

Go green with your pet

Environmentally conscious lifestyles are a way of life for many people. But while men and women may look to hybrid cars or energy-saving appliances to reduce their carbon footprints, few may know they can go green with their pets, too.

Pet care is likely not the first thing pet owners think of when they look to tweak their lifestyles to make them more environmentally friendly. But there are many ways pet owners can take a more eco-friendly approach to caring for their pets.

• Buy environmentally friendly toys and supplies. Many businesses now produce products with the environment in mind, and manufacturers of pet products are no exception. When buying toys and supplies

for your furry friends, look for products made from recycled materials or natural fibers. Such products may even be packaged in post-consumer materials like recycled paper.

• Buy in bulk. Buying pet items in bulk can be both eco-friendly and convenient. Buying in bulk means less frequent trips to the store, which conserves fuel and saves you time. Buying in bulk also means less packaging, which conserves resources and leads to less plastic and cardboard finding its way into landfills.

• Keep a watchful on your pets. Pets that are allowed to roam free can have an adverse impact on local wildlife. For example, cats that are allowed out to roam your yard and the yards

of your neighbors may be on the prowl for birds, and killing birds can have a negative impact on local ecosystems. Each bird death caused by a cat is preventable if pet owners simply keep their feline friends inside, which veterinarians note is good for the average cat's life expectancy. In addition, keep your dog on a leash when taking Fido for a walk or to the park, as dogs also are prone to some questionable behavior when off the leash and out from under the watchful eyes of their owners.

• Embrace organic foods. Many humans are turning to organic-only diets, and there is no reason why pet owners can't let their four-legged friends in on the fun. Certified organic pet foods are created without the

use of any harmful pesticides, hormones and artificial ingredients, making them healthier for both the family dog and the planet on which he roams and chases his frisbee.

• Clean up in an eco-friendly way. Cleaning up after your pet has done his business is perhaps the least enjoyable part of pet ownership. But dog owners can make picking up their pooches' poop more eco-friendly by using biodegradable poop bags in lieu of plastic bags from the grocery store or elsewhere. Plastic bags will sit in landfills for years to come, while biodegradable bags will decompose over time. Cat owners can also make cleaning up after their pets more eco-friendly and healthy for their furry friends by using envi-



ronmentally friendly cat litters that don't contain strip-mined clay or clay sediment that can contribute to feline respiratory problems.

There are many ways eco-

conscious pet owners can reduce their carbon footprints without expending much effort at all.

Eight ways that kids can go green

Raising eco-friendly children is less complicated than it once was. From very early ages, today's kids are exposed to environmental topics and how they can do their part to maintain and protect the planet's resources. Between activities at daycare and lessons at school to information they receive from educational television programming, some kids are taking their own environmental initiatives — and involving their parents along the way.

Inspiring children to be eco-friendly can be enjoyable and get those creative juices flowing. The following are eight ways children and their families can work together to protect the environment.

1. Precycle. Kids can attempt to reduce waste by recognizing products that could be wasteful and then avoiding those items. Toys or everyday items with excessive packaging that we use without thinking are just some examples of items that can be precycled.

2. Repurpose. Look at items that normally end up in the trash and find new and fun ways to repurpose them. Children can make crafts out of junk mail, catalogs and old newspapers. Juice boxes or plastic containers can be turned into boats or accessories for dolls and action figures. Use natural materials found in the yard or on a nature walk to make a fairy garden or imaginative world for small toys.

3. Reuse. Toting lunch or snacks around can be more eco-friendly when reusable containers are part of the equation. Explore

the many lunch bags, beverage cups, thermoses, Bento boxes, and other packaging available. Many are made from recycled materials as well.

4. Walk. Encourage getting around without firing up the car. Walking, jogging, biking, or scooting around the neighborhood is more eco-friendly than driving. Many adventures can unfold when seeing the world from a pedestrian's vantage point, but things are easily missed when riding inside cars or trucks.

5. Conserve water. Lessons learned in conservation are important. Water is one resource that is crucial to human life. Kids can explore ways to cut down on water consumption or use water more efficiently. The environmental resource Green Lifestyle Changes says that a 10-minute shower with a standard shower head can use upward of 80 gallons of water and generate up to four pounds of CO2 emissions. Simply reducing shower time can save energy and water. There are other ways to conserve as well. Make it a family project to collect rain water to use for washing cars or watering plants.

