

GREEN TIP NO. 001

## It's good to b(eco)me a light-weight.

If every household in the U.S. replaced incandescent bulbs with fluorescent bulbs in just one room in their home, the nation would save more than 800 billion kilowatts of energy and keep 1 trillion pounds of greenhouse gases out of the air. It would be like taking 8 million traffic-polluting cars off the road.

**COST BENEFIT:** Florescent bulbs are more expensive, but they last 10 times longer. Lighting your home accounts for about 17% of the average household's energy bill. You could save \$30 to \$60 on your energy bill over time per light bulb.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** Generating electricity is the single largest source of industrial carbon dioxide emissions in the United States at 34.9%. Fluorescent bulbs use 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs.

GREEN TIP NO. 002

## It's good to b(eco)me powerless.

Devices that are "on" even when off waste energy and account for 10% of your electric bill. Put chargers together on a power strip and turn it off while you're away. Unplug unused refrigerators, toasters, coffee pots, blenders and cell phone chargers.

**COST BENEFIT:** Most people use their chargers only 5% of the time they have them plugged in, wasting both energy and money. Unplugging unused appliances can reduce the phantom energy use in your home and save you up to \$170 a year. Kitchen countertop appliances alone, when unplugged, can save the average family more than \$80 a year.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** It takes a tree-packed forest with an area equivalent to 500 soccer fields to absorb all the carbon dioxide produced by mobile phone chargers that are left plugged into outlets.

GREEN TIP NO. 003

## It's good to b(eco)me high-maintenance.

If you're sitting idle in your car for more than 3 minutes, it's best to turn it off. Remaining idle uses more gasoline than restarting the engine again. Keep your tires inflated properly to improve gas mileage by more than 3% and conserve fuel. Change your air filter. Change your oil. Get quality service on your vehicle to keep it in good shape and as eco-friendly as possible.

**COST BENEFIT:** Adequately inflated tires can not only save 250 pounds of carbon dioxide, but also \$840 per year on gasoline. Having a clean air filter in your vehicle can save the atmosphere 800 pounds of carbon dioxide and you \$130 a year.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** Every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

GREEN TIP NO. 004

## It's good to b(eco)me controlled.

If you move your home's thermostat down 2 degrees in winter and up 2 degrees in the summer, you will prevent 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the air each year. In the summer, keep your thermostat as high as tolerable. In the winter, set the thermostat no higher than 68 degrees. Purchase a programmable thermostat. Save energy and money, by installing ceiling fans to help cool and heat your home. Keeping your water heater thermostat no higher than 120°F can avoid 550 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions annually.

**COST BENEFIT:** A 2 degree adjustment on the thermostat can save you \$98 per year on your electric bill. For each degree above 78, you'll save 6 to 8% on cooling costs. Programmable thermostats are more expensive upfront, but can save you up to 20% on your electric bill. Monitoring your water heater's temperature can save \$30 per year.

GREEN TIP NO. 005

## It's good to b(eco)me steamed.

When cooking on the stovetop, especially when bringing water to a boil, put lids on pots and pans. Lids increase cooking efficiency by 14%. And old, warped pots and pans waste energy. Buy a new pan and use two-thirds the amount of energy. Also, match the utensil to the job. Use pots and pans that fit the size of the stove's burner to save energy. If you put a 6 inch pan on an 8 inch burner, about 40% of the cooktop's energy dissipates into the air.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** If just 1% of the population covered pots when cooking, it could save the country billions of kilowatts a day. And the manufacturing process of stainless steel and ceramic pots and pans is less harsh on the environment. They're more expensive, but they last longer.

GREEN TIP NO. 006

## It's good to b(eco)me a neat freak.

In addition to switching to more energy-efficient lighting, keep your light bulbs clean. Dusted light bulbs save energy by increasing output and make them more efficient. Dust any electrical equipment (televisions, DVD players, stereos and computers). This prevents dust from getting into air vents and reducing performance, making them less energy efficient. Vacuum around and wipe down the condenser coils on the back of your fridge to make it function more efficiently. Clean the interior of your fridge. A clean fridge can be up to 20% more efficient than a dirty one. Cleaning or replacing a dirty air conditioner filter helps your unit run better and spares 350 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions.

**COST BENEFIT:** Replacing the air conditioner filter as recommended can save the average household \$150 per year.

GREEN TIP NO. 007

## It's good to b(eco)me old news.

If United States citizens recycled just 10% of newspapers, approximately 25 million trees would be saved annually. About 75% of what we throw out could be recycled into tomorrow's news, books and household paper products. Once you're done reading a book, donate it or sell it to a secondhand shop or used bookstore. Start the cycle over again and buy secondhand products whenever possible.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** It takes 28% less energy to recycle than to produce paper from scratch. Paper accounts for 40% of solid waste in the United States, which is about 72 million tons annually. If every household replaced one roll of regular toilet paper with one recycled post-consumer waste roll, 424,000 trees would be saved.

