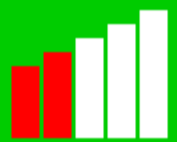
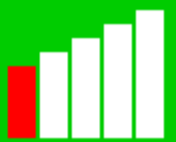


Do the Worm

If one million people vermicompost for a year, 82,000 tons of food waste could be turned into fertilizer	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$19/lb	5 min/wk		

Do not underestimate the lowly worm it is one of the nature's best recyclers. Give hungry worms access to your kitchen vegetable waste and soon, through the process of vermicomposting your garbage will be transformed into nutrient-rich, non-polluting fertilizer for your thriving organic garden.


By composting with *Eisenia fetida* – worms – you'll reduce the waste you contribute to landfills, help keep methane out of the atmosphere, convert your scraps into an environmentally desirable product, and give some worms a home.

In the process of consuming waste, such as eggshells, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetables scraps, and tea leaves, worms add micronutrients, magnesium, and calcium carbonate to the organic matter that passes through their gizzards and intestines. The end result is what's known variously as vermicast, worm humus, or worm manure. This vermicast is great fertilizer for your vegetable garden or your houseplants.

Why compost?

Your garden will love you. Compost improves plant and root growth, helps the soil hold moisture, binds nutrients in the soil and can help inhibit plant diseases



 **The organic process of composting does produce CO₂ – but that's instead of the methane the same waste would create decomposing at the landfill, which is 23 times worse for the atmosphere.**

Help us prevent sending organics to the landfill by writing a letter to City Councilmember Donna Frye and City Council President Scott Peters. See a Zero Waste San Diego volunteer for more information

Bank Online

If every U.S. home received and paid its bills online, annual greenhouse gas emissions would drop by 2.1 million tons.	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$0	5 min		

Some of us find paying bills soothing. The signing the check, the scribbling of the return address, the choosing of just the right stamp.

It's time to snap out of it, pen pal, and enter the modern world of online bill paying. Look at your bills this month. More than likely, every single one has a paragraph begging you to pay your bill online. Online transactions save companies money they would otherwise be spending on paper, printing, and postage.



405,000
trees are felled annually to make paper required to send everyone in America their phone bills

That's their angle. Yours is saving the world for future generations. The cost in fuel and CO₂ for one bill is tiny, but it adds up. By one estimate, if each U.S. household viewed and paid its bills online, we would save more than 29 trillion BTU of energy and reduce 1.7 billion pounds of waste a year.

You can arrange individual payments at the companies' websites, or centralize the process by setting up online banking at your financial institution. Your bank may charge you for the service, but most utilities do not.



Say No to Styrofoam

If one million people reduced their trash by 10%, we'd keep 600,000 tons of CO ₂ out of the atmosphere per year.	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$0	1min		

Sure, it keeps your coffee hot, but a thousand years after your last gulp, your empty cup will still be around.

It shouldn't take much convincing to Say No to Styrofoam, but there's so much of it! We are almost as addicted to Styrofoam as we are to oil. (Indeed, it takes 3.2 grams of fossil fuel to make a single Styrofoam coffee cup.) The U.S. makes some three million tons of it each year, the majority of which goes to the landfill.



25 billion Styrofoam cups are thrown away by Americans each year.

The challenge isn't just coffee cups and packing peanuts: we love over-packaging in all shapes and materials. Whether it's for a toy, a DVD set, or a blister-packed memory card, we love big boxes. It's time to say not to all that waste. Reducing your packaging trash by 10% could save the atmosphere 1,200 pounds of CO₂ per year.

HOW TO FIGHT OVERPACKAGING

LEAVE THE PACKAGING AT THE STORE Unpack your product right there at the store and hand all the pesky packaging to the manager. This sends a message to retailers to downsize their waste.

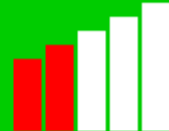
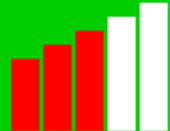
MAKE YOUR OWN PACKING PEANUTS When packing your own boxes, pop real popcorn with an air popper and use that for packaging. The recipient can sprinkle it in their backyard for the birds.

RECYCLE While Styrofoam is hard to recycle, most plastics are not. Making one ton of recycled plastic – versus the virgin stuff – saves 685 gallons of oil.

KEEP SILVERWARE AND NAPKINS BY YOUR DESK Tell the takeout joint to hold the plastic forks and paper napkins wrapped in plastic.

GIVE POSITIVE FEEDBACK Praise companies that have switched to smaller, biodegradable, or recycled packaging.


