

Green Congregation Project Resource Guide 2012

Compiled by Sustainable Midlands for the Midlands Green Congregation Initiative

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This guide will be expanded to include other information and projects in the future!
Any questions, please contact Jason Craig <mailto:info@sustainablemidlands.org>.

What does it mean to “Care for Creation”?

Every major religion teaches that humanity is responsible to care for creation.

In a 2005 letter, the National Council of Churches wrote: “**Sustainability** is living within the bounds of planetary capacities indefinitely, in fairness to both present and future generations of life. God’s covenant is with humanity and all other living creatures “for all future generations” (Genesis 9:8-17). The concern for sustainability forces us to be responsible for the truly long-term impacts of our lifestyles and policies”.

To read the entire letter go to: <http://www.nccusa.org/news/godsearthissacred.html>

In layman terms, “Going Green” means to pursue knowledge and practices that can lead to more environmentally friendly and ecologically responsible decisions and lifestyles, which can help protect the environment and sustain our natural resources. Green living allows us to meet the needs of the present, without compromising the needs of future generations.

This guide was developed to:

- Help you establish your Green Team
- Assist in project selection
- Provide “how to” advice on project set up
- Provide a directory of resources

Sustainable Midlands looks forward to working with you on this green journey. We hope you will participate in the Midlands Green Congregation Initiative.

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Creation Care Statements from the Faith Community

Compiled by Bruce Coull, Dean Emeritus USC School of the Environment

Lambeth Conferences of Anglican Bishops, 1988. Encourage people everywhere to make changes, personal and corporate, in their attitudes and life-style, recognizing that wholeness of living requires a right relationship with God, one's neighbour, and creation.

<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1988/1988-40.cfm>

The Evangelical Environmental Network. Creation-care does not just mean caring for "nature," nor does it just mean caring for humanity; it means caring for both. A biblical creation-care ethic is a holistic ethic. <http://creationcare.org/blank.php?id=35>

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. God blesses the world and sees it as "good". All creation, not just humankind, is viewed as "very good" in God's eyes.

<http://www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements/Environment.aspx>

Islam (from Easily Understood Islam). Islam has urged humanity to be kind to nature and not to abuse the trust that has been placed on the shoulders of man. In fact, to be kind to animals is an integral part of Islam for Muslims. <http://www.easily-understand-Islam.com/articles/islam-environment.htm>

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life. What's Jewish About Protecting the Environment.

....we have an urgent Jewish mission to establish a more healthy and sustainable relationship between human beings and the rest of God's creation. <http://www.coejl.org/~coejlor/jewviro.php>

Church of the Nazarene. Our care for the earth as Christians is as fundamental as our care for our physical bodies.just as we are only given one body in which to live we are also only given one earth. <http://www.ncm.org/awareness/environment/>

Presbyterian Church (USA). Restoring Creation is a central concern of the church to be incorporated into its life and mission at every level.

<http://www.pcusa.org/news/2010/9/16/congregations-caring-creation>

Roman Catholic: Message of Pope Benedict XVI, January 1, 2010 it is imperative that mankind renew and strengthen that covenant between human beings and the environment, which should mirror the creative love of God.....

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20091208_xliiii-world-day-peace_en.html

Salvation Army. God ... has given us a special responsibility ...to care for living things, and yet human beings again and again destroy the earth around us. Let's learn how to better care for creation. <http://www.salvationarmyethics.org/resources/creation-care>

Unitarian Universalist Association, Principle # 7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. <http://www.uua.org/visitors/6798.shtml>

United Methodist Church. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect.

<http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?mid=1701>

Partial List of Creation Care/ Earth Stewardship Websites

Blessed Earth - An educational nonprofit that inspires and equips faith communities to become better stewards of the earth. <http://www.blessedearth.org/>

City of Columbia Climate Protection Action Campaign Green Congregations - Encourage faith-based organizations to: 1) improve their environmental record while saving money and being good stewards of the Earth; and 2) engage their members individually to improve the environment.
<http://www.columbia.sc.gov/coc/index.cfm/cpac/green-congregations>

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL) - What's Jewish about protecting the Environment? <http://www.coejl.org/~coejlor/jewviro.php>

Creation Care (National Association of Evangelicals) – Responsibility to care for God’s earth, provides scriptural basis for care, to do items in churches, home, work, and resources. <http://www.creationcare.org>

Earth Ministry - Earth stewardship programs and resources (books, videos, curricula) for congregations, clergy, individuals and families. <http://earthministry.org>.

