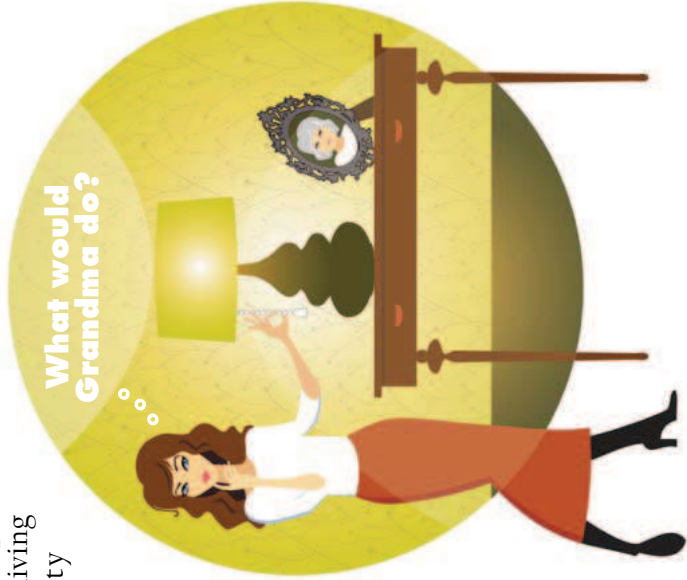


Simple WAYS TO LIVE A GREENER LIFE

BY MELODY WREN // ILLUSTRATIONS BY SHEILA BRITTON

The economy has shifted and people are more interested than ever in living a green life, as saving electricity and conserving water results in financial savings. Many environmentally and budget friendly ideas hail from the post-war days. My mother reused tinfoil, wax paper, paper bags and bread bags. She greased cake pans and baking trays with the butter wrapper kept in the fridge. She turned stale bread into stuffing, bread pudding and French toast. She minced any leftover meat and made shepherd's pie. Nothing went to waste, so if you think like grandma would have done, you might be inspired to reuse, recycle and repurpose.

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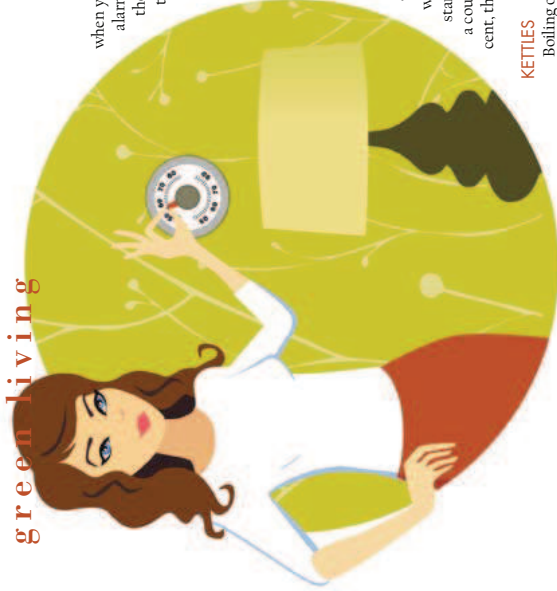
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when you leave the house each day. The constant flashing on your alarm clock can remind you of the energy you are saving. Resist the temptation to leave your computer on overnight, or your television on standby.

Reduce the temperature on your thermostat. Turning it down by just one degree could cut your heating bills by up to 10 per cent and save you a considerable amount of money each year. Turn your hot water heater down to 50 degrees Celsius.

Dry your clothes on a clothesline or a wall or ceiling-mounted drying rack and cut out the tumble dryer – the greediest of appliances, which gobbles up loads of electricity a year. Using the principle of warm air rising, ceiling racks will dry clothes within a day. Canadian company Greenway Home Products has come out with a “laundry lift”, which operates on a pulley system. Look for wall-mounted drying racks, including space savers and free-standing larger models. If you must use a tumble dryer, throw in a couple of reusable dryer balls to speed up the process by 25 per cent, therefore using less energy.

KETTLES

Boiling our kettles costs the country millions per year and produces an estimated 2.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. We also spend an estimated 200-million hours a year waiting for the kettle to boil, so save yourself time, money and energy by only boiling exactly what you need – enough for that mug of tea, rather than a whole kettle full.

You may have heard some of these suggestions before, so they can serve as reminders to make a conscious choice to reduce costs and consumption every day. Keep in mind that daily small steps add up to huge changes to the environment over time. **OH**

It’s easy to get overwhelmed by green recommendations and some days we cannot contemplate adding one extra thing to our routines, but these easy-to-remember ideas are simple enough to incorporate into everyday living.

SAVE WATER

To conserve water in the bathroom, don’t run the tap while brushing your teeth, and install low-flow showerheads. A bath can use around 81 litres of water, while a short shower only requires a third of that amount. However, many power showers can use more water than a bath if you shower for more than five minutes, so set your timer!

SOAP, CLOTHES AND COLD

Wash clothes in cold water and use a natural laundry detergent. You’ll save up to 40 per cent of the energy used per load and save money. Eliminate partial loads in the washer, the dishwasher and the freezer. You can dramatically reduce your energy and water consumption by changing your laundry practices and dishwashing duties and keeping the freezer full.

When doing the dishes, use a concentrated dishwashing liquid. You’ll use fewer bottles, saving you money, and by opting for concentrate you can help save millions of bottles.

Instead of using liquid soap from non-renewable plastic packaging, buy a refillable foam pump dispenser. To fill, add three tablespoons of liquid soap to the dispenser and fill with cold or warm water. Or use an old fashioned bar of soap. Substituting one disposable plastic bottle with a bar in each home would keep more than 2.5-million pounds of plastic out of landfills.

POWER

Electricity bills escalating? Start replacing all of your incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They have come down considerably in cost and they’re more energy efficient and last 10 times longer. Typically, they use up to 80 per cent less electricity than a standard bulb while giving off the same light.

Off is the new on! Turn off lights you are not using. Plug all your small appliances and electronic gear into power strips, and turn them off

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