GREEN TIP NO. 008

## It's good to b(eco)me wishy-washy.

Encourage friends, family and coworkers to drink from reusable mugs rather than polystyrene cups. Launch a mug movement in your office. Wash and reuse mugs and cups and ditch the paper trail left behind by your daily latté. Go a step further and reduce paper waste by using a filterless coffee maker with a french press. Trade out your individual bottled water for a reusable water bottle. Wash, refill and drink up.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** If every coffee-drinking American used a refillable mug instead of a disposable cup, it would spare our environment close to 7 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions every day. The annual amount of oil expended to produce plastic bottles sold in the United States is enough to fuel 100,000 cars for an entire year.

GREEN TIP NO. 009

## It's good to b(eco)me shallow.

If just 2% of the U.S. population turned on the bathroom faucets to a fraction of full blast when washing their hands, nearly 12 million gallons of water could be saved every day. And turning off the water while brushing your teeth saves 2 gallons of water. Swapping a bath for a 5-minute shower can save up to 2,000 gallons of water a year. Better yet, upgrade your showerhead to a low-flow, hot-water-saving version.

**COST BENEFIT:** Newer, low-flowing showerheads can save \$10 to \$20 per person each year. And they can reduce your household water consumption by up to 50%.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** The average shower uses 20 gallons of water, compared to the 40 gallons that's needed for a bath. Nonconserving showerheads let up to five gallons of water flow per minute. Low-flow showerheads save 350 pounds of carbon dioxide per year.

GREEN TIP NO. 010

## It's good to b(eco)me carried away.

Paper or plastic? How about neither. Both plastic and paper bags are less desirable for the environment, not to mention, not as strong nor as functional as reusable carriers. Keep a tote bag in your car to lug groceries and books to and fro.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** It takes as much petroleum to make 14 plastic bags as it does to drive a car one mile. Paper bags use even more petroleum. Plastic bags are made from nonrenewable petroleum resources that require the use of toxic chemicals during production and processing. Few facilities collect and recycle them, and most plastic bags end up as litter or in landfills. Plastics production accounts for 14% of toxic air emissions in the United States. The 10 billion brown paper grocery bags used in supermarkets annually require virgin pulp to give them strength to hold heavy groceries, cutting down millions of trees for the creation of bags.

GREEN TIP NO. 011

## It's good to b(eco)me greedy.

Household appliances can use 4 to 7 watts per hour, even when not in use. A fridge with an Energy Star label uses 40% less power than an older model. New, front-loading washing machines use half the energy and water compared to a 5-year-old top-loading washer. Consider updating your household appliances to use more energy-efficient technologies. Just think of the loads of energy and water you can save and the money you can keep in your pocket. Use appliances during off-peak hours to save even more dough on your electric bill.

**COST BENEFIT:** Replacing a 10-year-old dishwasher can save up to \$44 a year on energy bill. And new, front-loading washing machines can save up to \$90 a year in energy costs.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** Generating electricity is the single largest source of industrial carbon dioxide emissions in the United States at 34.9%.

GREEN TIP NO. 013

## It's good to b(eco)me a tag-along.

Ride-sharing can reduce exhaust fumes and frequency of trips to the gas station and keep dollars in the bank. Travel in groups. Carpool. Travel for multiple purposes. Condense your errands into one trip. Some cities and states offer travel benefits for low emissions or "clean air" vehicles and high-occupancy vehicles during rush hour. Walking, however, is the greenest form of transportation.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** Carpooling with friends and co-workers saves fuel, about 790 pounds of carbon dioxide and hundreds of dollars per year. Every mile you walk is estimated to add 20 minutes to your life.

GREEN TIP NO. 014

## It's good to b(eco)me dirty.

Go on, get your hands dirty. Break out the shovel and plant a tree. Ten trees will offset the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that one U.S. citizen generates in four months. Nine trees will negate the effect of your family vacation in the Caribbean. Plant eight trees, and you'll cancel out four years' worth of garbage. Six will neutralize all of the CO<sub>2</sub> released by your refrigerator over its lifetime. Five will reabsorb your automobile emissions for a year. Four trees will let you carbon-neutralize your washing machine for six years.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** A single tree will absorb 1 ton (yes, one ton!) of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.

GREEN TIP NO. 015

## It's good to b(eco)me flushed.

Install a low-flush toilet (1.6 gallons per flush) can save more than 4,000 gallons a year per person. Train an older toilet to use less water by installing a toilet dam or plastic jug and save up to 3 gallons per flush.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** About 75% of indoor water use comes from the bathroom. Toilets use the most water indoors at an average of 20 gallons per person per day.

