#### REDUCE YOUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

# **Household Tips**

"Every choice you make contributes to the health of the planet, for better or worse. Even a small reduction in your consumption of natural products can make the difference between what's lost and what's saved."

Conservation International, 2012.

# **Energy Tips:**

- Turn off lights when no one is occupying a room (and whenever possible).
- Turn off electronics (e.g. computers) when not in use.
- Unplug charged electronics (if possible)
- Program thermostat and air conditioner to reduce energy consumption when the home is unoccupied and at night.
- Use energy efficient bulbs.
- Purchase Energy Star appliances.
- Conduct an energy audit yourself or hire a professional.

#### Water Tips:

- For cold drinks keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap.
- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation.
- Collect the water you use for rinsing fruits and vegetables, and then reuse it to water houseplants.
- Invest in rain barrels for outdoor water use.
- Check for water leaks indoors and outdoors (e.g. toilets, sinks, water heater, hoses, and sprinklers).
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.
- Invest in low-flush toilets (check out your region for incentives to replace old toilets)
- Invest in a water-efficient shower head and reduce your shower time by a minute or two.

# **Transportation Tips:**

- Make sustainable transportation choices:
  - > Public transit,
  - o Carpool,
  - o Ride a bike or walk.
- Keep tires properly inflated, clean your air filters, have your vehicle properly tuned and avoid idling.
- Instead of a second vehicle or if you only require one part-time try AutoShare.
- If you require a new vehicle consider cars with better gas mileage or hybrids.

## **Food Tips:**

- Purchase locally grown foods (they require less processing and transportation).
- · Eat less meat and dairy products.
- Eat less processed and packaged food.
- Create a food garden (if possible), try container gardening (on your balcony, porch, or deck), and/or grow your own herbs indoors all-year-round.







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# **Household Tips**

#### **Waste Management:**

#### • Reduce Consumption

- Invest in reusable products such as glass
  Tupperware, travel mugs, and water bottles.
- Buy items in bulk and avoid individually wrapped items
- Make double sided copies when you have to print (adjust printer settings)

## Reuse Materials

- Use reusable bags when shopping
- Buy second-hand or borrow rather buying infrequently used items.
- Donate used toys, clothing, furniture, and appliances to charities and non-profit organizations.
- Recycle (when you cannot reduce or reuse).
  - Municipalities differ in what can be recycled;
    visit your regional website to learn more.

#### Compost

 Do-It-Yourself and add richness to your gardens or visit your regional website to learn more.

#### **Offset your Ecological Footprint:**

- Native tree planting.
- Organize a clean-up event.
- Invest in renewable energy
- Volunteer for or support local environmental organizations.

# Many thanks to Christina Read, Greening Sacred Spaces Halton – Peel Coordinator for allowing us to adapt this brochure.

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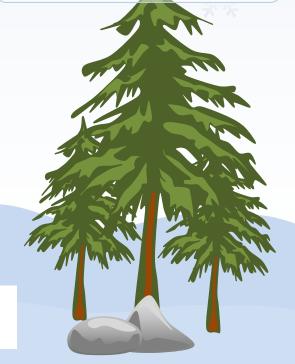
www.greeningsacredspaces.net

## **Online Resources:**

- David Suzuki Foundation
  - o <u>www.davidsuzuki.org</u>
- Global Ecological Footprint Network
  - www.footprintnetwork.org
- Nature Conservancy
  - o www.nature.org
- The Story of Stuff
  - o www.storyofstuff.org
- We Conserve
  - o www.weconserve.ca

# **Community Resources:**

- EcoSource
  - o <u>www.ecosource.ca</u>
- City of Toronto
  - www.toronto.ca/garbage
  - www.cityoftoronto.ca/water
- Live Green Toronto
  - www:toronto.ca/livegreen.index
- Halton Environmental Network
  - www.haltonenvinonment.ca







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