

# EcoLiteracy 101

## 100 Ways I Can Reduce My Environmental Impact



Student Website: [www.AtlanticEcoWorks.ca/EcoLiteracy101](http://www.AtlanticEcoWorks.ca/EcoLiteracy101)

### I can conserve electricity by:

- Using a clothes line to dry my laundry
- Turning my oven off and letting it “coast” for the last ten or fifteen minutes to use its residual heat
- Using the energy-saving power-down option on my computer monitor rather than the screen saver (when my computer must be left on)
- Turning my computer and its peripherals off at the power bar to eliminate standby power consumption
- Using my dishwasher only when it is full
- Using the no-heat or air-dry cycle on my dishwasher
- Regularly cleaning the heating coils and rubber door seals of my refrigerator and freezer
- Maintaining the temperature of my refrigerator between 1.7 – 3.3 °C and my freezer at -18 °C
- Using low-wattage task lights rather than high-wattage ceiling lights
- Using a pressure cooker to cook food
- Using lids on boiling pots and pans
- Replacing the ten most used lights in my house with compact fluorescent bulbs
- Turning off lights, televisions, computers, stereos and other electricity consuming devices when they are not being used
- Cleaning the lint filter of my clothes dryer after each load
- Unplugging electrically powered exercise equipment between uses (to eliminate standby power consumption)
- Unplugging electronic devices when not in use
- Purchasing “Energy Star” appliances and products as replacement becomes necessary
- Purchasing an all-fridge; that is, a refrigerator without a freezer unit
- Turning my home’s heat recovery ventilator (HRV) off during the summer when windows are usually kept open
- Using a timer to control my home’s heat recovery ventilator (HRV) so that it doesn’t run when the house is unoccupied
- Insulating recessed pot lights to reduce heat loss to the attic
- Using motion sensor outdoor lights
- Baking several items in the oven in succession rather than baking on separate occasions

### I can conserve water by:

- Having a shower rather than a bath
- Using a “low-flow” tooth brushing technique
- Allowing for two uses of the toilet for “number one” before flushing
- Keeping a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the faucet for cool water
- Using a pan of water when peeling and cleaning vegetables and fruits rather than letting the tap run
- Removing ice cube trays from the refrigerator a few minutes before I need them, to loosen them at room temperature instead of under the faucet
- Turning the water off in the shower while lathering my hair (some low-flow showerheads have a valve to turn off the water so the main controls won’t require adjusting when the water is turned back on)
- Putting the stopper in the kitchen sink before running hot water for dishwashing. (The cold water that accumulates in the sink will be warmed by the hot water)
- Installing an energy-efficient showerhead(6 litres/minute or less)
  - Home Hardware: SKU #3266913
  - Home Depot: “The Incredible Head Power Showerhead, Product # 157624 (Alsons ES141 showerhead)
  - Canadian Tire: “Shower with Pause Button,” #63-0157-8
- Adding displacement containers to my toilet tank
- Installing a low-flow toilet
- Reducing the number of rinses in the clothes washing cycle

### I can reduce space and water heating requirements by:

- Closing my window blinds/curtains during the night in winter and opening them during the day
- Keeping my thermostat set back to at least 65 °F during the night and turned off during the summer
- Keeping my thermostat set back to at least 65 °F when I/we are away during the day

- Insulating at least the first two meters of pipe from my water heater
- Installing an energy efficient furnace
- Using caulking and weather-stripping to seal air leaks
- Installing insulating foam gaskets behind the cover plates of my wall outlets and wall switches, especially those on my exterior walls
- Turning down the temperature of my water heater to 120 °F
- Installing an insulation jacket around my water heater
- Installing a ground source heat pump
- Using cold water in the clothes washer
- Installing an energy-efficient showerhead in my shower (6 litres/minute or less)
- Insulating my attic to at least R-40
- Insulating my basement walls
- Installing a drain water heat recovery system

**I can improve my vehicle's fuel efficiency by:**

- Keeping my vehicle and its trunk free of unnecessary items/weight
- Trying to drive at 90 km/hr (and never faster than 100 km/hr) when on the highway
- Maintaining at least a four-second margin between my vehicle and the vehicle ahead of me (to prevent unnecessary braking)
- Accelerating gradually rather than quickly
- Checking my tire pressure every month
- Never idling unnecessarily
- Removing my roof racks when not in use
- Keeping my vehicle well maintained
- Driving the most fuel-efficient vehicle that meets my everyday needs

**I can reduce my vehicle use by:**

- Carpooling
- Walking
- Cycling
- Working from home one or two days a week
- Choosing services close to home or work
- Combining errands into one trip and efficiently planning my route
- Using shopping lists to prevent having to return to stores for forgotten items

**I can make green food choices by:**

- Purchasing produce from local farmers
- Purchasing produce from vendors who support local farmers

- Growing my own vegetables in the summer
- Maintaining a few vegetable plants inside during the winter
- Checking labels and not purchasing foods that have traveled an excessive distance
- Consuming less meat
- Following a vegetarian diet
- Purchasing food with little or no packaging
- Taking my lunch to work rather than eating out
- Not frequenting fast-food restaurants
- Supporting locally-owned restaurants whose owners support the community (when I do eat out)
- Preparing food from "scratch" rather than purchasing processed food
- Buying foods in bulk when possible

**I can reduce my material consumption by:**

- Refusing to purchase food items packaged in type 6 or 7 plastic
- Using cloth bags to carry my groceries
- Using both sides of paper before recycling
- Purchasing second-hand items when possible
- Giving away items I no longer need
- Trying to repair or reuse an item before recycling or discarding it
- Receiving monthly bills by email rather than by mail
- Using rags for household cleaning rather than paper towels
- Renting or borrowing tools rather than buying them
- Using vinegar instead of fabric softener in the clothes washer rinse cycle
- Making my own laundry detergent

**I can reduce my impact outside the home by:**

- Using manual alternatives to tilling the garden
- Using manual tools to maintain my flower beds
- Using a manual reel push mower to cut my lawn
- Replacing part of my lawn with native shrubs/trees and natural landscaping
- Leaving grass clippings on lawn
- Using corn gluten meal rather than fertilizer on my lawn
- Collecting rainwater for gardening purposes
- Not using chemical herbicides and pesticides
- Composting at home
- Using native/low-water need plants