Advertise Your Trash

One million clay bricks have embodied energy equal to 9,372 gallons of gasoline. Trade 'em in!	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$0	15min		

One man’s tacky eyesore is the pièce de résistance of another man’s Hawaiian-themed den. So strike a deal: advertise your unwanted items on the Internet and sell them to someone who wants them.

You’ll give the local landfill some breathing room, save or make some money (the exact amount depends only on your generosity, charm, and bartering prowess), and come away with a closer sense of community. You may even make a friend as part of the bargain. After all, you and this complete stranger already have something special in common: your fondness – whether it’s waxing or waning – for your old ceramic bust of Tom Selleck.

Because you’re dealing primarily with strangers, use some common sense. Of course 99.9% of the people you’ll meet are interesting, responsible, environmentally concerned fold like yourself. If you think you may be dealing with the other .1% just politely decline, or opt to meet in public and make sure to get any cash up front.



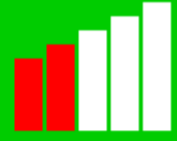
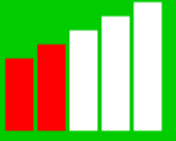
Because it’s free, the Internet is the best place to list old items, whether it’s to auction off your brass thumbtack collection for a cool G on eBay or to sell Grandma’s floral ottoman (“needs a good reupholstering”) for a tidy profit on Craigslist. Online markets are great for creating instant links between buyers and sellers, and they also connect like-minded swappers. Craigslist, for example has a section (labeled “free”) where users list free items that anyone’s welcome to pick up, and the same basic deal goes for the younger site www.freecycle.org, which also allows you to post “wanted” notices, requesting free stuff you’d like to receive. Where else can you ask strangers for free stuff, and actually get it?

\$5,000 - \$7,000 is the average amount an American family spends in the first year of a baby’s life. (Collectively, it’s about \$15 billion annually for maternity and baby items.)

The larger goal here, of course, is to save energy. Every retail item you purchase has already cost energy – and produced CO₂ – to grow, mine, manufacture, alter, or build, and then transport. This energy is unrecoverable – i.e. wasted totally – unless the stuff is reused as is (for maximum return on energy investment), reused as something else (called “new life reuse”), or recycled (for a lower return). Increasingly, economists and environmentalists are advocating a tax to reflect the environmental cost of a product’s manufacture and disposal, to encourage reuse.



Send Your PC Packing

	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
If one million people reused or upgraded their computers, we would save 265,000 tons of fossil fuel	\$0+	1hr		

When it comes to big energy sucks, the usual suspects are obvious and easy to finger – cars, refrigerators, incandescent lights. But there is an inconspicuous environmental Mata Hari. It's sleek, it's small, and it doesn't have a tailpipe: the personal computer.

Like Denmark, *edamame*, and brown shoes, computers just feel eco-friendly. But they're actually furtive CO₂ offenders – in ways you might not expect. It's not the plug: electricity consumption accounts for just one-fifth of a computer's lifetime energy toll. The rest comes largely from the tremendous amounts of fuel – usually coal – burned to power its manufacture. Your friendly laptop is about five times more energy-expensive to make than a car or fridge. Producing a two-gram microchip creates 2,000 times that amount of CO₂.

4 billion pounds of electronic waste go to landfills each year. Only about 10% of computers are recycled. It is illegal to dump electronic waste in the landfill because it contains hazardous material.



Don't rush out and buy an abacus just yet. PCs are there to stay, and they enable many other environmentally friendly practices like freecycling and telecommuting. Besides, computers make modern life bearable; how else could we Google our ex...umm... friends?

Because making microchips uses so much energy – and because there's a witches' brew of chemicals and heavy metals in that desktop – it's important to think twice before you dump your old machine for a new one.

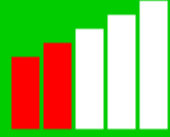
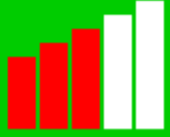
WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR PC

UPGRADE A good choice, especially if all you need is a bit more memory or a faster processor.

REUSE Give your PC to someone else – a friend or a charity. Be sure to erase your data, but try to find the original software and licenses. Your donation may get you're a tax credit.

RECYCLE Apple, Dell, HP, Sony, and other manufacturers will take care of recycling for you when you buy a new machine, and even salvage what they can from what you send in. For older and off-brand equipment, check with your local government for e-recycling drives or drop-off points. Try to find out where the computers end up – some unscrupulous outfits ship the old machines to China to be buried.