EPA – Energy Star for Congregations - Ways a congregation can save energy
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=small_business.sb_congregations

The Episcopal Ecological Network *EpEN's* mission is to educate, encourage, and facilitate congregations, dioceses, provinces, and the *Episcopal Church, USA*, toward local, regional, national, and international activities for the stewardship of God's Creation.
<http://eenonline.org/>

Interfaith Power and Light - National organization with chapters in most states – new chapter starting in SC in 2011; educates congregations on the conservation/financial value of renewable energy and energy efficiency. <http://interfaithpowerandlight.org>.

National Council of Churches (Eco-Justice Council) – Justice for God’s planet; includes networking ideas and resources. <http://nccecojustice.org>

National Religious Partnership for the Environment – Jewish, Catholic, and evangelical and mainline Protestant perspectives on why the environment is of religious concern. http://www.nrpe.org/why/qaa_all.htm

Sierra Club, Partnership with Faith Communities - “*Faith in Action*”, a PDF booklet, provides a stewardship example from each state, regional resources (with contact) and a denominational list of faith /environment web addresses.
<http://www.sierraclub.org/ej/partnerships/faith/default.aspx>

S.C. Green Churches - Provides list of SC green churches along with information and shared ideas to effect in for God's creation. <http://www.scgreenchurches.org>.

Web of Creation – Details (resources) for a green congregation program: transforming faith communities. <http://www.webofcreation.org>

There are many more resources on the web. Just search for “caring for creation” or “green congregations”.

What does a Green Team do?

Every congregation will find their own path. The first thing is to **establish your team's goals and priorities**, and that will depend on the state of your congregation as well as the talents and energies of your group. Here are some ideas to just get your brainstorming going:

- Structural and energy audits
- Advocate for less waste by getting rid of Styrofoam cups at coffee hour
- Organize a thrift-store day to educate about over-consumption
- Educate around food issues and get congregation events to become more vegetarian-friendly
- Work for community gardens or organic/climate appropriate greenscaping around the buildings
- Research low-flush toilets and water use
- Connect your congregation with local recycling resources
- Organize carpools to congregation events

...and whatever creative ideas your group comes up with!

What you need to do most of all is **agree, as a group, on what your goals are and commit to pursuing them** - and to realize that you can't do everything at once, and that change takes time. The team needs to support its members while working for change. That's the main reason for its existence

Why is it important to have a Green Team?

It's important to have **support and community** in this kind of work. If you just go it alone, you're going to get burned out. A group shows decision-makers that there's a real **constituency for change**, and you can divide the tasks rather than trying to do it all yourself. Without a core group advocating for change over the long haul, change just isn't going to happen.

How to “sell” the idea of a Green Team:

Adapted from Go Green, Save Green: A simple guide to saving time, money, and God's green earth (Nancy Sleeth, Tyndale, 2009).

Reducing expenses is a great incentive to Caring for Creation! Below is an illustration that one person used to prompt her congregation to “go green”:

- Shut down the computers in the office when not in use \$219
- Turn off the power strip when electronic devices are not in use \$200
- Trade disposable coffee cups for reusable mugs \$400
- Change exit sign bulbs to LED bulbs \$150
- Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs \$210
- Set office printers to double-sided default \$100
- Turn off furnaces/gas boilers with standing pilots and dial back the temperature of water heaters after spring \$125
- Weather strip and caulk air leaks \$400
- Host a congregation garage sale \$2000
- Turn the thermostat up three or more degrees in summer and down three degrees in winter \$4500

Savings will vary from congregation to congregation, and your organization might only be willing to consider one or two changes to start. The point is to get started. Stewardship has many facets, and saving money may be the on-ramp in these tough economic times.

Your Green Team Checklist

- 1) Review your denominational philosophy on Creation Care
- 2) Recruit a small core team
- 3) Discuss and agree on your areas of interest.
 - Theological education
 - Building operating cost reduction
 - Reduce, reuse, recycle projects
 - Water related: conservation, runoff
 - Gardening: ecosystems, biblical, connecting with nature
- 4) Talk to congregation leaders to determine the procedure to launch new initiatives
- 5) Choose area of interest and a set of specific and achievable goals
 - Example:
 - Building Operating Cost Reduction
 - Goal: Reduce electric bill by 20%
 - Projects: conduct energy audit, develop signs and education to encourage turning off lights and make sure that unused space is not heated/cooled, turn off office electronics when not in use.

