an immediate impact on national policy and public support. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment, and many groups continued their public fight against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness and the extinction of wildlife. Earth Day was a combination of solidarity among these groups, national politicians and the media that played a crucial role in the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. It also catalyzed the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species acts.



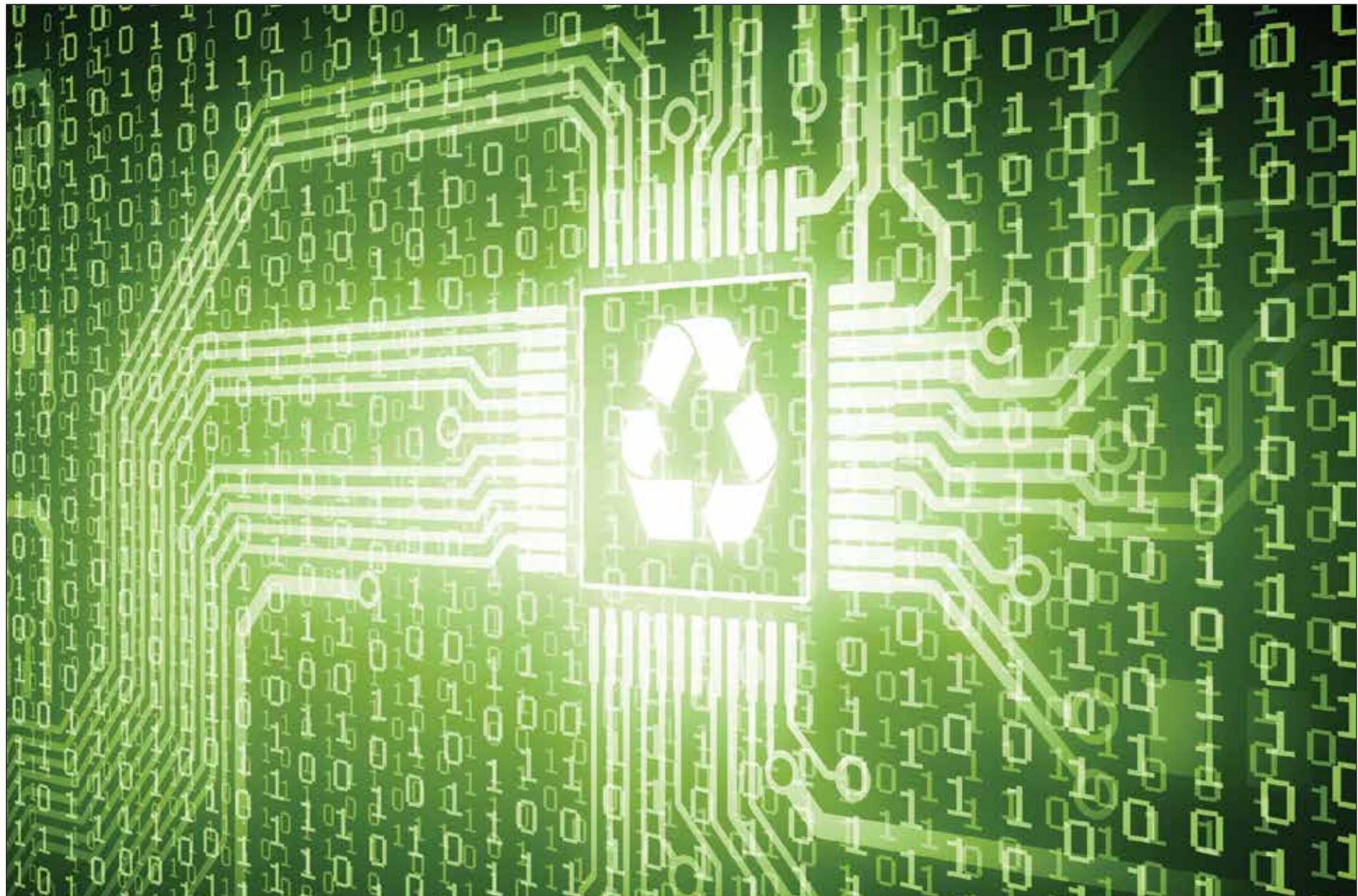
Recycle Your e-waste

We are trained from an early age the importance of recycling our paper, plastic and glass materials. But what about our electronic items?

