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PRESS RELEASE

EASY, EVERYDAY TIPS ON HOW TO “GO GREEN”

Save the Environment and Save Money at the Same Time

SAN DIEGO, March 31, 2008 – The “going green” craze is spreading at a much faster pace in recent years and it will only continue to expand from here. Studies have shown that the average American emits approximately 9.44 tons of carbon dioxide per year. In order to save the environment from the toxins and waste that are constantly polluting the air and the soil, more people have started to make a conscious effort in trying to reduce how much energy they use, what products they purchase and how much they recycle. And it turns out “going green” may not only help save the environment, but it can save you money at the same time. Everyone is constantly looking for ways to save money, so why not make some changes that will help save the environment as well?

Debt-Free America offers the following tips for people looking to help clean up the environment and save money at the same time:

Save on Electric Bills

Low-Wattage Light Bulbs: One of the easiest things you can do in your home to cut electricity costs is to replace your 75 or 100-watt light bulbs with 23-watt compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL). By using CFLs, you will get the same amount of light from these bulbs, but you will use 69% less energy. On average, CFLs can save you up to \$250 in one year and all it takes is a simple bulb switch.

Unplug Appliances: Another easy tip that can make a huge impact on your electricity bill is to unplug appliances when they are not in use. Many people may use the coffee maker or toaster in the morning, but rather than leave it on for the rest of the day, unplug it when you are done. Electricity still leaks into appliances, even when they are turned off. Unplugging them will ensure that unnecessary power does not go to waste.

Adjust Your Thermostat: You can install a programmable thermostat that will automatically adjust the heating or cooling in your home at night and when you are away. Programmable thermostats cut your energy cost by 10-20% more than the average thermostat. Also, the thermostat on your water heater is typically set at 140 degrees Fahrenheit, but 120 degrees is warm enough for daily showers and running the dishwasher. This can average an annual savings of \$24 and reduce carbon-dioxide emissions by 187 pounds.

At Home

Laundry: Washing your clothes in cold water rather than hot can save you up to \$160 a year in energy costs. Also, in the spring and summer, air-dry your clothes instead of using the dryer. If you must use the dryer, try to combine smaller loads together or simply dry them in a row so that you can utilize the heat that is still in the dryer.

Recycle: Always remember to recycle aluminum/tin cans, paper, plastic bottles and glass containers. Also, rather than using Tupperware for leftovers, just reuse the plastic containers or tubs that the food already comes in. When grocery shopping, use a few reusable grocery bags you can bring from home rather than multiple paper or plastic shopping bags the store supplies. Also, look for boxes (such as for

crackers, cookies and cereal) that are made from 100% recycled paper and try to buy organic produce, which is grown without chemicals or pesticides.

Homemade Compost: If you enjoy gardening, then the environment is obviously important to you. You can save money and keep your garden looking beautiful by making your own compost out of stuff you would normally put in the garbage. Carefully combine egg shells, coffee grounds, leftovers and spoiled vegetables and mix them with dirt. Once a week, give it a good mix so that air can get in and in about 3 weeks, you will have rich nutritious soil for your garden.

At the Office

Pack Your Lunch: Going out for lunch on a daily basis can get to be rather costly for you and for packaging companies. Instead, bring your lunch from home and pack it in a reusable container. This lessens your waste and you will most likely be eating a healthier meal as well.

Reusable Coffee Mug: Getting your morning caffeine fix can become another added cost in your daily routine. Make coffee at home (don't forget to unplug the maker and save your grounds for the garden) and bring it in a washable mug rather than a Styrofoam cup. If you must buy your coffee from your favorite coffee stand, most places will even give you a discount off of your coffee if you bring in your own cup.

Reusable Water Bottle: The same goes for reusable water bottles that you can refill yourself rather than constantly buying new plastic water bottles. Buying your own water filter and filling up a reusable water bottle will save you money (and the environment) over time.

On The Road

Cut Driving Costs: Going green on the road does not necessarily mean you should go out and buy a Hybrid, but you could help save the environment by reducing fuel and carbon monoxide emissions with your current vehicle. You could reduce your speed while you drive (or just go the speed limit) because driving at 55 mph rather than 65 mph can reduce your mileage by 15%. Also, you can get better mileage if you do not accelerate or break rapidly.

Leave The Car At Home: Instead of driving to work everyday, you should try and carpool with co-workers. Also, if just running errands, try walking or riding a bike. These tips will help cut down on high-priced gasoline and parking bills, reduce the smog and exhaust in the air and also get you into shape.

WHO: Debt-Free America

WHAT: Easy Everyday Tips on How to "Go Green"

WHEN: Interviews are available immediately and ongoing

WHERE: In-studio or phone interviews with Debt-Free America

Debt-Free America is a 501(c)3 non-profit, community service organization offering confidential and professional credit counseling, debt management programs, and financial education to consumers nationwide. Debt-Free America is dedicated to providing FREE services to help financially distressed families and individuals effectively manage their personal finances. The Board members and operations staff have a long-term commitment to helping anyone in debt crisis, and even those not in a debt crisis. Debt-Free America has been in the business since 1997 and is now serving over 16,000 clients nationwide. Visit them on the web at www.debtfreeamerica.com.

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