- 6) Measure your usage/costs before you begin. It is always fun and encouraging to measure what you have accomplished.
- 7) Name your team, consider creating a logo. Consider developing a green pledge.
- 8) Hold a kick-off meeting to encourage member involvement:
 - Announce an overall mission
 - Share goals
 - Show the film *The Story of Stuff* and discuss
 - Invite members to participate
 - Form several green teams for individual projects
- 9) Work to get all members involved in some way, respect those who do not wish to participate.
- 10) Raise mission awareness by announcing projects and goals in bulletins and newsletters, encourage sermons and educational classes to support your efforts.
- 11) Share one green tip per week in your bulletin.
- 12) Track your progress and report your success!

Green Team Slump?

Many green teams hit a wall at some point. This is a great article on Web of Creation website detailing how to deal with roadblocks and revitalize your team!

[Revitalizing your Green Team](#)

GREENING YOUR CONGREGATION REVIVING YOUR EFFORTS

David Rhoads

What do you do when you have had a green team for several years and you hit some problems: you hit a plateau: interest fades, you face resistance, or you have run out of energy or ideas? Here are some reflections to help jumpstart your efforts again.

This is a common problem. It is not unusual for there to be rhythms in the work of a group seeking to renew a community or a congregation in significant ways. Community organizers often confront this problem. Do not be discouraged by it. See it as a constructive opportunity.

No magic formula. The situations described above are quite common. There is no instant formula to embrace that will solve the problem, because every situation is different. You need to assess your situation and see what needs to be done to move forward.

Re-organize your green team. Solidify the group working on greening the congregation. If there are only a few, that is fine. If you can expand the group at this time, that would

bring in some new energy. Connect with people who already have different environmental interests, such as gardening or justice or nature. See if you can get a commitment to meet regularly, say every month, so that you can make some action plans and have accountability with follow-through.

Have an assessment meeting. Get the team together for a meeting designed to evaluate where you are. List what you have done. Identify problems. Put your finger on reasons why the efforts to green the congregation may have stalled. See if you can identify some strategies to address these reasons and move forward.

Avoid guilt. It is no help to feel guilty about what has not been accomplished or what has not succeeded. Guilt is not a helpful or a sustaining motivation for action. The idea is to be free to begin anew. Assessing your situation honestly is a good thing, but blaming yourself or others will not help you move forward. If you have failed, allow God to forgive you and then forgive one another. In future, be realistic with yourself and others about what you can and cannot do.

Address the problem of being overwhelmed. It may be that you are so overwhelmed by ecological problems and environmental crises that you have become disheartened and wonder if anything you/we do will make a difference. It is important to talk about this openly. Admit what you are feeling, and name the reasons why you are feeling this way. Acknowledge that what we do might not make the difference we would hope. Sometimes we are motivated by the hopeful outcome of what we are doing. But we are also called to be faithful regardless of results: to love creation for its own sake in response to God's grace, just as we may love our family and just as we are called to love our neighbor. Remember that changes come in an organic way: we keep sowing seeds and entrust the outcome to God.

Address discouragement about your congregation. It may be difficult to do the work of caring for creation if your congregation is in decline in terms of members or of finances. You may have had to cut back on pastoral staff. You may be in an interim situation between times of fulltime pastoral leadership. Other concerns may grasp the attention of the congregation. This can be an opportunity to be creative. Continue to work at engaging the congregation in earth-care. We don't stop caring for the sick or giving to the hungry even when under great stress. In whatever ways we can, we should also continue caring for creation.

Read more at: <http://www.webofcreation.org/archive-of-resources/archive-of-resources/512-greening-your-congregation-reviving-your-efforts>

Project Ideas:

Incorporating the “Three R’s” into your congregational life is one of the simplest ways to teach about Caring for Creation!

There are a myriad of activities and resources available to help you integrate reduce, reuse, and recycle into the lives of members.

Why Reduce?

In 2008 alone, the United States produced over 167 million tons of waste that was sent to the landfill. In the USA we use more water, oil and many other resources per capita than any other country. There are lots of opportunities to reduce!

Why Reuse?

Containers and packaging represented approximately 28 percent of the materials source reduced in 2000, in addition to nondurable goods (e.g., newspapers, clothing) at 17 percent, and durable goods (e.g., appliances, furniture, tires) at 10 percent. Reusing these items or choosing to buy items made from recycled materials helps stop our landfills from filling up!

Why Recycle?

