

# How to make spring projects more eco-friendly



## Tour Dorena Genetic Resource Center

Two tours of the U.S. Forest Services' Dorena Genetic Resource Center (DGRC) will be offered on Earth Day, Saturday, April 23. The Center is a world leader in development of populations of trees with resistance to non-native diseases. It is a regional (Oregon and Washington) facility, but also does cooperative projects with partners in other states and Canada. During the tour, guests will see examples of tests to examine the natural level of disease resistance in some of the native North American trees, orchards where tree breeding is done, greenhouses where an array of plants are grown, and a seed plant where seed is extracted from cones. There will be a display of cones of some of the area's native conifers, and poster presentations displaying a summary of results. Richard Sniezko, geneticist at the center, will also discuss the common garden genetic trials, the native plant restoration program, and the national tree climbing program (centered at DGRC), as well as some of the related work they are involved with in Hawaii and the white bark pine restoration plantings at Crater Lake National Park. Tours will leave from west parking lot at Coiner Park. South Lane Wheels will depart at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Guests are asked to bring a sack lunch and wear appropriate weather-related clothing. To sign up for the tour go to the information booth at Coiner Park. Space is limited to 17 people per bus and is on a first-come basis.

## Smokey Bear to appear at Cottage Grove Earth Day celebration

On Saturday, April 23, the Cottage Grove Ranger Station will host a booth at the Earth Day Celebration in Coiner Park. The free Earth Day Celebration will feature live music and food, prizes, arts and crafts, and a variety of local vendors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To contribute to the festivities, the U.S. Forest Service booth will be handing out Smokey Bear swag, sharing information about the nearby Cottage Grove Ranger District, and offering a number of kids' activities and giveaways. These include:

Fourth-graders can stop by the booth and do a fun learning activity to earn their Every Kid in a Park pass, which will grant them and their families free access to thousands of public lands across the country – including free access to every national park and forest.

Kids can get their hands wet and learn about stream ecology at the stream simulator, a hands-on tool to enact and experiment with real stream conditions. Volunteer students from the Al Kennedy alternative high school will be present to help operate the simulator.

Smokey Bear will make two special appearances at the booth, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., and 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Visitors can shake Smokey's hand and pose for selfies with their favorite bear.

For additional information, contact the Cottage Grove Ranger Station at (541) 767-5000, or stop by the station during business hours at 78405 Cedar Park Road.

The arrival of warmer weather means different things to different people. Some anticipate opportunities for outdoor fun, while others may be considering redecorating or remodeling their homes. For the latter group, home improvement season provides a great opportunity to make homes more eco-friendly.

When planning home improvement projects, it's best to first choose a project and then look for ways to make the project more environmentally friendly. Such an approach may not only benefit the environment, but it also may benefit homeowners' bottom lines.

Interior decorating  
Longer days and warmer temperatures often translate into wanting to freshen up the interior of a home. Heavy draperies and comforters are put away, and lighter fabrics are taken out of storage. Whenever possible, reuse or repurpose items you already have rather than purchasing new items. Longer drapes can be cut and hemmed to be used as window treatments in other rooms. Making a patchwork blanket out of old T-shirts is a crafty project that makes use of items that would otherwise be destined for landfills.

When laundering linens, skip the energy-using dryer and let



items line dry in the sun and fresh air.

If you decide to purchase some new items, look for products made from sustainable or organic fabrics. Hemp and bamboo textiles have grown in popularity. Hemp and bamboo plants grow quickly, and their durability makes these materials smart choices.

When replacing items around the house, donate older items to a charitable organization.

Flowers and plants  
Spring and summer call to mind beautiful blooming plants. Relying on native, sustainable plants is practical, environmentally friendly and cost-effective.

According to the National Wildlife Federation, sustainable plants are native plants. Native plants sustain local wildlife

more effectively than non-native alternatives, so include native plants in your sustainable garden. Native plants also are less reliant on pesticides and herbicides to keep them healthy and viable.

