

CAN YOU HELP OUR ENVIRONMENT?



**MARLBOROUGH
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

How can we help the environment?

There are 30 ways you can make a positive difference.

There are many easy things that you and your family can do every day to put less strain on the environment.

1. Before throwing letter size paper into the garbage, check the back of sheets to see if they're blank. If so, use them for drawing. Or cut them into squares and use them as notepaper beside the phone.
2. Reuse big envelopes that arrive in the mail. Just put a new address label on – any square of paper will do – and send them out again.
3. Most families get many pieces of junk mail. These are a great waste of paper if you don't want them and don't read them. Send pieces of junk mail back where they came from – at the mailers' expense. Tell the mailers you don't want any more. Put a 'no circulars' notice on your mailbox.
4. If possible, take showers instead of baths. Showers use less water than baths. Don't throw out those last little bits of soap. Stick them to the next bar.
5. Don't use the toilet as a rubbish bin. For instance, don't throw a facial tissue into the toilet after blowing your nose. Throw it into a wastepaper basket instead.
6. Don't pour anything from a container marked 'poisonous' or 'dangerous' into the sink or onto the ground.
7. Buy pump spray containers, which work just as well as aerosol cans, and don't harm the atmosphere.
8. Compost your kitchen leftovers, such as apple cores and potato peelings with your worms. You'll be amazed at how much less refuse you have. And your garden will be grateful. Check out our worm farm information pamphlet.
9. Instead of installing an air conditioner, plant some trees around your house. They're the cheapest air conditioner you can buy. While cooling your house, they're also providing homes and food for animals.
10. For foods that don't spoil quickly, buy the biggest size you can afford. First the biggest size is usually the best buy. Second, there's less packaging for the amount of stuff you get. For instance, a



big box of cereal is cheaper and has less wrapping than a carton of one-serving boxes.

11. Buy food such as flour, sugar and raisins in bulk. Most supermarkets now have bulk bins. You can sometimes reuse your own containers. Buying from bulk bins is cheaper and less wasteful than buying packaged products.
12. Write letters complaining to companies that use lots of wasteful, polluting packaging on their products. Support companies that try to put their products in simple packages that can be recycled.
13. Recycle your excess packaging.
14. Set up a worm farm so all the food scraps can be turned into great compost or invest in an EM Bokashi system.
15. You'll probably *have* to buy some things in plastic containers, because that's the only way many are sold. What else can you do with them? You can use big ice-cream containers as flour canisters or crayon containers. Ice-cream and margarine containers can be fridge keepers or plant pots. Little yoghurt cups make great paint containers. If you can't use them preschool centres, schools and day care centres usually want them. There are craft books at the library that tell you how to make gifts out of old containers. Find out how crafty you can be.
16. Become a saver. Giftwrap paper can be smoothed out and used again. So can ribbon and string. Make gift tags from the fronts of old greeting cards. Better still have a go at making your own recycled paper.
17. Use rags – worn out clothes, sheets, and (softest of all) old cloth nappies – for housecleaning instead of paper towels and throwaway cleaning cloths.
18. Don't throw away outgrown or unwanted clothes. Maybe there is someone else in your family or neighbourhood that the clothes could be passed on to.
19. You can also sell the clothes to a second hand shop or give them to a charity that will pass them on to needy people.
20. Please be careful to take your litter home or use rubbish containers provided when travelling around. This is especially important near waterways. New Zealand has a very high rate of suffocation of marine mammals due to ingestion of plastics.
21. Turn the heater down and wear a jumper. Turn the heater down even more at night, when everyone's cosy under their blankets anyway.
22. Turn off: the TV when no-one's watching it; the lights when you leave a room.



23. If you can, walk or ride your bike instead of asking for a car ride. It's better for you, saves energy and cuts down on pollution and its often much easier to get a park!
24. When you use an electric appliance, make sure you get all you can out of the electricity you're using. For instance, try to dry a few things in a clothes dryer at once. Don't turn it on for just one blouse or a pair of socks.
25. When you have a choice, buy the product that runs on human energy instead of a battery or electricity. For instance, do you really need an electric toothbrush? Your dentist can show you how to do a great job of brushing your teeth with an ordinary toothbrush.
26. Your family probably makes some donations to charities and other groups every year. Could your family support a group that works to clean up the environment?
27. Check labels on food items, watch out for preservatives and additives, unless stated as otherwise many are chemical additives which both your body and the environment find it hard to break down.
28. Support organic growers where possible. Their prices are usually competitive and not only are you eating healthy food, but you are also supporting a growing industry. Even better grow your own vegetables.
29. Try sourcing alternatives. The Eco Store in Auckland has a great mail order catalogue, which has a great variety of alternatives to chemicals, which are competitive. (Free phone 0800 432 678). www.ecostore.co.nz.
30. Last but not least let others know what you are doing. By each of us making small differences as a collective we can make a huge difference to our own and our children's future.



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