The amount of recycling in 2007 saved the energy equivalent of 10.7 billion gallons of gasoline and prevented the release of carbon dioxide of approximately 35 million cars. Imagine how much more can be saved if everyone gets involved!

REDUCE

Explore reducing solid waste, energy and water consumption. Remember to make a record of past usage so you can track your progress!

SOLID WASTE: Green teams often begin with a solid waste audit. That is just examining and recording what is being thrown away and the cost of the waste disposal. Once you know what is being thrown out you can prioritize your waste reduction!

Some popular projects include:

Eliminate Styrofoam cups: One of the most obvious ways to reduce a congregation’s waste is to eliminate Styrofoam cups and change to reusable mugs.

Problems with Styrofoam (from Green Living.com):

1) Non-biodegradable - Styrofoam appears to last forever, as it is resistant to photolysis or the breaking down of materials by protons originating from a light source. This fact, combined with the fact that Styrofoam is lightweight and floats, means that over time a great deal of Styrofoam has accumulated along coasts and waterways around the world. It is now considered the main component of marine debris.

2) Not-Usually Recycled - Many municipal recycling programs do not recycle Styrofoam because it is virtually weightless which makes it worthless as scrap. The same lightweight property of the material makes collecting it difficult, because even light winds can send it blowing great distances.

3) HFCs - Styrofoam is manufactured by using HFCs, or hydrofluorocarbons, which have negative impacts on the ozone layer and global warming. HFCs are less detrimental to the ozone than CFCs, which they replaced in the manufacturing of Styrofoam, but it is thought that the impact of HFCs on global warming is much more serious.

4) Flame Retardants - The brominated flame retardants that are used on Styrofoam are also causing concern, and some research suggests that these chemicals might have negative environmental and health effects.

Reduce Paper Use:

- **Electronic Newsletters:** Save on postage and paper, only print and mail to those without electronic communication.

- **Print Margins:** Reducing the margins on your documents reduces paper use. changethemargins.com is a website and movement dedicated to reducing paper waste by reducing the margins used when printing. It's a simple concept really, but it can make a big difference. Consider: Penn State University research showed that the University could save 72 acres of forest and over \$120,000/year by reducing the default margin settings across campus.

Adopt a Green Purchasing Program for items such as:

- Cleaning Products- reduce toxic fumes and waste
- Recycled Paper, reduce cutting of trees
- Ink Cartridges, reduce plastic

ENERGY: Energy costs of all kinds are increasing every year. Electricity, natural gas, gasoline, heating oil, all are targets for your green team to choose a reduce project!

Energy audits of buildings can help you determine how to reduce your heating and cooling cost. The SC Energy Office can guide you to certified auditors.

Adjust the heat & air thermostat! This one will take some negotiating! A good compromise is to focus on areas that are often unoccupied.

When appliances wear out **change to energy star** rated replacements.

Adjust the hot water heater thermostat. This is an easy win.

Plant trees on the west side of your building to create shade from the hot sun.

Carpooling can save gas and build relationships! Consider starting a carpool club in your congregation.

WATER: Cost for water and sewer services are rising.

Monitor faucets for drips and leaks.

Change to low flow toilets and faucets.

REUSE:

Magazine/book Swap Basket: Drop off and take what you want.

Reusable Bags: Encourage the use of reusable shopping bags.

Reusable Water Bottles: Just say no to buying bottled water! Email members a link to this You Tube Video or show it in a study group. It shows the problems created by plastic water bottles.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Se12y9hSOM0&feature=player_embedded

Swap Meet or “Freecycle” sessions are fun ways to keep items out of the landfill and build a sense of community!

Suggest that your congregation conduct regular swap sessions. Swap meets can also be organized between multiple congregations to create community events. This is a great way to save money on outgrown clothes, unused sports equipment, games and other items! Swap-meets can also be expanded to include homemade crafts, food and services. Good resource guides can be found at:

<http://shareable.net/blog/how-to-throw-your-own-community-swap-meet>

<http://www.freecycle.org/>

Garage Sale: Raise money for a project by having a congregation garage sale. One person’s trash is another’s treasure! Take unsold things to Goodwill or Salvation Army.

Building Material: Habitat for Humanity ReStore –

Habitat’s ReStore resale outlets sell reusable and surplus building materials to the public. The proceeds help local Habitat affiliates fund the construction of Habitat homes within their communities. <http://www.habitat.org/restores/default.aspx>

RECYCLE:

Paper/Cardboard Recycling

Quick Facts:

- Each year, Americans trash enough office paper to build a 12-foot wall from Los Angeles to New York City. Every year, nearly 900,000,000 trees are cut down to provide raw materials for American paper and pulp mills.

