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# GO GREEN

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# Lower your pet's environmental paw print

## BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Animal lovers know how important it is to work toward a more sustainable planet—in no small part because animals are some of those most adversely affected by climate change.

This is especially true of pets. As the planet heats up, many pets, especially dogs are unable to adapt and some breeds are in danger of dying out. Animals can suffer heatstroke and sunburns. During heat waves, people are less likely to walk or exercise their dogs outdoors. Rabies thrives in warmer weather.

## Choosing eco-friendly pets

Some pets are more eco-friendly than others. Pets that contribute to sustainability are chickens, goats, rabbits and ducks. Their waste can be used as fertilizer and they have a mostly plant-based diet. Chickens, goats and ducks can provide

milk and eggs that can contribute to a more sustainable diet and goats can replace a lawn mower, reducing carbon emissions.

The least eco-friendly animals you can adopt mostly belong to exotic species, but include pythons, parrots and monkeys. Custom Earth Promos points out that people abandoning their pet pythons in the Florida Everglades caused an overpopulation problem that disrupted its eco-system. They warn that owning exotic animals puts a species at risk as they are often stolen for illegal trade.

## Ways to more sustainably care for pets

There are several things you can do to engage in more eco-conscious pet care.

First, look at the products you buy. Avoid those with harmful chemicals or that won't biodegrade. Shop for organic bedding and toys and

pet accessories that are made from natural ingredients.

Be conscious about what you purchase. Pet care is a huge industry and many things sold are entirely unnecessary for the health and happiness of a pet. Buying a fancy pet toy that has traveled all around the world is unlikely to give your pet any more joy than chasing a stick or playing with a string of yarn.

Make mindful decisions about pet food. Don't put a carnivore on a vegetarian diet, but reduce the waste associated with pet food. The meat in pet food has a different environmental impact than human food. Most pet food is made up of the parts of food-producing animals that humans don't eat. In some ways, pet food reduces industrial agricultural waste because it uses up material that would otherwise be thrown out.

Choose food-grade meat



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products for pets and not prime cuts. The organ meats in pet food is actually more nutritious than the muscle meat that humans eat, so you aren't depriving your animal companion by feeding them this less expensive food. Avoid canned food as the cans often have toxins that make your pet sick and are bad for the environment. When possible, buy food in bulk and choose foods that are organic, non-GMO and from grass-fed animals.

While we are trained to not feed our pets from the table, you can turn food scraps into healthy pet food which they will enjoy and will

reduce your food waste.

Always scoop your dog's poop, but put it in biodegradable waste bags and consider composting it rather than adding it to a landfill. Likewise, use biodegradable cat litter and compost the cat litter.

Cats kill 12.3 billion small animals and birds each year. If you let your cat outdoors, put a CatBib on them that keeps them from killing animals or put them in an outdoor enclosure.

Finally, spay or neuter your pets to prevent overpopulation and the environmental impact that unwanted animals have.



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# Travelers seek out ways for greener choices

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Travel, whether for business or pleasure, is an important part of people's lives. As concerns grow about the use of fossil fuels, climate change and the impact people have on the environment, more travelers are trying to make low-impact choices.

This has spawned the growth of green travel, a way of decreasing one's carbon footprint while traveling and making eco-friendly choices. Booking.com recently conducted a study in which they learned that more than 53 percent of travelers rank sustainable travel as a priority.

## Choosing destinations

Where you go has a huge impact on the environment.

According to the International Ecotourism Society, the definition of eco-tourism is "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education."

These trips are specifically designed to educate travelers about sustainability. The destinations offer interpretative experiences that promote the region's



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political, environmental and social climates.

However, green travel isn't just eco-tourism. It involves choosing destinations that are closer to your home. It might mean staying longer in a single destination rather than traveling between several. It means avoiding the crowded and popular locations. Or, if you're going to go somewhere popular, going during the off season or shoulder season so you put less strain on local resources and ecosystems.

## Choosing transportation

## and lodging

The U.S. General Services Administration encourages government travelers to choose earth-friendly transportation and lodging options. Their FedRooms program identifies hotels and other lodging properties with green practices by identifying them with their green icon. GSA shares the following suggestions:

Choose hotels that are locally owned or staffed by local employees, that have recycling programs and which offer options for reusing towels and sheets,

that have energy-efficient lighting, low-flow toilets and showers or that use alternative energy sources and that are close to public transportation or near the places you are going to visit.

