

Sustainable Web Directory

Sustainable Gifts and Lifestyle

Tear Australia
<http://www.usefulgifts.org/>

The hunger site
<http://www.thehungersite.com>

Give Organic
<http://www.giveorganic.com.au/>

The Green Directory
<http://www.thegreendirectory.com.au>

The Big Love Gift Guide
<http://barkingowl.com/cc/>

Natures Child
www.natureschild.com.au

Al Eco Natural Living
www.alleco.com.au

Living Sustainably
<http://www.livingthing.net.au/index.htm>

Eco Balance Australia
<http://www.ebabioproducts.com.au>

Recycling

Enviro Power
<http://www.enviropower.com.au/>

Planet Ark
<http://www.planetark.com.au/>

North East Waste Forum
<http://www.northeastwasteforum.org.au>

The Reuse Directory
<http://www.reusedirectory.com/>

Alternative Energy and Fuel

North Coast Bio Diesel
<http://www.northcoastbiodiesel.com/>

Rainbow Power Company
<http://www.rpc.com.au>

Eco Options (email contact)
info@eco-options.com.au

Practical Tips to "Save" Around Home

Save Money, Save Energy, Save Water, Save Waste



Australian Government
Department of the
Environment and Heritage
Australian Greenhouse Office



Sustainable Living

Australia's growing population is placing increasing pressures on our natural resources and now is a great time to think about the way we live.

Living sustainably is fun and easy and won't cost the earth or our lifestyle. Taking the time to "*Think Smart*" about our choices will create significant savings in water, energy, waste, and production of greenhouse gas emissions.

This booklet lists just a few simple and practical tips everyone can do around the home over Christmas and beyond to save energy, waste and water. Not only will you be saving the environment, but you will save money on your bills too!!

There are 'Sustainable Giving' gift ideas for Christmas and we have even given you an idea of the kilograms of greenhouse gas emissions you can save around the home.

Our choices today is all we need to make a big difference to tomorrow. Lets Work together to provide a happy and healthy future for the next generation full of all the natural luxuries we enjoy today.



Sustainable Giving



Let's reclaim gift giving from big business and save some energy to share with each other. Think before you buy.

Think about gifts that show what a big heart you have - that bring us back together and don't cost the earth.

Great gifts for grown-ups

- Massage (neck & shoulders, head, feet or more) Breakfast in bed every Sunday for a month!
- A simply-framed photograph or child's painting
- A poem
- Pickles & preserves
- Your undivided attention for a whole hour to do anything the other person wishes!!
- Babysitting vouchers.

Great gifts for kids, teenagers & families

- Favourite books with special messages inside eg. "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" by Dr Seuss !!!!
- An exciting (low-cost) family outing
- The 'title' to a piece of the backyard (for gardening, cubby, etc)
- A cooking lesson or homemade play-doh
- An old tape recorder and blank cassettes
- A costume box filled with fun dress-ups from op shops.

How to be a powerful consumer

Relish your power as a conscious consumer. Before buying anything, consider that your actions really do make a difference. Ask questions like... Where is it from? What is it made of?

It's okay to be loving

Some people worry that inexpensive gifts won't be well received. We've found this is rarely the case. When you give something with love, 99% of people couldn't be happier - no matter what the price tag. The other 1% are going to have to catch on!

- **Recycle containers from your Christmas cheer** (glass and PET soft drink bottles, aluminium cans) through kerbside collections. Even the corks can be recycled by dropping them off at any Body Shop stores or Girl Guides.
- **Recycle Christmas cards** – take your cards to Planet Ark drop off boxes at Coles, Video Ezy or Body Shop stores in January and February.
- **Buy 'live' Christmas trees** which still have soil around the roots ready for potting. After Christmas you can **replant it in your garden**. Or artificial trees can be re-used year after year.
- **Choose gifts and products which are long lasting**, repairable, refillable and easily recyclable for when they eventually reach the end of their life.
- Avoid purchasing items which are non-functional and gimmicky.
- If you are throwing a party, **avoid using disposal items such as cups, plates and napkins**. Hire out glasses or **use biodegradable** products for example.
- If goods are packaged, choose items which are made from recycled material, and that can be easily recycled by you after use, such as glass and paper products.
- Christmas gifts don't necessarily have to be material items. Treat somebody to a day out, buy cinema or theatre tickets, open a children's savings account, or arrange a years subscription to a society such as The National Trust, or magazine such as Habitat or ECOS.
- **Plan meals wisely**. Think ahead when buying food (how many people will you be feeding and plan for left-overs - after a big turkey dinner for example. This will help minimise the amount of waste you throw away, and avoid wasting money.