- In the U.S. on average, we use 730 pounds of paper per person per year. This amounts to about 31.5 million tons of printing and writing paper per year, requiring about 535 million trees (most from virgin fiber) and 12 billion gallons of oil for its manufacturing.

Starting your program:

1. Ask the head of the building committee where an outside paper and or cardboard bin can be located.
2. Contact Jane Hiller (803-779-0608) at Sonoco Recycling to request a free outside recycling bin.
3. Calculate how much paper is being thrown away currently and where inside recycle bins are needed.
4. Create the inside paper recycle boxes or bins.
5. Have your team develop a communication plan.
 - Name your project or team
 - Write an article for the newsletter or bulletin
6. Based on how often the bins need to be emptied, have your Green Team set up the pickup schedule and take the paper to the outside bin.

SONOCO RECYCLING 1132 Idlewilde Blvd, Columbia
CAN HELP YOUR CONGREGATION RECYCLE!

Sonoco is a full scale MRF (Material Recovery Facility) that sorts and bales recyclables which are then transported to factories where they become new products. Have questions or need more information?

Contact: jane.hiller@sonoco.com or call 779-0608.

- **OFFICE PAPER RECYCLING** We loan 90 gallon roll carts and provide free call-in pick-up service for high grade paper.
- **DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION** We loan confidential roll carts and provide free call-in pick-ups and shredding.
- **CARDBOARD RECYCLING** We rent containers for cardboard recycling and provide weekly pick-up service.

Bottle and Can Recycling

Quick Facts:

- The average American discarded fourteen and a half pounds of aluminum just from packaging last year—and almost three pounds of aluminum foil. That's not even counting aluminum cans.
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours -- or the equivalent of a half a gallon of gasoline.
- Bottled water produces up to 1.5 million tons of plastic waste per year. According to Food and Water Watch, that plastic requires up to 47 million gallons of oil per year to produce.

Starting your program –

1. Go to the SC DHEC website to find county-by-county information about what can be recycled in your specific community and where it can be recycled. The web address for this page is:
<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/recycle/counties.htm>
2. Create your bins/boxes.
3. Develop a communication plan.
 - Name your project/team
 - Write an article for your newsletter/bulletin
 - Write an email to be sent to members of your congregation
 - Create signs to encourage members to recycle bottles and cans.
 - Keep track of the amount of bottles and cans recycled!

Resources

America Recycles Day –

America Recycles Day (November 15th) is the nationally recognized day dedicated to the promotion of recycling programs in the United States.

http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ard_homepage

The Story of Bottle Water is a short video that tells the story of manufactured demand—how you get Americans to buy more than half a billion bottles of water every week when it already flows from the tap. Over five minutes, the film explores the bottled water industry's attacks on tap water and its use of seductive, environmental-themed advertising to cover up the mountains of plastic waste it produces. The film concludes with a call to take back the tap, not only by making a personal commitment to avoid bottled water, but by supporting investments in clean, available tap water for all. This site also provides downloadable materials, including fact sheets on bottled water and images. <http://storyofstuff.org/bottledwater/downloads/>

Twenty-First Century Waterfall

This short video is a one-minute computer animation comparing the US rate of plastic water bottle recycling (approx. 10 bottles/second) to the non-recycled rate (approx. 845 bottles/second; see image) for 2005.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZbTXDkrD1o&feature=player_embedded

Battery Recycling

Quick Facts: Batteries contain heavy metals that can contaminate the environment when improperly disposed of. Dry cell batteries contribute about 88 percent of the total mercury and 50 percent of the cadmium in the municipal solid waste stream. In the past, batteries accounted for nearly half of the mercury used in the United States and over half of the mercury and cadmium in the municipal solid waste stream.

Starting your Program –

1. There are several places to recycle batteries and several types of batteries to recycle. Contact Matt Livingston (803-744-3007), Manager of Batteries Plus, to see if they can help with your program. There is also a Batteries Plus on Two Notch.

2. Make sure to bag or tape the ends of all non-alkaline batteries before putting them into a container.
3. A pre made collection tube is available for purchase at:
<http://www.batteryrecycling.com/Products/204/400/Blue+Tinted+Collection+Tubes/5%20Gal%20Blue%20Tinted%20Battery%20Collection%20Tube>

Battery Recycling Resources

Call 2 Recycle –

Call2Recycle's contains a wealth of learning resources for recycling batteries and cell phones. The website contains interactive games that are great for educating youth members of your congregation on the importance of recycling batteries for public health and the environment.

