

GOING GREEN CAN SAVE YOU GREEN -- AS IN -- CASH!

Annabelle Gurwitch, Host of the show "WA\$TED" on Discovery's Planet Green channel, showed how, on *The Early Show* on Earth Day 2009, April 22:

Five things you can do to lower your carbon footprint on Earth; all are money-saving or cost nothing:

1. Don't buy bottled water
2. Use dish towels instead of paper towels
3. Make a meal for your family using 20% less meat
4. Make your own cleaning products
5. Sign the petition to stop junk mail

Is tap water just as good as water that you would buy?

Yea, here's the issue. You can actually find out what exactly is in you're tap water; it's a lot harder to find that information out from the bottled water companies. The average family spends more than \$500 dollars a year on bottled water and there is really no reason.

How can eating 20% less meat help the environment?

Raising cattle is extremely energy intensive. Transportation, grain production, processing, raising the cows, all of these stages are very energy intensive, and expensive. Raising cows is the most energy intensive food we eat. If everyone in the country started eating 20% less beef it would be like everyone in America switching over to a hybrid car.

Will homemade cleaning products work as well as say Windex or other all purpose cleaners?

They work just fine. They are not anti-bacterial so if that's a concern, you may want to keep that in the house. But many people are starting to say don't use anti-bacterial. The more anti-bacterial cleaners we spray on bacteria the more resistant they become. Making your own products cost about .50 cents and our estimation is that you can save over 500 dollars a year by making your own.

Does the petition to stop junk mail take you off junk mail lists?

Signing the petition will not actually stop junk mail from coming to your house but I am trying to get everyone together so we can pass legislation to put a ban on all of the junk mail that is sent out unsolicited. There are some things you can do though; there are some companies out there that will take your name off of these lists. Catalogchoice.org takes your name off of lists; the other option is to call each catalog or vendor individually to take your name off the list.

Annabelle's Tips for Saving Money by Going Green:

1. Make a commitment not to buy bottled water.

Start today! Earth Day is the perfect day to start drinking from your faucet. The average family spends between \$500- \$4000 dollars a year on bottled water. It's a 16 Billion dollar industry in America. Instead of buying a new water bottle every time opt for a reusable bottle that you can fill up yourself.

2. Drop that paper towel right now!

Make a commitment to use dish towels for just one day.

Over 90% of American households use paper towels, creating over 3,000 tons of waste each day. Switching to recycled roll paper towels can help cut down on all this trash.

The Benefits:

If every household in the US replaced one roll of non-recycled paper towels with a roll of 100% recycled paper towels, we would save 864,000 trees and 3.4 million cubic feet of landfill space.

For every ton of 100% recycled paper that is bought, about 4000kWh of energy and 7,000 gallons of water are saved. It also avoids releasing 60 pounds of pollutants into the air.

3. Make a meal for your family with 20% less meat.

Try it once! No one will even notice it, and the impact adds up to be huge.

This is the biggest, but very affordable thing you can do to change the planet..

If every American ate 20% less meat, it would have the same effect on carbon emissions as if every one in the country started driving hybrids.

4. Make Your Own Home Cleaning Products

It took exactly one minute to make a great all purpose cleaner. And the best part is you use ingredients most people already have: vinegar, baking soda and water. The average family spends approximately \$600 a year on cleaning products. And the cost to make them yourself, about 50 cents each. You'll reuse old plastic bottles too.

5. Sign the petition to STOP junk mail

You'll save 100 million trees. The average American spends 8 months of their life opening junk mail! More than 100 billion pieces of junk mail are delivered each year - that's more than 800 pieces per household. Every year American households receive a total of 104.7 billion pieces of junk mail that's 848 pieces of junk mail per household, which requires 6.5 million tons of paper. Go to www.donotmail.org so sign the petition to stop junk mail.