

Simple Starters for A “Greener” Practice

Courtesy of GREEN SPA NETWORK

1. Install energy efficient lighting like halogen, CFL and LED light bulbs. Energy costs can drop as much as 7%. **Install low-flow faucet aerators** to reduce water use by up to 50% and reduces water-heating needs as well.

2. Provide skin care products free from ingredients known to pose health risks such as: parabens, petrochemicals, nanoparticles, and artificial coloring. Look for products that contain natural, healthy, and ethically sourced and produced ingredients.

3. Stop selling or providing water in bottles. Bottled water produces 1.5 million tons of plastic water per year, and requires 47 million gallons of oil per year to produce and only 20% of plastic bottles get recycled. A better option: Make water available for use with a recycled paper cup--or better yet, a reusable container.

Make a concerted effort to reduce or eliminate the use of all plastic waste.

4. Purchase unbleached (without chlorine) paper products. Paper towels, toilet paper, and many other products have excellent quality and cost-effective alternatives. Bleached paper products not only require large amounts of energy to produce, but utilize toxic chemicals that are slow to degrade in the ecosystem negatively impacting plants, animals and people.

5. Recycle and help educate staff and guests by providing clearly labeled recycling containers. For the office--use refillable and recyclable toner or ink cartridges, rechargeable batteries.

6. Pre-cycle – reduce waste before you buy. When making purchasing decisions, consider the packaging: choose minimal packaged goods, utilize bulk purchasing options, recycled paper, and for printing use soy ink.

7. Avoid soaps and detergents that contain phosphates, which can be harmful to delicate water-based ecosystems. High levels of phosphates in water allows algae to grow unhindered which can make lakes and rivers unsuitable for marine life and swimming as well as contaminate municipal and domestic wastewater systems.

8. Use alternative pesticides to prevent pests naturally indoors and outdoors. This is good for people, pets and allows the natural ecosystem to still flourish. Think about using essential oils like peppermint, clove, lavender to thyme to help keep away unwanted pests.