<http://www.call2recycle.org/>

Cell Phone Recycling

Quick Facts: Each year Americans retire over 200 million cell phones, of which the EPA estimates less than 20% are recycled or reused. These small electronic devices are extremely harmful to the environment because they contain lead, mercury, cadmium and arsenic. When not properly disposed of, these chemicals are absorbed by the soil and can leach into local water sources.

Did You Know?

Recycling one million cell phones saves enough energy to power more than 185 US households with electricity for a year.

Did you just get a new cell phone? Are you wondering what to do with the old one? Rather than adding it to your growing collection of unwanted mobile phones, recycle it!

In 2007, approximately 14 million Americans recycled their used cell phones. Today, donating or recycling cell phones, PDAs, chargers, and batteries has never been easier.

Recycling cell phones helps the environment by saving energy and keeping usable materials out of landfills. Cell phones and PDAs are made of precious metals, copper, and plastics-all of which require energy to mine and manufacture. Recycling conserves these materials so they can be turned into new products.

1. Choose a site to recycle your collected phones*
2. Create your bins/boxes
3. Communicate your plan
4. Track your results

* Keep the Midlands Beautiful, Staples, Radio Shack and others have programs. Some programs pay for working models. Erase all information on phone before recycling.

Resources

Encyclopedia of Earth

Encyclopedia of the Earth provides a wealth of information about Earth's natural resources. It is a free, fully searchable collection of articles written by scholars, professionals, educators, and experts who collaborate and review each other's work. The articles are written in non-technical language and are useful to students, educators, scholars, professionals, as well as to the general public.

http://www.eoearth.org/article/Cell_phone_recycling

Ink Cartridge Recycling

Quick facts:

- It is estimated that more than 30,000,000 empty printer cartridges are dumped into landfill sites every year.
- Over 375 million empty toner and ink cartridges are thrown into the trash every year in the US.
- Up to 97 percent of the materials that make up a printer cartridge can be recycled or reused if taken care of.
- Printer cartridges can be refilled up to 15 times before reaching the end of their life most though averaging between 5-7 refills.

Starting your Program –

1. Develop a plan to collect and drop off ink cartridges to be recycled.
Staples accepts any inkjet and toner cartridges in exchange for a \$2 coupon for each cartridge.
(Columbia Locations: <http://stores.staples-locator.com/staples/>)
You can find other companies online that offer similar recycling programs.
2. Establish a policy for how Staples' coupons will be used.
3. Set your goals: How many cartridges will your congregation recycle this year?
Will you reach out to find community partners that will donate cartridges?

General Resources for Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Keep the Midlands Beautiful –

Combines education with hands-on stewardship to make America's communities cleaner, greener, safer, and more livable.

<http://www.keepthemidlandsbeautiful.com/>

EPA, Make a Difference Campaign –

EPA's "Make a Difference" campaign is aimed at educating and engaging you in resource conservation and environmental protection. This campaign helps you make informed decisions for protecting the environment in your day-to-day life. The following resources will inspire you to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste — to "make a difference" at home, at school, and in your community.

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/education/mad.htm>

Do Something

Do Something encourages young people to take an interest in volunteerism and advocacy. Their website is a great resource for young people to learn more about environmental issues and to figure out how they can get involved.

www.dosomething.org

The Story of Stuff Project –

The Story of Stuff Project provides a series of short films (approximately 20 minutes in length) that provide a discourse on environmental, social and economic issues created by the way we dispose of waste. Films include *The Story of Stuff*, *The Story of Electronics*, *The Story of Bottled Water*, *The Story of Cap and Trade*, and *The Story of Cosmetics*. Website contains links to individual YouTube videos.

<http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

Bill Nye the Science Guy –

Bill Nye offers fun, educational videos about all types of science. Episodes 13 (Garbage), 67 (Pollution), and *Stuff Happens with Bill Nye* are excellent options for introducing young people to recycling and its importance. Videos are available at the Richland County Public Library.