Don't forget to bring plants indoors as well. Even though you may be opening the windows more, indoor plants can filter and purify indoor air. The NASA Clean Air Study, led in association with the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, found that certain common indoor plants naturally remove toxic agents such as benzene, formaldehyde and trichloroethylene from the air. Efficient air cleaning is accomplished with at least one plant per 100 square feet of home or office space.

Proper disposal  
Spring cleaning is another tradition for many families come the end of winter and dawn of spring. Many people use spring as a time to go through closets and garages to remove items they no longer use or need. In an effort to clean up fast, some people may dispose of chemical products, paints, treated lumber, and many other items in ways that can be damaging to the environment. Always learn local municipal guidelines for proper disposal of potentially harmful products. Area recycling centers may have drop-off areas for stains and paints, used motor oil and other potentially harmful products.

Before discarding something, see if it can be donated or sold. This will result in fewer items ending up in landfills.

Exercise caution outdoors as well. Runoff from cleaning products used on home siding or driveways can leach into the surrounding soil or find its way into sewage drains that ultimately direct fluids to public waterways. Choose environmentally responsible products whenever possible.

Springtime renovation and cleaning projects provide the perfect opportunity to adopt eco-friendly practices that pay dividends for years to come.

# Earth Day is a great teaching opportunity

Earth Day has been around for more than 40 years, and during that time, it has inspired millions of people to increase their awareness of, and their appreciation for, the environment. Since the dawn of the twenty-first century, people increasingly have adopted eco-friendly lifestyles and attitudes, and the continued embrace of environmentally friendly practices and principles has made the struggles of Earth Day pioneers, like former United States Senator Gaylord Nelson, more than worth it.

Nowadays, children grow up learning about the environment in school and at home. For example, many households participate in their community's recycling programs, and such households are raising eco-conscious children, perhaps without even recognizing they're doing so.

While a transition to a more eco-conscious lifestyle might not be seamless, it's far easier than many might suspect and even easier for kids who have yet to develop a lifetime of habits that might not be so eco-friendly. With Earth Day on the horizon, the following are a few ways parents can get their kids involved in activities or lifestyles that benefit the environment.

## Address Eating Habits

Over the last several years, the opportunities to eat in an eco-friendly manner have increased dramatically. Organic foods have grown more and more popular, and parents can use this growing trend to teach their kids about the environment. When shopping for groceries, choose organic products that weren't grown with pesticides or harmful chemicals and explain this difference to kids.

Shopping locally provides

another opportunity for parents to involve food when teaching kids about the environment. Explain to kids that shopping locally reduces reliance on fuel because products don't need to be shipped, be it through the air or on the ground, to your community, minimizing fuel consumption.

## Teach Conservation Techniques

Conservation provides another

easy opportunity for parents to instill eco-friendly ideals in their children. Conservation is about reducing waste, so conservation techniques don't involve sacrifice. Instead, they involve being more responsible when it comes to using our resources.

Parents know full well the constant reminders kids need when it comes to dental hygiene. But use these daily reminders about brushing and flossing as an opportunity to impart a lesson about the environment. In-

