



## MEC TIP-OF-THE-MONTH

October 2016

EASY WAYS TO LIVE GREENER.... Following up on last month's tip regarding composting, we offer more household suggestions. As stated in the iconic Good Housekeeping magazine, "An eco-friendly life style doesn't need to be difficult or expensive". The tips and tricks listed below will help you create a home that will enhance pro-planet habits.

### IN THE MORNING

- Brew "certified" or "Fair Trade" labeled coffee and/or tea. A USDA Certified Organic label means coffee (tea) was grown using sustainable standards.
- If getting coffee/tea out... take a travel cup/mug to your favorite place.
- Don't leave tap water running while brushing teeth; 2 minutes of brushing with water running can waste 5 gallons of water a day!

### AT HOME OR AT WORK

- Put your computer in "sleep" mode if away from it for 20 minutes or more and definitely shut off overnight.
- Switch to Energy-Star rated light bulbs. You can reduce your electric bill \$30 for each bulb over its lifetime.
- Replace any old showerheads with new that have a 2.5 gals/min or lower flow. This can save \$45/month for a family of four.
- Lower the temperature on your hot water heater.
- Fix leaky faucets.
- Don't forget to remove bottle/jar caps. They're made of a different type of plastic and may result in an entire batch of recycling being rejected... really!!
- Make your own household cleaner. There are numerous websites and books providing recipes for 'green' cleaners. Here is one example:
  - Cut orange peels and fill empty glass container/s.
  - Add 1 t or more of salt to orange peels and let sit at least 20-30 minutes.
  - Fill container/s with vinegar and water- equal parts of each.
  - Put tight fitting lid on containers and let solution sit for 2-3 weeks.
  - Strain solution and fill squirt bottles with natural, orange cleaner.

*Note! NEVER combine ammonia-based cleaners with chlorine bleach or products containing bleach. Fumes created are DANGEROUS.*

### RUNNING ERRANDS

- Take your own bags (BYOB) to retailers. Some stores even reward such behavior.
- Return plastic bags to collection boxes. To locate such places, try-- [www.plasticbagrecycling.org](http://www.plasticbagrecycling.org).
- Consider biking rather than taking car to shop in our nearby town of Bay Head!

- Monthly (or at least every 2-3 months), check air pressure in automobile tires. ADD air if needed according to your car's guidelines. Mileage can be improved up to 3% with correct air pressure.

#### BEFORE BED

- Plug your devices- TV, DVD, computer, printer, etc. - into a UL certified powerstrip; then, switch whole group OFF for the evening. This prevents electrical draw.
- Unplug unused chargers and appliances-- especially if you leave home for days or weeks.

#### AND, FOR YOU ANIMAL LOVERS CONSIDER:

- Donating old newspapers to an animal shelter or animal hospital.
- Buying edible toys or toys that last long term. AVOID throw away toys.
- Choose organic pet food.

FOLLOWING EVEN A COUPLE OF THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS WILL AID AND ADD TO THE 'GREENING' OF OUR PLANET... PASS THIS ALONG...