

Ten Ways to Make Your Life Greener
Denise Everson, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent
706.769.3946 * deverson@uga.edu

Making a few small changes in your life can help you save money while conserving natural resources and reducing waste.

1. Take your own bag to the grocery store. Plastics, including grocery bags, result in over 14.4 million tons of trash each year. Local grocery stores do offer recycling bins for used grocery bags, but packing your own re-usable bag can reduce your impact!
2. Downsize your life by donating things you no longer use. There are numerous non-profit organizations that will accept donations of clothes and other household items. Consider donating those unused items to churches, homeless shelters, or drop-off centers. You reduce your clutter and give an unused item a "second life" in a new home.
3. Start recycling. Newspapers, magazines, #1 and #2 plastics, steel food cans, aluminum cans, and cardboard can be dropped off at one of several donation centers located throughout the county. You can also recycle some electronics near the old landfill on US 441 South. To find recycling centers for specific items, visit www.Earth911.com.
4. Replace incandescent light bulbs with Energy Star qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL). According to the EPA, if every home in the U.S. replaced one light bulb with a CFL, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes each year!
5. Limit your use of paper products, including plates, cups, and napkins. Those items just add to the landfill. Use your washable dinnerware and cloth napkins. Your family and guests will feel like royalty and you will be reducing your footprint!
6. Select the appropriate size on the washing machine and follow the detergent manufacturer's instructions for the proper measures. Only use hot water when necessary - 85 to 90 percent of the energy used is for heating the water. Cold water can be a real energy saver!
7. Instead of washing one dish at a time under running water, fill up the sink or a dishpan with soap and water and wash several dishes at one time. You could save five gallons of water by change just one habit!
8. Sweep off sidewalks, driveways, and porches instead of wasting water hosing them off or wasting energy using a leaf blower. Protects the environment and gives you a great workout!
9. Start a compost pile for food scraps, grass and other yard clippings. You will reduce your garbage while improving the soil in your yard and garden. Visit the UGA Cooperative Extension (<http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/pubs/PDF/c816.pdf>) or stop by the Oconee County Extension Office for more information and compost recipes.
10. Replace old appliances with new ENERGY Star and Water Sense labeled products. Replacing appliances can save you about 30 percent on your utility bills. Visit www.epa.gov to learn more about energy efficient products and rebate programs.

Make one small change today and start feeling better about the impact you are making on our world!

For more information about family and consumer sciences topics, contact the Oconee County Cooperative Extension Office at (706) 769-3946 or stop by our office located behind the Oconee County Courthouse.