



Environmental Stewardship
the brick companies

Environmental Steward Checklist

Energy: Reduce electricity usage and report your success. Think 12x12!

- Change incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).
- Install a programmable thermostat in your home for better control over usage.
- Lower the thermostat a few degrees in winter and raise it a few degrees in summer. One degree lower/higher can reduce energy use by 10%.
- Don't forget to close the damper on your fireplace when not in use.
- Check the temperature on your hot water heater: it should be 120 degrees. Old water heaters should have an insulating blanket.
- Request previous year's kWh usage from your utility. Track comparable months to see how you are doing in your goal.
- Keep AC and furnace filters clean.
- Install weatherstripping and caulking on drafty doors and windows. Improperly sealed homes can waste 10-15% in heating dollars.
- Seal any gaps in walls. Pay special attention to plumbing outlets, vents and light fixtures. Pre-cut foam gaskets can easily be installed behind wall plugs and switches.
- Replace single-paned windows with double-paned windows.
- Use curtains, shades and shutters for insulation and shade. In the winter, open them during the day to let warm sunlight in and close them at night to keep warm air in. In the summer, keep them closed to keep the hot sun out.
- Turn off lights when not in use; install motion/occupancy sensors if possible.
- Do not run vent fan in bathroom more than necessary.
- Buy Energy Star appliances.
- Do not use dishwasher to dry dishes and only run full loads.
- Wash clothes in cold water to avoid using the hot water heater.
- Turn off computer and other electronics at power strip when not in use so that transformers do not continue drawing power even when "off." In the average home, nearly 75% of all electricity used to power electronics is consumed by products that are switched off but still plugged in.
- Unplug chargers (cell phone, iPod) when not in use.
- Turn off your monitor instead of using a screen saver.
- Conduct a home energy audit: do-it-yourself at <http://hes.lbl.gov> or <http://www.eere.energy.gov> or hire a home energy audit professional.
- In the summer, grill outside and keep the oven (and the kitchen lights!) off.
- Get outside for exercise and play. You won't need lights, television or computer!

Reduce: Use less of everything!

- Bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store.
- Get a library card or swap paperbacks at www.paperbackswap.com.
- Swap other stuff on ebay.com, craigslist.com, www.freecycle.org.
- Buy reusable water bottles and fill them with tap water rather than buying bottled water.
- Install low-flow shower heads. Find other ways to conserve water at www.watersavers.com.
- Install rain barrels to use rain water for irrigation and reduce runoff into the Bay. Find info on how to purchase one and support local environmental education at www.arlingtonecho.net.
- Instead of purchasing toxic cleaners, make your own! Go to <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/make-your-own-non-toxic-cleaning-kit.html>.
- Get off junk mail lists. There are several to choose from and can be free.
- Print on both sides of paper at work and at home. Don't print out those emails!
- Switch to a reusable coffee filter.
- Banking: Sign up for online banking and stop receiving paper statements. Pay online rather than write a check. Don't request an ATM receipt (or a gas station receipt).
- Cancel phone book delivery.
- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Bring lunch to work in reusable containers (a "no-garbage" lunch!).
- Use washable towels instead of paper towels.
- Buy in bulk to avoid excess packaging.
- Bring your own mug to Starbucks!

Reuse: Find new life for old stuff:

- Let us know what great ideas you come up with!

Recycle: When you must have and can't reuse!

- Participate in home and work recycling efforts.
- Buy recycled products as much as possible. Look for items with post-consumer recycled content.
- Shred old paper for packing instead of using Styrofoam peanuts.
- Donate old cell phones at www.eco-cell.org. Start a program at your facility!
- Start composting. Anne Arundel County offers free outdoor compost bins at all of its service centers. Check out www.compostguide.com for good info on how to get started. This keeps food and yard waste out of landfills and provides good mulch and fertilizer for your garden.

Let us know what else you're doing to be an Environmental Steward. Drop us a line at greenteam@thebrickcompanies.com. Great ideas will be shared and applauded!