SIMPLE SUSTAINABLE LIVING HABITS

1. USING WATER

Detect your leaks – most common areas are:

- Toilet, under sinks, taps, washing machines, outside hose connections and taps.
- Other things may be detected through mildew puddles or water stains

Bathrooms

- Don't run the water when brushing your teeth, shaving or washing your face
- Cut down on shower times average shower rose uses 20 litres of water per minute. Half to three quarter full the bath instead of up to the top as average bath uses 200 litres water per time

Toilets

- Use dual flush or have one installed - can halve usual full flush of 11 litres

Kitchen

- Wash your fruit and vegies in a half full sink rather than a running tap
- Just cover vegies with water when cooking them tastes better cooks quicker
- Minimise dishwashing detergent when washing by hand
- Use dishwasher at night as it saves electricity
- Install flow restrictions or aerators on taps can save up to 50% water that is normally going down the drain
- Don't run tap waiting for cold water fill up a bottle and put it into the 'frig

Laundry

- Be sure to set the water level appropriate to your load size
- If you only have a few small garments wait for a complete load before washing or wash by hand
- When buying a washing machine choose one that is water and energy efficient by looking at the star ratings displayed on the machine

Gardens

- Forgotten sprinklers can waste over 1 000 litres per hour. Sometimes its best to water by hand
- Water your garden in the early morning or late evening to conserve the most amount of water for your plants
- When watering remember it's the roots not the leaves that need the water
- Using your hose to clean up the drive way can waste more than 1000 litres per hour – a broom is better for the environment and can be just as effective

- When washing your car limit the times you use the sprayer and where possible wash your car on the lawn for dual purpose of the water
- Remove weeds from your garden as they compete for the water and nutrients
- Install a drip irrigation system it is the most efficient watering system for plants
- Plant a native garden as it needs less water

2.SAVING ENERGY

Lighting

- Switch lights off before you leave a room. Lighting accounts for 8% of household greenhouse emissions
- Keep light fittings and globes clean
- Try to use natural light during the day, maximise use of daylight through north facing windows
- Purchase long life globes OR use fluorescent lights in well-frequented rooms in the house
- Ensure sensor lights are switched off when not required

Laundry

- Where possible use a washing line or clothes rack for drying clothes naturally. Clothes dryers use an enormous amount of energy
- When using a washing machine wash your clothes in cold water. There is no need to do a hot wash unless the clothes are particularly greasy

Heating and Cooling

- Maintain your heater in good working order. Keep reflectors shiny and free of dust and clean air filters and fans regularly
- Clean air conditioners; clean the air filter regularly for efficient running
- Running your ceiling fan while your heater is on assists in circulating warm air and reduces heater running times
- Pilot lights in heaters that run continuously are unnecessary in warmer months and are a waste of gas during of the year

Home Entertainment

- Switch off your computer when not in use. Even if you are only leaving the computer for a few minutes turn the monitor off
- Switch all devices associated with the computer when not in use

Cooking

- Only heat the amount of water you will need to use eg with coffee/tea making
- Use lids on pots on the stove to save 2/3 of the energy used for cooking
- Grillers are inefficient users of energy – look for alternatives

- Try to keep gas flames low. Most times there is no need for the flame to be at full pace
- Cook in bulk and freeze portions left over
- Microwave cooking cuts greenhouse gas emissions…and saves time

Water Heating

- Check your thermostat and set your hot water system at around 60o C it is an adequate temperature for showers etc

Refrigeration

- Your refrigerator accounts for nearly 25% of your electricity consumption –
- Keep space behind your frige to allow air to circulate around the coils at the back
- Defrost your freezer regularly and ensure your frige is sealed properly
- Don't overstock your frige – this requires more power for cooling
- Ensure the coils behind the frige are clean of dust to ensure efficient cooling
- A hole in the floor or on the wall at the back of the frige approx 10cm in diameter. Can reduce running costs by $30 per year

Other modifications…..for a little extra money

Heating and Cooling

- Seal up gaps and cracks in skirting boards, walls, doors and floors to prevent heat loss
- Use draft excluders at the base of doors e.g. beanbag snake
- Use weather stripping around windows to block out drafts

Lighting

- Install compact fluorescent light globes. Compacts last 8 times that of normal light globes and use 70% less electricity

And then… you could

- Insulate your home, and increase heat in winter and be cooler in summer and save up to $300 per year in reduced energy costs
- When installing air conditioners ensure that the unit is in the shade to reduce its workload
- External shading devices on the outside of windows are a very effective way of keeping your house cool in summer
- Skylights are a great alternative source of lighting and can be most cost effective
- Look to renewable energy sources such as solar power. Solar hot water systems can reduce household hot water bills by more than 60% each year
- A front loader washing machine uses less water and less energy and will save you after over time
- When buying a new appliance always look for the energy-rating label

- Check whether your energy supplier delivers Green power – this means energy produced from solar hydro or wind sources This power costs a little more but is saving planetary resources eg coal oil

Reuse

- Empty glass jars for condiments
- Take your own bags shopping
- Share or borrow items such as appliances or tools
- Envelopes can be reused
- Empty plastic bottles can be used for cold drinks/water bottles in your car
- Buy reuseable items rather than disposable ones
- Take your own cup or mug when buying a coffee or tea
- Always use both sides of the paper
- Old stockings can be used for tying up plants in the garden

Recycling

- Paper and cardboard and in some councils waxed papers and boxes
- Tetra packs and milk cartons need to go in the recycling bin with glass tins and plastics
- Check codes for plastic recycling
- Glass can be recycled except for window glass, pyrex, crockery, drinking glasses, light globes
- Drink and food cans, aerosols and clean aluminium foil can be recycled

Composting

- Over 40% of household garbage is made up of food and garden waste. Most of this can be composted or mulched. This will help improve your garden soil quality and you're helping to reduce the amount of waste going to land fill
- Composting bins are used to break down organic materials by utilising natural decomposition. After a few weeks or months the broken down material can be used for fertiliser on the garden
- You can also reduce compost by using a worm farm

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