Saving Energy and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

DID YOU KNOW?

One kilogram of Greenhouse Gas (carbon dioxide) would **FILL A LARGE FAMILY FRIDGE!**

One tonne of Greenhouse Gas (carbon dioxide) would **FILL A LARGE FAMILY HOME!**

- **Turn off** your computer screen when you are going to be away from your desk for more than 10 minutes. A computer screen uses far more electricity than the processor, by switching off your screen while it is not in use, you will gain access to your computer within about 10 seconds, rather than having to turn the whole box on.
- A desktop computer used five hours per day **generates 225 kilograms of greenhouse gas** per year. Laptop computers **save up to 90%**. Energy Star computers have a sleep mode, which saves up to 80%.
- Dishwashers **generate up to 500 kilograms of greenhouse gas** each year, so **only run your dishwasher when it's fully loaded**
- A pool filter pump **generates 1 to 3 tonnes of greenhouse gas** each year (one kilogram every one to three hours). **Fit a timer switch** and ask your pool expert about new chemical treatments to reduce the need for pool filtering over winter.
- **Efficient cooking methods**, such as putting lids on pots, simmering gently instead of boiling vigorously and using a pressure cooker, can save **half the greenhouse gas** generated during cooking.

Saving Waste

- An electric kettle or gas cooker generates about **one kilogram of greenhouse gas** for every 10 litres of water boiled, half as much as **using a microwave** or an electric cook top.
- **Fan-forced ovens** generate up to **35% less** greenhouse gas than conventional ovens and more items can be cooked at the same time, as heat is more evenly distributed around the oven.
- For maximum efficiency when cooking with electricity, **use pots and pans with flat bases** that match the size of the element.
- A television switched on for three hours per day **generates 100 kilograms of greenhouse gas** per year, depending on size – but some new models are noticeably more efficient. Using a video cassette recorder **adds 20 kilograms** per year.
- Televisions, VCRs and stereos can **generate between 20 and 85 kilograms of greenhouse gas** per year when in 'standby' mode. **Turn them off at the power point** when you leave the house for long periods.
- Fluorescent lights, including **compact fluorescents**, generate only **one-fifth as much greenhouse gas** as ordinary globes producing the same amount of light.
- **Don't waste detergent: 1.3 kilograms of greenhouse gas is generated** in the manufacture of 100 grams of detergent (the approximate amount used per wash in top-loading machines – front-loaders use half as much).
- **SNUB - Say No to Unwanted Bags.** Try to take a reusable shopping bag with you and decide whether or not you really need a new bag for every purchase.
- **Compost** vegetable peelings and food scraps except meat.
- Try to buy Christmas decorations that could be used for several years.
- **Buy recycled** Christmas cards, wrapping paper, tags, diaries and calendars.
- **Avoid** presents with **excess packaging** or that run on batteries. (possible **provide rechargeable batteries** if necessary)
- **Make your own cards and presents** if possible with reusable materials – it could be a lot more fun and more personal. Have a go at making your own gift labels by recycling last years Christmas cards.
- When shopping, make a list! **Don't buy unwanted presents!** You may be creating unnecessary waste. Before you buy, think whether it will be a welcome gift!
- If you receive a present that you don't like, why not give it to the charity shop and give someone else a chance to enjoy it rather than throwing it away.
- **Email electronic Christmas cards** – saving you money and helping the environment.
- **Wrap creatively!** Use tea towels, cloth, wool, ribbon, reusable bags, Christmas stockings or make wrapping paper with the kids.
- **Reuse** old Christmas wrapping paper (open presents carefully)

Rous Water Rebates

Rous water is offering a variety of rebates for water saving initiatives to town water customers:

- A \$50 rebate is available from Rous Water when you buy a **dual flush toilet** or cistern. To be eligible for a full \$50 rebate you are required to purchase a 6/3 litre or 9/4½ litre dual flush toilet or cistern to replace an existing single flush toilet or cistern, on or after 1 July 2005 until 30 June 2007. *Conditions apply*
- Rous Water now offers three levels of rebates on the **installation of rainwater tanks**, based in the first instance on the tank volume. For more than one tank, the rebate is based on the total combined volume. Additional rebates are available if rainwater from the tank/s is supplied for flushing toilets and/or to the washing machine. Tanks purchased on or after 1 July 2005 are eligible for the current rebate ranging from \$100 to \$670. *Conditions apply*
- Consider Rous Water's \$50 rebate on **front loading washing machines** when purchasing your next washing machine. Compared to top loading washing machines, front-loading models save approximately 50 litres of water per load. *Conditions apply*

For more information on eligibility of the Rous Water Rebates and for application forms visit their website at:

<http://www.rouswater.nsw.gov.au>

Or phone Rous Water -

02 66 218055



- wash in top-loading machines – front-loaders use half as much). Using more than the recommended amount of detergent does not make clothes cleaner.
- Fit lower-wattage globes or compact fluorescents in bright lights, especially down lights and spotlights; **save up to 50% of greenhouse gas**.
- Turn off unnecessary lights, including fluorescent lamps.
- Timer controls and daylight or movement sensors are now available to switch off lights automatically.
- Ensure good air circulation around the coils at the back of the refrigerator: **save up to 150 kilograms of greenhouse gas** each year.
- Locate refrigerators and freezers in cool spots, out of the sun and away from ovens: **save up to 100 kilograms of greenhouse gas** each year.
- One-third of Australian homes have at least two fridges. Switch off the second fridge: **save up to a tonne of greenhouse gases** and \$120 each year (for a single-door fridge).
- Larger or older refrigerators may **generate more than 1.5 tonnes of greenhouse gas** and cost more than \$175 to run each year. Ensure door seals are clean and the door closes properly: **save up to 50 kilograms of greenhouse gas** each year.

Source AGO <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au>



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Saving Water

- Every 13 litres of hot water used from an electric water heater **generates about one kilogram of greenhouse gases**. Take shorter showers: save up to half a kilogram per minute.
- When selecting a **hot water system** ensure that its size matches your hot water needs.
- **Avoid over-watering gardens**: water treatment processes and pumping use energy and generate greenhouse gases.
- **Wash clothes in cold water**: a warm wash can add **1.5 kilograms of greenhouse gas** per wash compared to a cold wash, and a hot wash can add 3 kilograms.
- If you have a single flush toilet, consider **converting to a new dual flush system**, or placing a water displacement device (ie a bottle full of water) in the cistern.
- **Fix leaky toilets**. A leaky toilet can **waste up to 16,000 litres** of water per year. To test for leaks place a few drops of food dye in the cistern. If colour appears in the bowl over the next 15 minutes without flushing then a leak exists.
- The shower is the easiest and most cost-effective way to decrease the water used in your home. An inefficient showerhead uses up to 25 litres of water per minute, while one of the new comfortable and effective **AAA-rated showerheads uses only 9 litres per minute**.
- Alternately, **have a shorter shower**. If everyone in your household reduced showering time by 1 minute you would **save an incredible 15,000 litres of water!**
- When doing activities such as rinsing vegetables, **part-fill the sink instead of letting the water run**.
- When using a dishwasher, ensure it is fully loaded, and **use the 'economy' cycle** if you have one. Avoid rinsing prior to washing. **Scrape food remains off dishes** and dispose of them rather than rinsing them away.
- If you are replacing your washing machine, look for water efficient **AAA-rated front-loading models**.
- Adjust the water level on the machine so it is appropriate for the size of the load. **Wash only when there is a full load** of laundry, and use the 'economy' cycle if you have one.
- **Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth**. Also, when shaving, half fill the sink instead of letting the water run.
- **Fix leaking taps** immediately.
- Avoid over tightening taps as this can wear the washer and cause leaks.
- Install a tap **flow aerator or regulator** to decrease the amount of water throughput in taps not required for volume-based uses.
- **Install mixer taps** in basins and showers. They avoid wasting hot water when trying to get a comfortable water temperature.