As our infatuation with our phones, computers and televisions continues to grow, so too does the importance of properly recycling them. By choosing to throw your old electronic devices in the trash, you are sending them to sit in a landfill or to be incinerated, both of which can cause major environmental damage. Water and air pollution has been tied to this careless act, which can easily be remediated by taking advantage of your community's clean-up days or by using programs offered by electronics retailers, recycling centers or environmental groups.

WHAT IS E-WASTE?

Electronic waste is any electronic device that is broken, donated, discarded or at the end of its useful life. This includes cell phones, computers, laptops, televisions, printers, scanners and any other electrical device. The United States alone produces up to 50 million tons of e-waste each year, of which only 20 to 25 percent is recycled safely. The other 75 percent ends up in landfills. These statistics, provided by earthday.org, are eye-opening reminders about the importance of proper e-waste disposal.



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PROPER DISPOSAL

Many of the materials found in electronic devices – including lead, mercury and cadmium – are extremely hazardous. In landfills, these chemicals can leach into the soil during rainfall or release

into the atmosphere when burned.

These chemicals not only can have dangerous impacts on the health of the planet and animals, but also can cause serious respiratory problems when inhaled.

WHAT TO DO

Making a difference in the area of e-waste is simple. Collect all of your old electronic materials and take them to an e-waste recycling facility. Professionals at these centers – located across the

country – are equipped with the knowledge and resources to properly recycle these devices. Earth Day Network partners with many recycling services providers and provides a searchable list of e-waste facilities.

Arbor Day Foundation Programs

Since 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees.

But the foundation is more than trees. It is a group of one million members, volunteers, supporters and partners, all dedicated to conserving the environment and educating the masses. Its educational programs are designed for learners of all ages and are easy to take part in. Here are a few:

TREE CITY USA

This national program promotes community forestry management for cities and towns. More than 3,400 communities have met the four core standards of the program: maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and celebrating Arbor Day. Together, more than 135 million people live in a Tree City USA, according to arborday.org.



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NATURE EXPLORE

Connecting children with nature is the goal of Nature Explore. The initiative is a collaboration between the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, and is comprised of outdoor classroom design services, workshops and conferences, and family resources. There are

more than 200 Certified Nature Explore Classrooms across the nation, according to the Arbor Day Foundation.

RAIN FOREST RESCUE

More far-reaching than other programs, Rain Forest Rescue is an effort helped by donors to preserve precious

rainforests. One recent focus of the Arbor Day Foundation has been centered on Central America's Maya Forest, which includes 13.3 million acres of tropical forest home to jaguars, macaws, eagles and monkeys, according to arborday.org. The foundation has worked closely with the locals in this area to implement sustainable forestry and man-

aged-logging approaches to help residents earn income while living in harmony with the forest.

COMMUNITY TREE RECOVERY

When natural disasters strike, the Arbor Day Foundation provides tree relief to help restore air and

water quality, as well as beauty and shading that can be compromised by tornadoes and hurricanes. You can get involved in this vital program by donating to its Community Tree Recovery Fund, which allows the foundation to provide trees for distribution in communities when its partners in forestry are ready for that stage of disaster recovery.

Know Your Earth

Unless you pursue a geography degree in college, your formal education about the Earth generally stops in high school.

So depending on your graduation year, your Earthly knowledge may be a little rusty. Take our true-or-false quiz below to reclaim your planetary proficiency. And challenge any children in your life to take

the quiz, as well. Just don't be upset if they know more about the Earth than you do. The statistics were obtained from earthday.org, while other facts are within this section's previous pages.

1. The Earth contains 21 percent oxygen.
2. The Earth is the only planet to have one large satellite (the moon).
3. Venus and Jupiter are the two planets directly surrounding the Earth.
4. The Earth's tilting motion is what gives us the seasons.
5. The Earth is 100 million miles from the sun.
6. The Earth is an exact sphere.
7. Earth Day was founded in 1960 by Sen. Gaylord Nelson.
8. Americans produce 50 million tons of e-waste every year.
9. EnergyStar refrigerators can be up to 5 percent more energy-efficient than non-EnergyStar alternatives.
10. EPA stands for Environmental Protection Agency.



Answers: 1. True; 2. True; 3. False (Venus and Mars); 4. True; 5. False (93 million miles); 6. False; 7. False (1970); 8. True; 9. True; 10. True.