## Book electronic tickets when flying.

Minimize air travel and stay longer in a destination.

Take a train, bus or car for closer destinations.

When renting a car, choose a small hybrid car.

Pack lightly as the weight of luggage affects greenhouse gas emissions.

You can also look for

hotels that have LEED or Green Key Eco-Rating certification.

## Green practices at a destination

Once you have arrived, don't throw your good habits out the window. Use public transportation or walk when possible. Conserve water and electricity. Only take the paper maps and brochures that you will use.

Eat local. Choose local experiences and tour operators so that the money you spend will stay in the community. Look for experiences with low or no carbon footprints such as swimming, biking, canoeing, hiking or horseback riding.

## Carbon offset

Some travelers try to reduce their effect by carbon offsetting. These programs allow travelers to take environmental actions that will balance out the carbon emissions caused by their traveling. Sometimes this takes the form of donations and other times it takes the form of volunteer actions.

However, there have been scams related to this method in the past so carefully research any company offering carbon trade-offs.

# Keep your money green by investing in sustainable funds

BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

If you want to make changes in a capitalist society, then you need to spend your money in ways that encourage the change you want. While that can start with purchasing recycled goods or buying local, investments

also matter because they provide companies with the means to make sustainable decisions and proves that there is a high demand for those actions.

Green investing, also known as socially responsible investing or eco-investing, involves buying

and trading stocks and bonds of companies that are committed to sustainability, whether that is in the form of creating sustainable products, reducing pollution, conserving natural resources or engaging in environmentally conscious business practices.

There are several ways you can engage in green investing, whether you are investing a lot of money or just a small amount.

Types of Green Investing Investopedia publishes a guide to green investing. In it they list several types of green investing, including:

Green equities: This is the buying and selling of stocks in companies that are committed to sustainability and creating a low-carbon economy.

Green bonds: Also known as climate bonds, these are loans that help banks,

**SEE FUNDS, Page A5**



# Fun and educational ways to celebrate Earth Day

## BY METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Earth Day is an annual holiday that has been celebrated since 1970. Despite somewhat humble beginnings, much of the globe now celebrates Earth Day, which this year takes place on Saturday, April 22.

Earth Day has long drawn attention to issues affecting the planet and its climate. The effects of those issues have grown increasingly noticeable in recent years, which makes this Earth Day and all subsequent celebrations an ideal opportunity to celebrate the planet while learning about the many challenges it faces in the years to come. The following are some unique, fun and

educational ways to celebrate the planet this April.

• **Leave the car at home.** Winter weather is a distant memory by late April in many places, making Earth Day an ideal time to travel by foot or by bicycle instead of by car. That's not only fun, but also a great opportunity to learn about carbon emissions. The United States Environmental Protection Agency reports that a typical passenger vehicle emits about 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide each year. Vehicles also emit a substantial amount of methane and nitrous oxide. This is why gas-powered vehicles are so often linked to climate

SEE EARTH DAY, Page A5



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

## Family Earth Day activities

### BY METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Protecting the planet is a year-round responsibility, and that obligation is emphasized each April 22 when the world celebrates Earth Day. In 1969, an oil spill in California killed thousands of sea animals and contributed to significant ocean pollution. This environmental disaster inspired Gaylord Nelson and Denis Hayes to establish Earth Day in 1970 as a global event to raise awareness about environmental issues.

Every year around a billion people are motivated to protect the planet for Earth Day. Families can work together to do their part in protecting the environment. Here are some ways families can commemorate Earth Day together.

### Clean up the neighborhood

Families can work together to make their neighborhoods cleaner. Litter in streets or parks can end up in waterways after being carried into storm drains by rain or wind, according to the Marine Debris Program. A 2016 report from the United Nations found that nearly 50 percent of cetacean and seabird species have ingested litter. Picking



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

up litter from local neighborhoods is a relatively easy way for families to do their part on Earth Day.

### Walk and bike more

Families can learn about their carbon footprints and how their lifestyle choices affect the environment. One way to cut down on carbon emissions is to walk or bike to school and to skip the car whenever possible.

### Visit a local park or wildlife habitat

Families can experience the beauty of nature and be reminded about humankind's responsibility to protect habitats and wildlife at a park, sanctuary or wildlife area. When visiting, it's important to stick to trails and remain mindful of leaving no trace behind.

