

Simple Steps for Faith in Action

These “Simple Steps” for faith-based communities not only help us care for the earth but also, in many cases, may lower expenditures. **In generating this list, we have incorporated a wide variety of suggestions, knowing that what makes sense for one individual or group, may not be practical for another.** We hope you will consider adding the steps that seem right for you to the daily routine of your congregation. The dashed lines are provided for your convenience in separating the sections of this document for distribution throughout your building. If you are interested in more information about recycling, pollution prevention, or other environmental issues, please visit our website at www.ceegr.org.



Your Faith Organization's Policy

- Make changes in your mission statement and organizational policy to include environmental impacts.
- Create a planning committee to make environmental improvements.
- Increase recycling efforts at your congregation by recycling materials that are currently discarded or by increasing the amount of currently recycled materials.
- When planning construction and remodeling, choose building design, materials, and furnishings that are environmentally preferable (energy and water conserving, with recycled content, etc.)
- Review purchasing policies to eliminate any barriers to buying products with recycled content.
- Publicize new environmental goals and policies within your group and encourage member participation.
- Once your environmental program is in place, nominate your congregation for an Environmental Excellence Award. These awards are presented annually by Choose Environmental Excellence - Gateway Region to individuals, schools, businesses, and organizations throughout the metropolitan area that have taken exemplary steps toward becoming more environmentally responsible.

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In the Office

- Implement a paper recycling program and encourage participation. Paper, envelopes, file folders, books, magazines, and cardboard can all be recycled. In most cases, the costs incurred will be offset by the decreased volume in your trash dumpster. Contact us for assistance in identifying a recycler.
- Encourage the use of e-mail communication, when practical, to minimize printed copies of memos, etc.
- Receive faxes directly by computer and print only the necessary pages.
- Make double-sided copies whenever possible.
- Reuse office supplies, such as file folders and manila envelopes, whenever possible.
- Use scrap paper for informal notes and phone messages.
- Use shredded newspaper as packing material.
- Use carbonless paper, which is easier to recycle, for invoices and other forms.
- Keep your organization's mailing list current and eliminate duplicate mailings.
- Consider adding “*Address Correction Requested*” to return addresses.
- Consider adding “*or Current Resident*” to mailing addresses for mass mailings of a general nature.
- Recycle inkjet and toner cartridges to reduce waste and provide your group with a cash rebate. Contact us for assistance in identifying a recycler.

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Buy Recycled - Buy Smart

- Order a copy of the Missouri Recycled Products Guide. Call (573) 526-5555.
- Buy paper products with as high a post-consumer recycled content as possible.
- Order supplies in bulk to reduce packaging waste and save money.

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In the Kitchen

Food Service

- Use glass, china, or dishwasher-safe plastic instead of disposable plates and cups.
- Use metal flatware instead of disposable plastic.
- Use linen or reusable plastic tablecloths instead of paper placemats.
- Serve sugar and creamer from containers instead of individual serving packets.
- Use pump dispensers or larger size containers for condiments instead of individual serving packets.
- Limit the use of straws and use bulk straw dispensers instead of individually wrapped straws.
- Serve milk from self-service machines instead of individual cartons.
- Use soda fountains instead of individual containers.
- Purchase reusable coffee filters.
- Donate surplus or past-pull-date food items to food banks or shelters, if still edible.
- Compost fruit and vegetable food waste.
- Reuse ice for plant and landscape watering.

Paper Products

- Replace folded paper towels with roll dispensers (which usually cost less and reduce the volume of paper needed) or air dryers.
- Buy unbleached kitchen paper products with recycled content. Unbleached products reduce the amount of dioxin released into the environment.
- Use cloth hats and aprons instead of disposable paper.
- Use newspapers to drain cooking grease instead of paper towels.
- Use a chalkboard or dry-erase board to post menu changes or daily specials.

Equipment

- Select a commercial conveyor-type dishwasher with an electric eye, so that water flows only when dishes are in the conveyor.
- Install manual pre-wash dishwashers to reduce total water usage.
- Install open-door buzzers for walk-in refrigerators.
- Disconnect lights or remove bulbs in dessert and salad refrigerators. These lights create heat and are usually unnecessary.
- Install timers on hood fans, exhaust systems, and hood lights.
- Use convection ovens instead of conventional ovens.
- Install grease traps in all waste traps.
- Clean grills and grease filters daily for greater heat transfer.
- Service all gas cooking equipment at least twice a year to maximize operating efficiency.
- Ensure that all refrigeration units are sealed properly in order to contain environmentally-harmful coolants.

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Reusing

- Purchase remanufactured business furniture. Donate used furniture to charities or sell to used-equipment dealers, instead of discarding.
- Reuse foam peanuts, bubble wrap, and other packing material.
- Return or reuse wooden pallets.
- Substitute recycled cardboard or recycled plastic pallets for wood.
- Investigate local resources for reusable building supplies and industrial fixtures.
- Use rechargeable batteries instead of disposables.
- Use worn-out tires for landscaping or swings.

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In the Restroom

- Replace folded paper towels with roll dispensers or air dryers.
- Buy unbleached restroom paper products.
- Consider purchasing faucets with motion sensors and automatic shutoff.

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Cleaning Supplies and Other Chemicals

- Purchase these items only in amounts needed. Properly dispose of unused quantities of solvents and other chemicals classified as hazardous waste. Contact us for assistance in disposing of these items.
- Replace chemical or chlorinated cleansers with citrus and water-based products.
- Use vinegar mixed with water as an everyday glass cleaner.
- Use water-based (latex) paints whenever possible.

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Outdoors

- Use solar timers for parking lot and walkway lighting.
- Install motion sensors to turn lights on/off where appropriate.
- Select landscaping plants that require minimal maintenance and attract bees and butterflies.
- Place sprinkler systems on a timer and monitor for leaks.
- Water lawns in the morning to avoid evaporation in the afternoon and disease from evening dampness.
- Request that your lawn service adjust the cutting height of their lawnmowers so that the grass is not cut too short.
- Request that your lawn service leave grass clippings on the lawn to decrease the amount of watering needed.
- Direct rainwater from downspouts onto plants.

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Saving Energy

- Contact the US Environmental Protection Agency and ask about becoming an “Energy Star Congregation.” Call the EPA at 1-888-STAR YES or visit www.energystar.gov for information on how to make your buildings more energy efficient.
- Install reusable furnace and air conditioner filters and clean them monthly.
- Establish a regular maintenance routine to prolong the life of equipment.
- Install airlock entrances.
- Institute energy management programs at all facilities.
- Conduct an energy audit and prioritize recommendations.
- Purchase copiers and other equipment that feature an energy-saving mode.
- Put thermostats on timers to minimize air conditioning and heating during hours when the building is not occupied.
- Install energy-saving software on computers.
- Turn off lights in areas that are not in use.
- Install motion sensors to turn off lights in rooms that are not used frequently.
- Use energy-efficient fluorescent lights instead of incandescent bulbs.
- Retrofit exit signs with fluorescent lights or replace with light-emitting diode technology.
- Service gas boilers and water heaters twice a year.
- Install heat recovery equipment on large air conditioning units to preheat water.

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