



BERNARDUS LODGE

Green Actions for Young People Making a Difference

Your generation will inherit the Earth with all its splendors . . . and all its problems. You can do many things right now to help keep the planet safe and sound.

Conserve Water

- Take a 5-minute shower instead of a bath. You can save up to 2,000 gallons of water a year.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth. You can save 2 gallons of water every time you brush.
- When using the sink faucet, try to keep the water flow to a pencil-thin stream.

Conserve Energy

- Turn off the TV and computer when you are not using them.
- Beware of "Secret Energy Addicts." When you think that you've turned off computers, flat screen TVs, or other electronic equipment, it's not always off, it's "idling"—and still consuming energy. Use a power strip or surge protector to really turn off tech equipment and save energy, not to mention money.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room. Swap standard light bulbs for cork-screw-shaped compact fluorescent light bulbs which use much less energy and last much longer.
- Know what you want before you open the refrigerator door. Don't keep the refrigerator door open too long.

Conserve Natural Resources

- Stop buying bottled water. Up to 40% of bottled water comes from the same source as tap water, but it is sold back to consumers at hundreds of times the cost. Making the bottles consumed than 17 million barrels of oil last year—enough fuel for more than 1 million U.S. cars for a year—and generated more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide, which causes global climate change. Billions of these bottles also wind up in landfills every year and they take forever to decompose. *Bernardus Lodge will provide every child that checks in with a reusable water bottle.*
- Instead of paper bags, pack school lunches in reusable bags and washable containers. Use a lunch box.

- Just say “no” to a bag at a store’s checkout counter. Keep reusable bags in the car for grocery shopping. Or better yet, get a tote bag. For yourself. For your parents.
- Use cloth towels instead of paper towels—which are made from wood pulp, which comes from forests.
- Hang up your bath towel so it can be used again. Otherwise, it will have to be washed, and that uses up water and energy to run the washing machine and generate hot water.
- Carpool or take the bus to school instead of having a parent drive you to school. You’ll help save energy and reduce oil consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. Ride your bike or walk in good weather if you live close to school.

Reduce Waste

- Donate old clothes and toys to stores like Goodwill and Salvation Army so they can be passed on and used by someone else. The average American throws away 68 pounds of clothes and fabrics a year. Donate books to a secondhand shop or used bookstore.
- Set up recycling bins for paper, aluminum cans, glass, and plastic bottles at school and at home. Paper accounts for 40% of solid waste in the United States, which is about 72 million tons annually. Recycling reduces the amount of waste in landfills.
- Properly dispose of batteries. You can prevent hazardous materials from leaking into our soil and water systems.
- More important, properly dispose of old cell phones, computers, and other electronic equipment. See if your community has e-waste pickup programs. See if the stores, where you purchased the equipment, have e-waste recycling programs.

Green the Earth

- Plant a tree. The average tree can absorb 48 pounds of carbon dioxide a year.
- Plant a garden. Avoid heavily chemical fertilizers. *Bernardus Lodge will provide every child that checks in with a starter seed pack.*
- Start a compost pile. You can make your own fertilizer and reduce waste at the same time. Your garden will thank you!
- Pick up any garbage left behind at the park or soccer field.
- Do a beach, river, waterway or park clean up. Parents can help too!

Do Some Fact Finding: Measure Your Carbon Footprint

How much do your choices and actions impact the Earth? Calculate your Carbon Footprint. A Carbon Footprint measures the impact our activities have in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases we produce. You can find several online calculators, including “Calculate Your Impact” on www.green.yahoo.com. How big is your footprint?