### Create reusable bags

Individuals can turn old T-shirts and other clothing into reusable cloth shopping bags. There are no-sew project instructions online that offer tips about how to repurpose old clothing that is no longer worn into something Earth-friendly.

### Plant more greenery

It doesn't have to be a tree, but families can visit a garden center to purchase seeds, seedlings or full-grown shrubbery to enhance their landscapes with more Earth-friendly plants. CO2METER, a carbon dioxide monitoring website, says plants and trees, combined with oceans, remove about 45 percent of the carbon dioxide emitted by human activities each year. A typical hardwood tree can absorb as much as 48 pounds of CO2 per year.

### Embrace locally grown foods

Families can plan meals together that feature in-season foods purchased at a local organic farmer's market.

Earth Day is a time when families can work together to help protect and preserve the planet.





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## FUNDS

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companies and government bodies finance climate-friendly projects. According to the Climate Bonds Initiative in 2021, there were about \$1.1 trillion new green bonds issued. You may be able to get tax incentives when making these investments.

Green funds: Mutual funds and index funds are always popular among investors and there are some that specifically invest in several green stocks and bonds. Some popular green mutual funds include the Trillium ESG Global Equity Fund (PORTX), the Green Century Balanced Fund (GCBLX) and the TIAA-CREF Social Choice Equity Fund (TICRX). There are also index funds that target renewable energy industries.

A good financial investor can help you find green funds to invest in and there are several independent organizations that will rate stocks and funds according to their green practices. For example, Green America has set up a socially responsible investing heart rating system. It rates mutual funds based on four areas: overall heart rating, shareholder advocacy, community investing and ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) screening.

You can also encourage your employer to invest your retirement funds in socially conscious funds. While you

are advocating for green investing, reach out to your faith organization, school or other community organization and encourage them to put their money in local banks and ensure that their investment portfolios are filled with green stocks and funds.

### Divestment

Green investing isn't just about buying. Sometimes selling also sends a strong statement and can precipitate corporate change and action.

Divestment as a tool for social action became popularized in the 1990s when activists fighting apartheid convinced investors to divest in companies that did business in South Africa. Today, people are doing the same thing to encourage change in fossil fuel usage and sustainability.

Divestment works best when it is part of a campaign and not just an individual sale. When a divestment campaign is launched, it puts companies at risk of losing revenue or having their stock prices drop.

In 2021, university students challenged their colleges and universities to divest from fossil fuels and 220 educational institutions divested their endowments from fossil fuel companies.

There are many ways to make your money work to create a more sustainable planet. Take a look at your investments and see how they might become more green.

## EARTH DAY

### FROM PAGE A4

change, much of which is driven by greenhouse gas emissions. A car-free Earth Day can be fun and serve as a catalyst for conversation about the effects of gas-powered vehicles on the health of the planet.

- **Volunteer with a local environmental organization.** Environmental organizations are committed to the ideals behind Earth Day all year long. However, each Earth Day many of these organizations sponsor eco-conscious efforts to help the planet and raise awareness about issues like climate change. Volunteering with a local beach or park cleanup or signing up to walk and raise money for a local environmental

charity makes for a fun and educational way to spend your Earth Day.

- **Get your hands dirty and plant.** The National Forest Foundation notes that planting trees can have a profound and positive impact on the planet. According to the NFF, planting more trees helps forests to sequester carbon, which can have a significant effect on climate change. The NFF estimates that 100 mature trees can remove 50 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent and 430 pounds of pollution from the atmosphere. Even if you can't work with a local forestry organization to plant more trees in a nearby forest, planting native trees on your own property can help combat climate change.

- **Involve children in your efforts to combat**

**climate change.** Today's adults likely won't be the ones forced to confront the more challenging consequences of climate change. Unfortunately, that cost is likely to be passed on to future generations. That makes this Earth Day a great time to involve kids more directly in efforts to combat climate change. Explain the significance of avoiding the car, volunteering or planting trees in terms that kids can understand, emphasizing that the future of the planet could very well be in their hands.

Earth Day takes on greater significance each year as the effects of climate change become more noticeable. This year the holiday can be celebrated in various ways that are both enjoyable and educational.

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# Reducing Electronic Waste

## BY GREEN SHOOT MEDIA

Our lives are filled with electronics and as technology improves, we often rush out to replace our current devices with new ones, creating a great deal of waste.