Choose the Right Bag

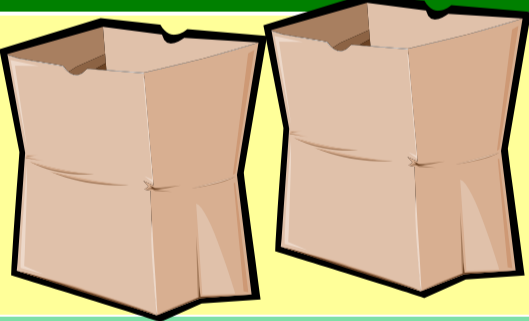

If one million people switched to reusable bags, we'd eliminate the need for one billion plastic bags.	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$5	5min		

Your hybrid car's waiting in the lot. Your groceries are certified organic and carbon-neutral. You even remembered to pick up a few CFLs for your life fixture. Time to check out. But wait. Paper or plastic? Sometimes, in carry-out world, there isn't a lesser evil.

The average American family of four tosses out about 1,500 plastic sacks a year, and each one can take up to 1,000 years to decompose. That's quite a legacy. Most of these bags aren't biodegrading: the plastic just breaks up into tinier bits until it leaches into the soil or water. It's not hard to connect the dots between plastic bags and fossil fuels either. The bags are manufactured from crude oil and natural-gas derivatives, to the tune of 12 million barrels per year.

Paper bags are biodegradable, which counts for a lot, but the energy, chemicals, and water—not to mention trees—consumed in making them amount to an even bigger drain on the environment. And then the bag is used once and thrown away.

So what's the best choice? Let's compare the options.

PAPER OR PLASTIC?	
	
1 ton of bags = 17 trees	1 ton of bags = 11 barrels of crude oil
20% get recycled	1% get recycled
Ingredients: wood, petroleum, and coal	Ingredients: natural gas and petroleum
Could biodegrade in as little as a month, but—due to poor landfill design—actually decompose at about the same rate as plastic	Decompose in 5 to 1,000 years
Each bag leads to 5.75 pounds of air pollution	Each bag result in 1.2 pounds of air pollution almost 80% less than paper
Generates five times as much solid waste as plastic	40% less energy to manufacture and 91% less energy to recycle than paper
Because of its heft and bulk, it uses more fuel getting trucked to the store	Up to 3% of the world's plastic bags end up as free-floating litter
Its manufacturing process produces 50 times more water pollution than plastic	Easily washes out to sea, where it clogs stomachs of whales and turtles

THE ANSWER? NEITHER


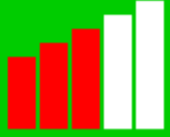
You call this a choice? Skip the in-store moral dilemma and Bring Your Own Bag. Whether you prefer hemp (strong and durable), organic canvas or cotton (to touch, the feel), or even nylon (light and cheap), when you B.Y.O.B., you've done the right thing. Better yet, look for a reusable bag made out of recycled materials



MAKE THE PLEDGE.

Pledge not to use a plastic bag for 7 days. The only way we can make a difference is to start changing the way we think. Ask a Zero Waste San Diego volunteer more about how to break the plastic bag habit.

Reuse the News

	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
If we recycle one million more pounds of newspaper, the trees we'd save could absorb 125,000 pounds of CO ₂ per year.	\$0	5min		

Next time you head to the recycling bin with a big stack of newspapers, remember that even though recycling paper may be the oldest green technology in the world — the Japanese first started repulping their wastepaper in 1031 — it's still not the most efficient.

67 million tons of paper are used by Americans each year.



Paper can only be recycled three to five times before its fiber breaks down; each trip to the pulper only delays its ultimate date with a landfill. Because of the unpleasant fact that paper products are the same number-one thing we throw away, it's time to start thinking about how to get more uses out of them. The goal: slow down the fiber flow. Haste really

does create waste.

HERE'S A START

PROTECT FRAGILE PACKAGES Instead of cushioning your next shipment of collectible shot glasses in bubble wrap, which is petroleum-based, or Styrofoam packing peanuts—they can languish in landfills for hundreds of years—use bunched-up balls of newsprint instead.

MAKE A PIÑATA FOR YOUR NEXT PARTY Soak old newspaper in a flour-and-water paste and form into a shape of your choice. Instead of beating an innocent donkey to smithereens to get the candy inside, choose something guilt-free to smash, like an effigy of Big Oil or a scale model of the Hummer H1.

STUFF IT IN YOUR SHOES TO KEEP THEIR SHAPE It's ecologically better than used shoe trees made out of wood. Newspaper is also a deodorizer.

CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PETS Line the bottom of kitty's litter box with a bad day's market report. You can save the letters to the editor for Buster.

BURY IT Layered newspaper, covered over with mulch, slowly converts a patch of crabgrass into a bed of prime potting soil. For best results, water down the mulch and then let everything sit for a few months. When you return, you'll have a perfect place to plant your geraniums. You can also add bits of shredded newspaper to your compost heap. Tear up the columnists you hate most and sprinkle them over some eggshells.

USE IT AS WRAPPING PAPER But remember: horrifying reports of flood, famine, and drought go on the inside; glamorous photos of celebrity couples go on the outside.



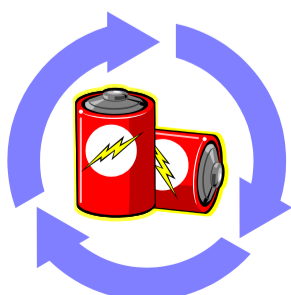
Restock for the Earth

If we skipped one million bottles of water, we'd eliminate 18.3 tons of CO ₂ emissions.	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$5+	15min		

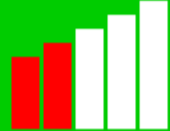
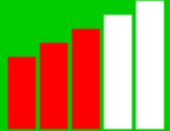
A useful rule for reducing global warming: buy less stuff. The corollary: if buy stuff you must, restock with planet friendly goods.

- ✓ **RECYCLED PAPER PRODUCTS** One ton of recycled paper uses 17 fewer trees and 67% less energy than non-recycled paper. Make the full commitment: buy recycle napkins, tissues, paper towels, printer paper, and—yes— toilet paper. (Trust us, the new kinds are actually soft.)
- ✓ **VEGETABLE-BASED, BIODEGRADABLE CLEANING STUFF** If every American household used just one box of an eco-friendly powdered detergent instead of the petroleum-based kind, we'd save 217,000 barrels of oil a year—that's about 90,000 tons of CO₂.
- ✓ **FAIR-TRADE, SHADE-GROWN COFFEE** Coffee grown in shade—the traditional way—preserves ecosystems that sequester some of the CO₂ that is produced in making your morning pick-me-up.
- ✓ **COMPACT FLUORESCENT BULBS** Better, longer-lasting. Need we say more?
- ✓ **PERSONAL-CARE PRODUCTS** There's fossil fuel hidden in staples such as lip balm and toothpaste. Look for organic or natural ingredient-only alternatives.
- ✓ **RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES** Instead of adding toxic chemicals to landfills, switch to rechargeable NiMH batteries. A single charge can last you three or four times as long as one traditional alkaline. And NiMHs can be reused hundreds of times before they finally kick out. When they do, take them to a local battery recycling drop-off point. Find one within five miles at www.rbc.org/call2recycle/dropoff.

Worldwide, we drink some 41 billion gallons of bottle water a year—even though it's often no safer or better—tasting than tap, and wastes fuel and water for bottling and transport. Drink smart: refill a durable, transportable bottle.