A LIST OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS CAN BE FOUND ON SUSTAINABLE MIDLANDS WEBSITE GO TO : www.sustainablemidlands.org

Tours and Activities

Sonoco Recycling Plant –

Tours are available at Sonoco Recycling in Columbia for people aged 4-104. See recycling in action, and learn about the wonderful products made from these recovered natural resources. To learn more and set up a tour, contact Jane Hiller at jane.hiller@sonoco.com or (803) 779-0608.

Richland County Solid Waste Management –

Screaming Eagle Landfill (1047 Highway Church Road, Elgin, SC) offers tours for interested parties. To learn more and set up a tour, contact John Tilton at 803-223-3235.

Water Quality:

The large roof tops and paved parking lots in most congregation buildings create a great deal of runoff into the creeks, streams and rivers. Learning about your watershed is a great way to begin to make a difference in the water quality.

Explore ways to **direct rooftop water to landscape** plantings. Look at rain gardens and rain barrel opportunities.

Educate members about how leaking oil and antifreeze from our vehicles can pollute our waterways as it washes off parking lots during rainstorms.

Gardening:

Nancy Sleeth, program director of Blessed Earth, a faith-based environmental nonprofit based in Wilmore, KY, said she didn't know of any congregation vegetable gardens five years ago. Now, everywhere she goes, she hears about congregations growing green thumbs.

Whether it is a meditation garden, memorial garden or a plot to raise food for the hungry, many congregations find a connection to the miracle of nature in their gardens.

Biblical Plants List: <http://homepages.sover.net/~hkfamily/Pages/PlantList.html>

Plant A Row for the Hungry:

<http://www.gardenwriters.org/gwa.php?p=par/index.html>

Meditation Gardens: http://www.ehow.com/how_4489175_create-peaceful-garden.html

Opportunities for Awards and Certificates

City of Columbia, CPAC Green Congregation Decal and Certificate details at:

<http://www.columbia.sc.gov/coc/index.cfm/cpac/green-congregations/>

EPA President's Environmental Youth and Regional Awards –

This EPA program recognizes young people across America for projects that demonstrate their commitment to the environment. Young people in all 50 states and the US territories are invited to participate. The application deadline for both awards programs is December 31st. Contact Kathy Armstrong, Region 4 coordinator, with any questions: armstrong.kathy@epa.gov

<http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/peya/index.html>

http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/peya/pdf/peyaapp_Oct08.pdf

Brower Youth Awards –

The Brower Youth Awards recognize people ages 13 to 22 living in North America who have shown outstanding leadership on a project or campaign with positive environmental and social impact. Applications for 2011 due by May 15th.

<http://www.broweryouthawards.org/>

The Story of Bottle Water is a short video that tells the story of manufactured demand—how you get Americans to buy more than half a billion bottles of water every week when it already flows from the tap. Over five minutes, the film explores the bottled water industry's attacks on tap water and its use of seductive, environmental-themed advertising to cover up the mountains of plastic waste it produces. The film concludes with a call to take back the tap, not only by making a personal commitment to avoid bottled water, but by supporting investments in clean, available tap water for all. This site also provides downloadable materials, including fact sheets on bottled water and images. <http://storyofstuff.org/bottledwater/downloads/>

Twenty-First Century Waterfall

This short video is a one-minute computer animation comparing the US rate of plastic water bottle recycling (approx. 10 bottles/second) to the non-recycled rate (approx. 845 bottles/second; see image) for 2005.

GREEN TIPS for eNewsletters

Unplug your life

Forty percent of all electricity used in homes is for appliances that are turned off but still plugged in. Pull some cords on your way out the door next time and you'll see a huge savings on that electric bill! Using surge protectors with numerous outlets is a great way to turn them all off at once.

Banish Excess Packaging

Buy things in larger sizes if you know you'll use them. Try to select items that have less plastic and extra filler stuffed with them.

Use Warm or Cold Setting on Washer - instead of the hot cycle use the warm or cold setting. This will save a lot of energy a year.

Turn Down your Thermostat - Every degree lower in the winter or higher in the summer you put it is a 10% decrease on your energy bill.

Turn off your lights - An easy one. Turn off your lights when you are not using them. The benefits are obvious.

Eat Less Meat

Modern meat is energy- and resource-intensive, and factory farms are huge polluters. Eating lower on the food chain reduces those problems.

Use Your Appliances Wisely

Get an energy audit (doing one yourself is easy), unplug unused devices and pick Energy Star when it's time to replace.

Hang Outside to Dry - Get a cloths line or rack to dry your cloths. Your cloths will last longer and you will save money

Turn off computers at night - don't just put them to sleep. You will save an average of 4 cents a day which adds up to \$14.60 a year.