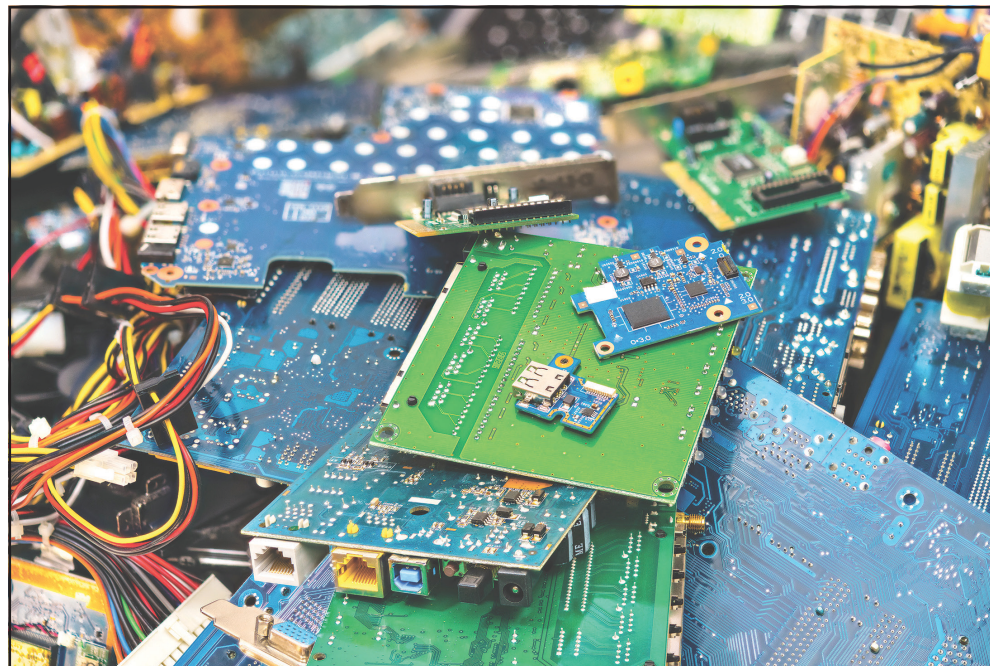
More and more products are being created with semi-conductors and sensors and at the same time, the life span of products is getting shorter.

Ten years ago, Consumer Electronics Association said that the average American household uses about 28 electronic products. It's only increased since then and the EPA released statistics saying that Americans generated 2.7 million tons of consumer goods in 2018.

According to the Columbia Climate School, e-waste is made up of several things. Electronic devices use precious metals such as gold, silver, copper, platinum, palladium, lithium and cobalt. They also have toxic heavy metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium, beryllium, PVC plastic and hazardous chemicals.

The World Economic Forum predicts that the world will produce 75 million tons of e-waste by 2030.

What can be done about that? Changes must happen at both a macro and individual



LADISLAV KUBES

level.

Corporate and governmental changesOn the macro level, changes have to be made by both corporations and governments—something that individuals can advocate for.

Corporations need to manufacture products that can last longer, can be repaired and reuse the precious metals and plastics instead of making or mining for more. One study out of China found that it is 13 times more expensive to mine for precious metals

than it is to recover them from e-waste, a process known as urban mining.

Many companies currently engage in practices that encourage electronic waste by constantly updating the design or software of their items and then discontinuing support for older models. They also make it hard to repair devices or invalidate warranties if people try to repair their own devices. This should be discouraged.

In 2021, President Joe Biden issued an executive

order providing the “right to repair,” which makes it easier for Americans to repair their electronics rather than having to take the in or throwing them out.

Around the globe, free repair clinics are starting to open and governments are providing incentives for corporations to make and market electronic goods more responsibly.

## Individual changes

Harvard University suggests six steps that

individuals can do to reduce electronic waste:

Re-evaluate whether you really need to purchase an electronic gadget. When possible, buy a device with multiple functions rather than several devices.

Extend the life of your electronics by doing such things as using cases, keeping them clean and avoiding overcharging the battery.

Buy environmentally friendly electronics that have Energy Star labels or that the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) has certified.

Donate your used electronics. Seek out non-profit organizations that can re-use your electronics.

Reuse large electronics.

Recycle electronics and batteries.

Columbia Climate School further recommends that before you recycle any electronics, seal any broken parts in separate containers so that chemicals don't leak out. They also warn that before you recycle something, make sure the recycler is responsible. Look for those that have an E-Steward label on their websites. These recyclers have to meet high standards to be certified. They will also clear your data.