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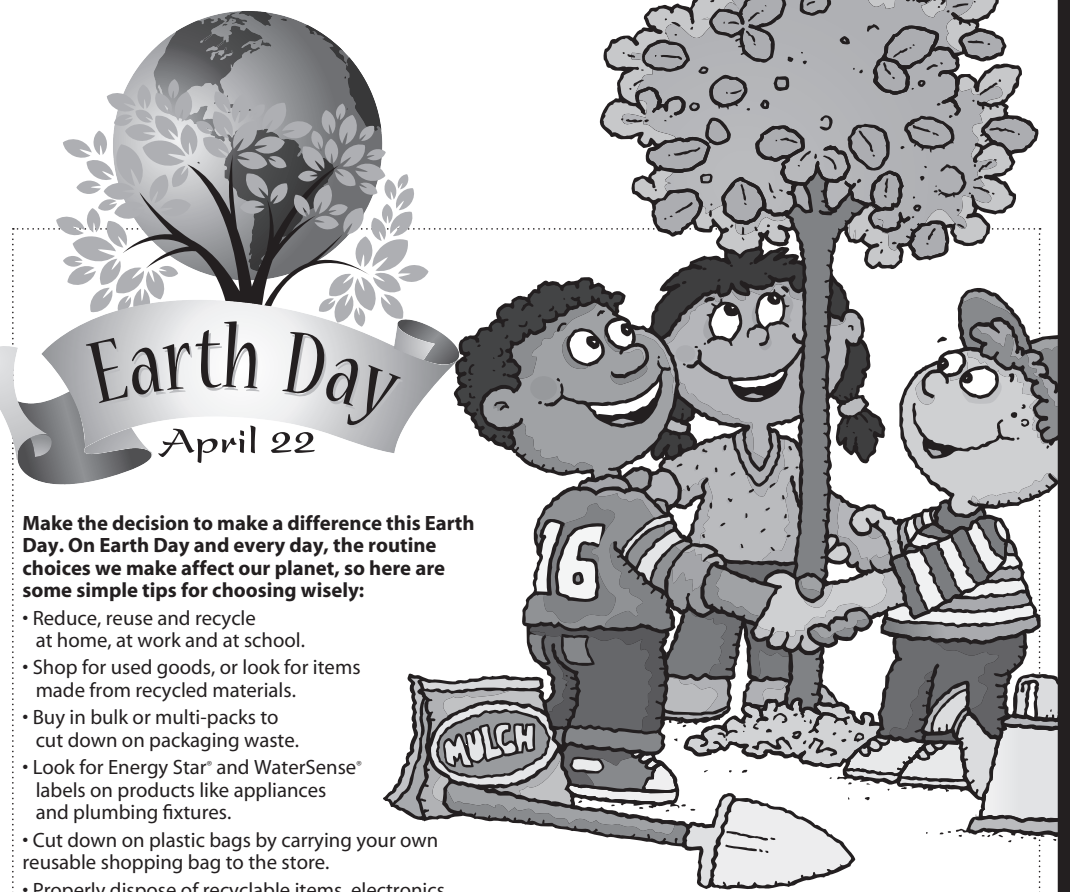


- \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Willow Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Family Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 Individual Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Volunteer Membership

**YES—I want to help enhance and protect the Coast Fork Willamette River by becoming a member!**

Members receive discounts on events, special invitations for tours, and are an integral part of our work to protect the water and habitat resources of our watershed. Become a member on our website [www.coastfork.org](http://www.coastfork.org) or mail this form to: 28 S. Sixth St., A Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

## Cause an Effect



**Make the decision to make a difference this Earth Day. On Earth Day and every day, the routine choices we make affect our planet, so here are some simple tips for choosing wisely:**

- Reduce, reuse and recycle at home, at work and at school.
- Shop for used goods, or look for items made from recycled materials.
- Buy in bulk or multi-packs to cut down on packaging waste.
- Look for Energy Star® and WaterSense® labels on products like appliances and plumbing fixtures.
- Cut down on plastic bags by carrying your own reusable shopping bag to the store.
- Properly dispose of recyclable items, electronics and potentially hazardous materials.
- Always turn off lights and appliances when you leave a room.
- Unplug your mobile phone charger when it's not in use.
- Walk, ride your bike or use public transportation whenever possible.
- Choose locally and organically produced foods.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Don't top off your gas tank, as this lets harmful chemicals enter the air.
- Go to [www.epa.gov/earthday](http://www.epa.gov/earthday) to find local volunteer opportunities and to learn more about steps you can take to protect our planet.

## Green your routine with eco-friendly choices from these local businesses:

<p><b>A OK Building Maintenance &amp; Janitorial</b> Grace Olsen</p>	<p><b>White Water Well Drilling</b> Creswell, OR 541-884-9702</p>	<p><b>Martin Creek Quarry</b> 76250 Martin Creek Rd Cottage Grove 541-942-1057</p>
<p><b>Pam's Sunnyside Greenhouses</b> 1704 W. Main St., Cottage Grove 541-942-7041</p>	<p><b>Rogers &amp; Son</b> 1324 E. Main Cottage Grove, OR 541-942-0500</p>	<p><b>Cottage Grove Sentinel</b> 116 N 6th Street Cottage Grove 541-942-3325</p>