Use Both Sides of Paper - if you have a printer with a double sided print option use it. You will save half of the amount of paper you would have normally used. Then when your done bring it to the recycle bin.

Get rid of baths - Don't take baths, take showers. You will in average save about half the amount of water that you would if you were taking a bath.

Don't get bottled water - Instead of bottled water get a reusable container to carry water. Also you can get a filter to make your home tap taste more like bottled water. It is definitely more cost efficient.

Turn the water off when you brush - Your parents have said this before, now I say it. You will save 4 gallons of water doing this alone.

Shorten your shower - Every minute you cut from your shower is roughly 5 gallons of water. The less time your shower takes, the lower your impact on the environment.

Recycle Glass - If you do not recycle this, it will take a million years to decompose.

Don't Pre-Heat the Oven - unless needed, just turn the oven on after you put the dish in it. Also, to see if it's finished just look through the glass instead of opening it.

Get rid of junk mail - There are many services that can help you get rid of junk mail. That will lead to a lot less trees being cut down to take up room in your mailbox.

Use Matches instead of lighters - Lighters are usually considered disposable so they will most likely end up in landfills. You can use the cardboard matches which are much more eco-friendly because they are made of recycled material.

Don't get a paper phone book - Instead of getting a paper phone book. Use an online directory instead.

Give things away - Take things that you are not going to wear or use and give it to a charity or someone who will use it.

Go to a car wash - Going to a car wash is a lot more water efficient than washing your car at home.

Stop paper bank statements - Why waste paper getting your bank statement mailed to you when you can just check it out online.

Buy **Rechargeable Batteries** - Even though it will take a good investment to buy these you will find yourself gaining it back in no time.

Pay your Bills Online - If every house in the US did this then we would save 18 million trees every year.

Get a reusable bag - You can't recycle plastic bags, instead get yourself a reusable bag so that you won't have to worry about carrying your necessities.

Do Errands in Bulk - Make a list of the things you have to do, and see if you can fit a couple of those things together in one ride.

Inflate your Tires - If your tires are inflated at all times your car will run more miles on less gas.

Wrap Presents Creatively - Without going out to get wrapping paper you can use newspaper, an old map, or anything else. It would look a whole lot more creative.

Plant a Tree - It's good for the air, can keep you cool, and can increase your property value.

Buy Local Produce - Consider how much energy it takes for produce from china or any other country to come here. If you have the option to buy local, do it.

Drink filtered tap water with a reusable water bottle

Over 38 billion plastic water bottles end up in landfills every year. By switching to filtered water from a faucet mount water filtration system and a reusable bottle, each person can help save the planet from up to 3,200 plastic water bottles a year. In addition, drinking filtered tap water is about one-tenth the cost of supplying your family with bottled water for an entire year, which could save at least \$600 per person annually.

Recycle and create a compost pile

Recycling and composting food diverted 82 million tons of material away from landfills and incinerators in 2006. Turn your kids into recycling and composting experts by putting them in charge of your household's efforts. It will teach them responsibility as well as sustainability.

Wash clothes with cold water and use concentrated detergent

Thirty-six percent of hot water use in households comes from laundering. By using cold water, you'll cut back on your energy bill and consumption. Take it one step further by washing your clothes with concentrated detergent and you'll cut back on plastic container waste as well.

Ditch the plastic bags

Over 100 billion plastic bags are thrown away every year. Next time you head to the grocery store or out on your errands, take reusable bags with you.

Buy local

Purchase food from local areas and help to cut back on gas emissions created by long transportation routes out-of-area fruits and vegetables must take to get to your local grocery. Your food will be fresher, taste better and the air will be cleaner.

Use an online phone directory

Call up your local phone company and ask to be taken off of their delivery route. Believe it or not, phone books make up almost 10% of waste at dumpsites!

Dispose of Disposables

Instead of relying on single-use containers, get real dishes, and wash them! The resources saved will really add up.

Go low-flow

Americans flush 4.8 billion gallons of water down the toilet every day. Take the easy step of filling a container with water and submerging it in your toilet tank. You'll cut back on your water bill and prevent hundreds of dollars being flushed away along with that extra water!

Subscribe to Sierra Club's Green Tip of the Day at:

http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageServer?pagename=DailyGreenTip&s_promoCode=&s_src=N11ZSEGO03&s_subsrc=DailyTip&gclid=CJOx98aH9aYCFRRg2godwxSOAg