Share the Driving

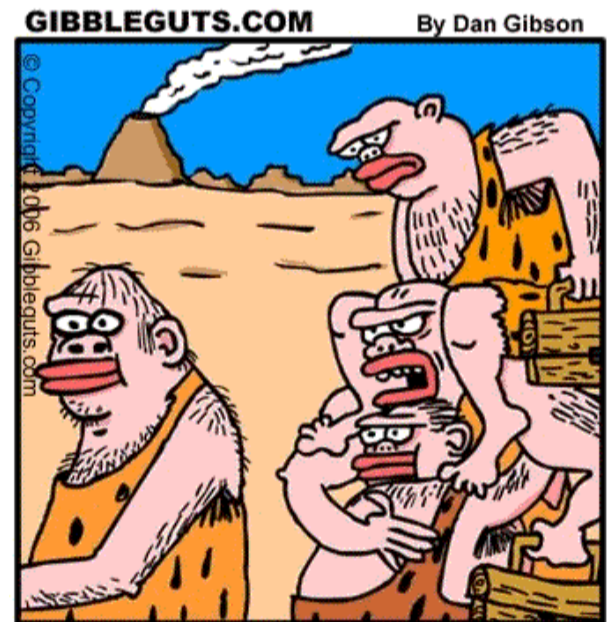
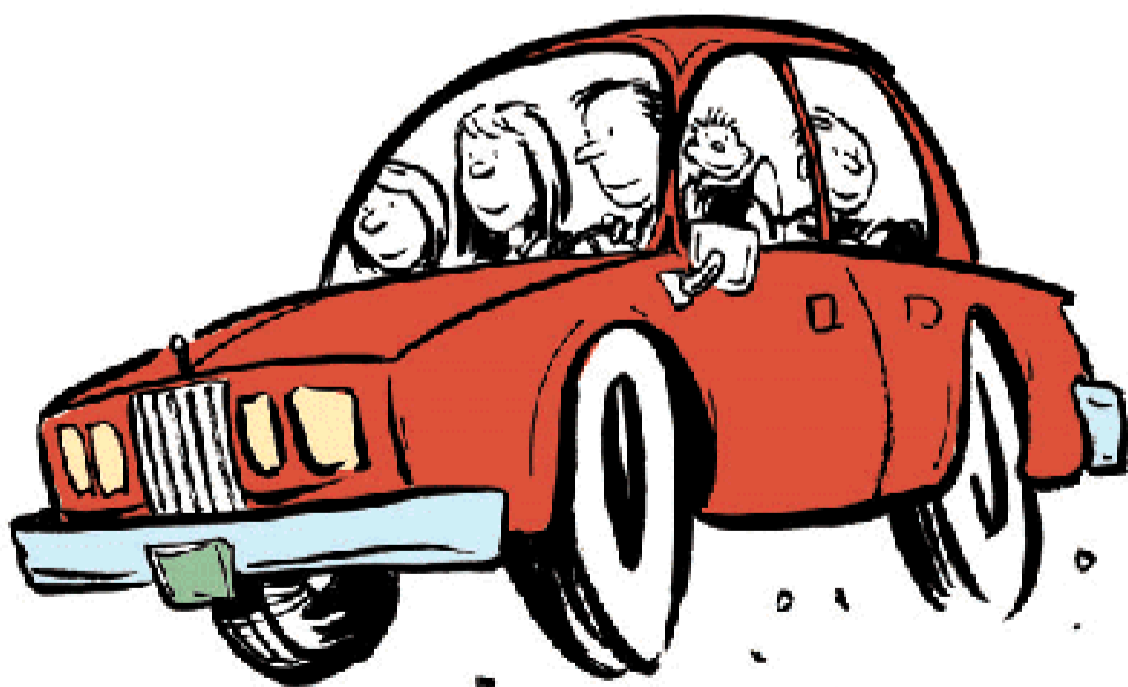
	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
If one million people carpooled, 1.7 million tons of CO ₂ would be eliminated per year.	\$0	30min		

Feel the twinge of guilt every time you drive solo? It's easy to give your conscience and the planet a break. Share your ride.

The average commuter burns 340 gallons a year, creating a 3.4-ton cloud of CO₂. Ride with one extra passenger and you've cut that figure in half. Find one more and you've cut it by two-thirds.

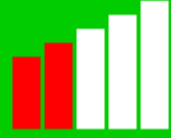
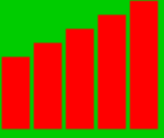
About 10% of American workers carpool every week. 'Poolers can qualify for discounts of up to 20% on insurance—not mention drive in carpool lanes—and your employer may offer sweet incentives like free parking, shortened workdays, salary bonuses, and even cash awards.

 No car to 'pool in? Try carsharing, where you use a car for only as long as you need, then leave it for the next person to hop into. Carsharing services exist all over the world; a shared car can replace four to eight private autos.



The nerve of that guy...traveling solo in the HOV lane.

Vote

More than 63 million votes were cast in 2006 <i>American Idol</i> finale. It can't be that hard.	Cost	Time	Effort	Impact
	\$0	10min		

It used to seem that if you didn't vote on Election Day, it wasn't the end of the world. Now, it just might be.

Without government committed to protecting the planet, there's only so much we as individuals can do. What we need are (drum roll)...elected representatives! Hey, it worked wonders for civil rights.

If we've learned anything this century, it's that every vote counts. But for whom? Party labels are not a foolproof way to tell where a candidate stands on global warming. Some candidates will say the right things at first, but when you ask for the details, you find that they're blowing hot air at you. Which is ironic, if you think about it.



Local politicians can make a difference. In the U.S., more than 450 mayors have signed a Climate Protection Agreement, pledging their cities to meet or beat the goals of the Kyoto Protocol. In London, Mayor Ken Livingstone has announced an ambitious program to cut the city's carbon emissions by 60% in 20 years.



Get Involved!

Join Zero Waste San Diego's mission to create a more sustainable zero waste community. Talk to a Zero Waste San Diego volunteer for more information on how to get involved.

10 things you can do to get to zero waste and lower your carbon footprint

Information adopted from