GREEN TIP NO. 016

## It's good to b(eco)me leftover.

Reuse durable products to carry food and beverages to and fro. Use a reusable lunch carrier. Reuse water bottles and sport bottles. Install a water-filtration system instead of relying on individually bottled water. Carry your coffee in a reusable thermos. Send the kids to school with durable lunch boxes, rather than a brown paper bag. Minimize your use of plastic storage and sandwich bags, and remember that they're made from polyethylene plastic that's recyclable.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** It has been estimated that on average a school-age child using a disposable lunch generates 67 pounds of waste per school year. That equates to 18,760 pounds of lunch waste for just one average-size elementary school. The annual amount of oil expended to produce plastic bottles sold in the United States is enough to fuel 100,000 cars for an entire year.

GREEN TIP NO. 017

## It's good to b(eco)me used.

Buy secondhand. Browse garage and estate sales. Shop pawn shops, used bookstores and vintage shops. Whenever possible, whether it's a car or a CD you're looking for, buy a previously-owned item. Donate products you're finished with, including eye-glasses, phones, clothing, appliances and linens. There are many charities that collect all types of products and benefit from the reuse or resell of discarded items. Some are even an opportunity for a tax right-off.

**COST BENEFIT:** You can save anywhere from 10 to 95% when you buy a product secondhand.

GREEN TIP NO. 018

## It's good to b(eco)me absent.

Be a telecommuter to cut down on pollution caused by your daily commute to work. Work from home 1 or 2 days a week. Ask if your employer already has a telecommuter program in place. Make the most of a home office. Utilize email and video-conferencing to stay in touch while you're physically out of the office. Work locally. If you work in the city, invest in an urban residence.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** You can save 1 pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive. The average person, by driving two days less each week, after a year, will have saved about 150 gallons of gasoline and will have kept about 2,700 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. The environmental cost of an email, while difficult to pinpoint, is minuscule compared to old-fashioned postal delivery.

GREEN TIP NO. 019

## It's good to b(eco)me a groupie.

Take mass-transit – a bus, trolley, train, subway, rail or ferry. Trains are a more environmentally-friendly means to travel than planes or cars so, whether for business or vacation, take the scenic route across country to reach your destination.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** One bus load of people is worth 40 cars, so every time you step onto a full bus, that's 40 fewer cars on the road, and 9 tons of air pollution spared per year. Public transportation saves more than 855 million gallons of gas and 45 million barrels of oil a year.

GREEN TIP NO. 020

## It's good to b(eco)me a geek.

Collect cell phones, chargers and related gadgets. Organize a cell phone donation drive at your office or in your neighborhood. You'd be surprised at how many you can hoard. Find a charity that you'd like to benefit from your collection of wireless devices. Cell phones, as small as they are and as innocent as they look, contain a very wide variety of toxic chemicals, including arsenic, mercury, lead and zinc, that should not end up in landfills. Wireless phones generally contain 40% metals, 40% plastics, and 20% ceramics – all materials that can be reclaimed, recycled and reused. Some can be refurbished and redistributed for a potentially-valuable second life.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** There are an estimated 500 million old cell phones gathering dust. United States residents get rid of about 130 million mobile phones every year. That's about 65,000 tons of cell phones. The average wireless phone user purchases a new wireless phone every 18 to 24 months. The wireless phone industry claims 1 new customer every 2 seconds.

GREEN TIP NO. 012

## It's good to b(eco)me canned.

Recycle food and drink cans. When you recycle an aluminum soda can, it does something few other containers can do: it reappears back on the shelf, probably in 60 days or less, as a brand new soda can. In addition to beverage cans, you can recycle aluminum bottles, pie plates, cookware, building materials like gutters and siding, lawn furniture and more.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** In the time it takes you to read this sentence, more than 50,000 12-ounce aluminum cans were made. It's estimated that 97% of all soft drink cans are made of aluminum. Consumers and industry in the United States throw away enough aluminum to rebuild the entire U.S. commercial air fleet every 3 months. It requires only 5% as much energy to manufacture a can from recycled aluminum as compared to virgin ore.

GREEN TIP NO. 021

## It's good to b(eco)me insignificant.

Drive a small car. When making your next vehicle purchase, select one that's as small as possible for your needs. When it comes to hauling the family around town or a lone driver commuting to work, purchase according to the purpose for the vehicle. Take it further by switching to a hybrid version to cut down your carbon dioxide emissions and gasoline consumption.

**COST BENEFIT:** Commute in a hybrid car rather than a SUV and you'd save \$1,262, not to mention a tankful or two of guilt. Check with your accountant or the IRS for a one-time "clean fuels" tax deduction of up to \$2,000.

**BARE FACTS & STATS:** The average car emits twice its weight in carbon dioxide annually. More than half of consumers who are in the market for a new vehicle claim they're considering a hybrid.

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there'll be more coming soon in the future, once our worker bees have a chance to take a breather. stay tuned for more eco-friendly tips and ideas on making your life greener. if you've got a tip you want to share with us, fill out the "drop us a line" form on [becomegreen.info](http://becomegreen.info) or email us at [workerbees@becomegreen.info](mailto:workerbees@becomegreen.info).

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