6. Rent rather than buy. From toys to video games to movies, people have more entertainment options than ever before. And nowadays it's easy to access a fresh supply of entertainment without making purchases that require the manufacturing of new items. Streaming rented content rather than buying packaged versions can reduce waste in a number of ways.



7. Turn off/turn down. Turn off lights, appliances, electronics, and much more when they're not in use. Also, encourage children (of an appropriate age) to unplug certain electronics so appliances aren't consuming electricity while in standby mode, which is called vampire power.

8. Change body care products. Introduce kids to earth-friendly soaps, shampoos, toiletries, and cleaning supplies.

Science Pub to feature dragonflies, damselflies

On Tuesday, April 26, the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council welcomes Cary Kerst, naturalist and co-author of the beautiful "Dragonflies and Damselflies of Oregon: A Field Guide," to Cottage Grove for our April 2016 Science Pub presentation. His talk entitled Dragonflies and Damselflies of Oregon will inform on these unique insects in whose ancestors were here before the dinosaurs, can live for five years, fly 35 miles per hour, and truly eat "on the fly." Learn from an expert about the life history, habitats, and behavior of these fascinating insects along with a photographic introduction to the Oregon species.

Dragonflies and Damselflies comprise the insect order Odonata, and are some of the most beautiful of insects, rivaling butterflies and moths for their amazing colors and behaviors. Dragonflies flying abilities rival anything in nature and continue to be studied by scientists and aeronautical engineers to learn how they accomplish their incredible feats of flight. Come and discover more about Dragonflies and Damselflies in Oregon!

The Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council hosts a free monthly public meeting series called the Coast Fork Science Pub on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 5-7pm at the Axe & Fiddle, 657 E. Main Street in Cottage Grove. The event begins with informal socializing, trivia, prizes and updates about the watershed and watershed council during the first hour. Then our formal science pub presentation begins at 6 p.m.

TEACHING

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stead of keeping the faucet running while brushing your teeth, turn the faucet off and encourage kids to do the same. When they ask why, explain that this helps conserve water, and show them how it's just as easy and effective to clean teeth without the water running as it is when the faucet is on. This teaches kids that conservation is simple and often just requires minimal effort to make a big difference.

There are additional lessons about conservation that parents can impart. For instance, when grocery shopping, always make a list before leaving the house and explain to kids that you do this so you don't have to make two trips to the store and waste the gas that the second trip would require. In addition, encourage kids to turn the lights off when they leave a room to better conserve energy.

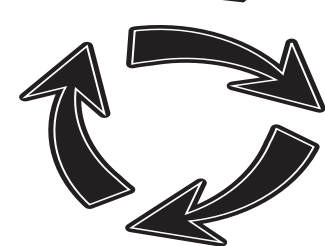
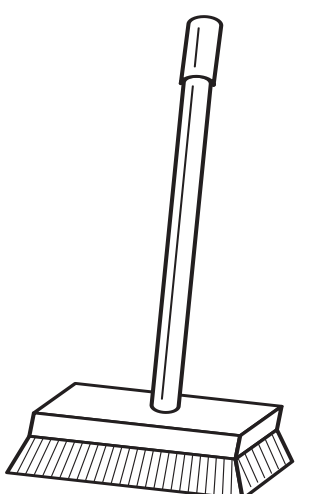
Purchase Recycled Products

Recycling is a practice that many of today's kids grow up

with, and as a result, many of them might take it for granted, failing to fully realize the positive impact they're making whenever they recycle. If recycling is as natural to kids as breathing, then it's no surprise they might not recognize its impact.

One way parents can address this issue is to purchase products made from recycled materials. A host of products are made from recycled materials, from the paper you put in the printer to the toys under the tree on Christmas morning. Explain to kids why you're choosing these products, and let them know such products wouldn't be possible without their own recycling efforts.

Another way to help kids realize the value of recycling is to make crafts from recycled products. For instance, make a papier mache globe to celebrate Earth Day by using old newspapers as your primary material. Such lessons show kids their efforts make an impact and increase the likelihood they'll continue this eco-friendly lifestyle well into adulthood.



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THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY

10AM-4PM

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2155 Getty Circle ~ Unit #1

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