

Go ahead, make Earth's day

BY KAREN DEER

kdeer@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8239

On Thursday, the Earth celebrates its big day. And on this, the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, we are reminded of how far we've come — and how far we have to go.

"Earth Day is about respecting the planet that sustains human life, or doesn't, if we don't change our ways," says Terry Winkelmann, owner of Home Eco, 4611 Macklind Avenue. "We have a lot to do and not much time left to make repairs, but I think most people finally get that 'the environment' isn't just a pretty place to visit."

What can you do for Earth Day? Anything that is meaningful to you and planet Earth.

You can start with simple changes in the home, in the garden and on the road. Take a look at these money savers for greening your home.

Tips for making your life a little more green

1. Fix faucet leaks • A leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons a year.

2. Seal drafty windows and doors • A home can lose about 50 percent of its heat or cool air through drafty windows and doors.

3. Avoid running water • Turn water off while you brush your teeth.

4. Say no to plastic • According to data released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2001, about 1 trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide annually, and it can take months to hundreds of years for these bags to break down. Bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store.

5. Use energy-efficient appliances • The average household can save up to \$400 annually by using energy-efficient appliances.

6. Replace light bulbs • One fluorescent bulb can save approximately \$30 over its lifetime and pay for itself in six months.

7. Start a compost pile • According to the EPA, 23 percent of U.S. waste materials sent to landfills, such as yard trimmings and leftover food, could be used as compost.

8. Slow it down • Sticking to the speed limit and keeping tires properly inflated

can help increase fuel efficiency and reduce emissions.

9. Raise the thermostat • Households will save up to 3 percent per month in energy costs by raising the air conditioner thermostat for every degree above 72 degrees.

10. Think before wrapping • Be creative and use newspaper, take-out menus, old calendars and wallpaper to wrap gifts.

11. Make energy-efficient home improvements • The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 extends, expands and simplifies the federal income tax credits for homeowners who make energy efficiency home improvements. The law extends the consumer tax benefits through this year. To learn more about the homeowners credits, visit http://ase.org/section/_audience/consumers/taxcredits#home_improvement.

Sources: Tina Pepe, director of merchandising for The Company Store; EPA statistics; Kohl's; Andrea Woroch, consumer savings expert at PromotionalCodes.com; and The Alliance to Save Energy



From the Meyer Corp., Earth Pan nonstick cookware is a collection that features eco-friendly SandFlow nonstick, which originates from sand. Earth Pan is produced with fewer greenhouse gasses compared to traditional nonstick cookware. All packaging material for Earth Pan is made from at least 50 percent recycled fiber with all materials being 100 percent recyclable (\$149.99 for a 10-piece cookware set) available at Walmart.com, Cookware.com and Amazon.com.





<< **Bon Ami has launched** a new green, all-purpose cleaner that is biodegradable, nontoxic and hypoallergenic (\$2.99) at Bonami.com.



<< **Try planting environmentally friendly Bonnie Plants.** You can grow delicious vegetables and herbs in your own backyard while doing something good for the environment. Bonnie Plants are packaged in 100 percent biodegradable pots that can be placed into the soil. As the pot disintegrates, the plant's roots grow through the biodegradable pot and into the surrounding soil (\$2.98 to \$9.98, depending on pot size) at Lowe's and Home Depot stores.



Save water and energy with the LG Electronics SteamWasher (WM3875HVCA) with 6Motion Technology (\$1,499) and LG Electronics SteamDryer (DLGX3876V for gas or DLEX3875V for electric, both starting at \$1,399). The SteamWasher uses up to 51 percent less energy. Both available in late April at most Best Buy and Home Depot stores.



Pet parents looking to reduce their carbon paw print now have a new, eco-friendly option when looking for ways to protect the oral health of their pets. TropiClean Fresh Breath Made Easy is a new generation of safe, natural products designed to make pet oral care easy (\$5.99 to \$14.99) at most Petco stores.



EOS organic lip balm smooth spheres are packaged in recyclable, spherical containers. The 100 percent natural, USDA-certified organic formula, is packed with therapeutic ingredients including shea butter, jojoba oil and vitamin E (\$3.49 each) at most Walgreens, evolutionofsmooth.com or riteaid.com.



CleanWell all-natural antibacterial hand soaps are infused with white tea and aloe and made with ingredients from renewable plants, including thyme. Available in orange vanilla, ginger bergamot, lavender and spearmint lime (\$4.99 to \$6.49) at Whole Foods Market, GNC and Amazon.com.



Flings Pop-UP Recycling Bins are convenient, portable compact containers (great for parties at the park) that are ready to use in a snap. Certified green by Sierra Club Green Home, filling one Flings Recycling Bin keeps 60 cans or bottles from ending up in a landfill, which saves enough energy to power a television for 180 hours (\$4) at FlingsBins.com.



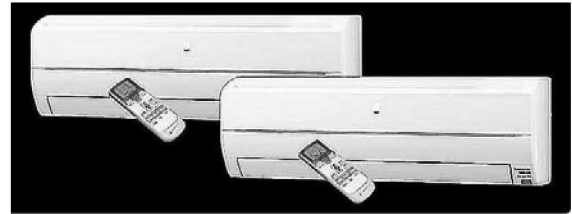
Green writing has never been so colorful. Sketch or write in green with colored pencils completely made of recycled products from Nepal (\$9.95) at Barnes and Noble and BN.com.



The HydroRight Dual Flush converter quickly and easily converts your toilet into a water-saving dual flush toilet. You can quick flush for liquids and paper or full flush for solids. It can save a family of four up to 15,000 gallons of water a year (\$25) at Amazon.com and select Ace Hardware stores.



Go green and save green at Kohl's by purchasing a reusable shopping bag in-store and you'll receive 15 percent off your purchase through Sunday (\$1.99) at Kohl's.



Friedrich Ductless split system central air is for homeowners who want central air with no ducts. One compressor runs up to four cooling units with its own remote control thermostat. They're quiet, efficient and have no ducts to clean (starting at \$1,000) at Home Eco, 4611 Macklind Avenue.



Sun Mar composting toilets are about the same size as a standard toilet but don't have any plumbing. Composting toilets have been used in places that don't have a septic field or a sewer system, such as converted garages or country homes. These are permanent systems that look and smell perfectly normal. You simply add peat mix, rotate the drum and empty the chamber annually. You can dispose of the resulting odor-free compost on a flower bed or elsewhere on your property. It looks like mulch and has a much lighter impact on the earth than a sewer system (starting at \$1,400) at Home Eco, 4611 Macklind Avenue.