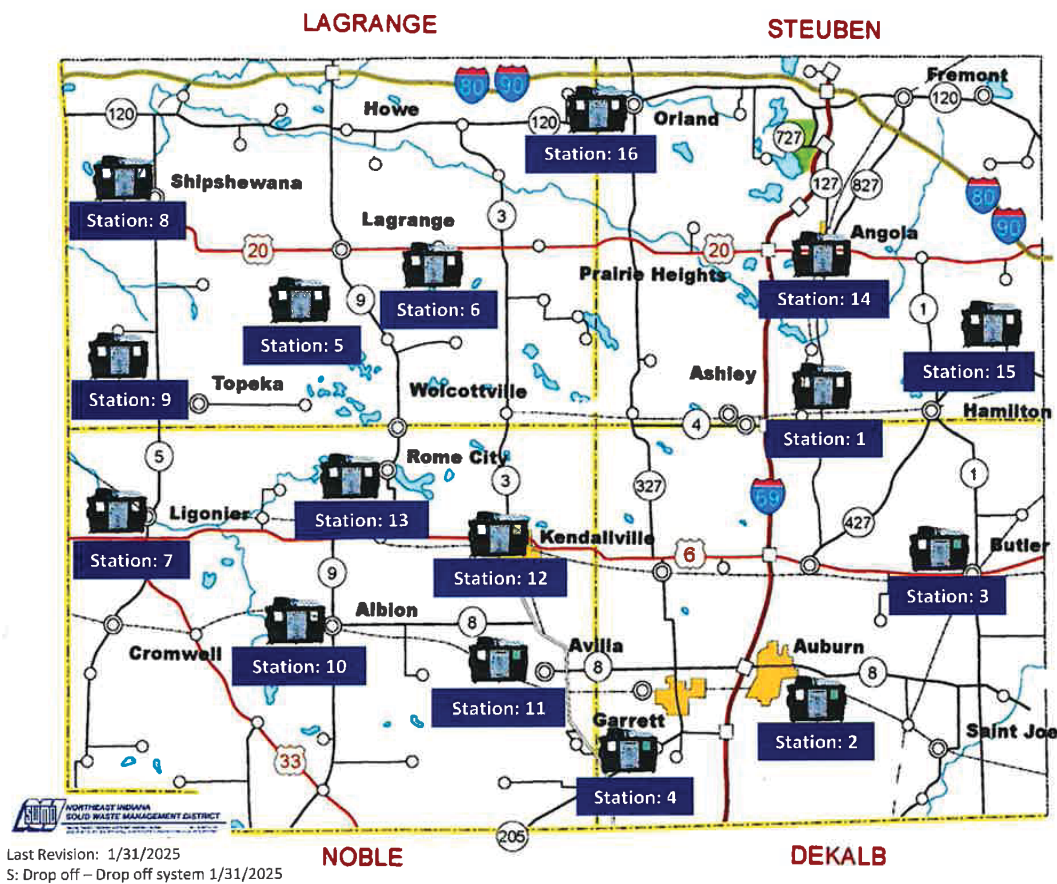
# HAPPY EARTH DAY



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NOBLE COUNTY

- Station 10: 1009 E State Street – Albion
- Station 11: 212 E 4<sup>th</sup> Street – Avilla
- Station 12: 720 Weston Avenue – Kendallville
- Station 13: 102 Kerr Avenue – Rome City

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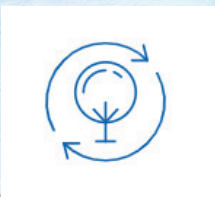
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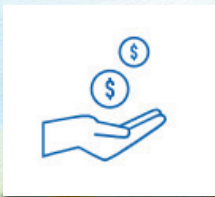
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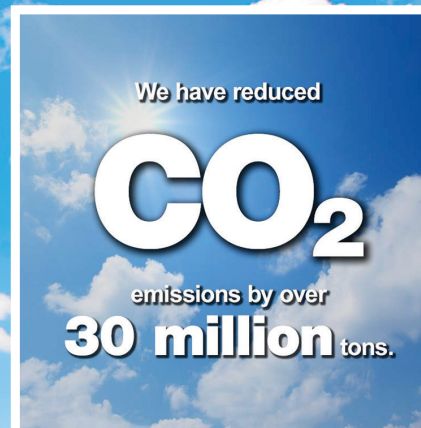
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