

**13. Use Native Plantings.** Native plants have been growing and evolving in your area for thousands of years and, as a result, have adapted to the local soils and climate. As a result they are more likely to thrive with minimal care, unlike exotic plants. That can mean less need for water, fertilizer and pesticides. Additional info on green landscaping techniques can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/>.

**14. Use Nontoxic Gardening Techniques.** Many gardeners over-apply or improperly apply pesticides, putting themselves, their families, and pets at increased health risk. Nearly half of all households have pesticides stored within reach of children. About 230,000 people each year are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries relating to various lawn and garden tools. Our clean air and drinking water are affected by pesticides and garden equipment emissions.

### **GREEN YOUR TRANSPORTATION**

**15. Carpool, Use Public Transportation, Walk or Bike When Possible.** Environmental responsibility does not begin and end at your doorstep; green transportation means can greatly reduce your energy expenditures and carbon emissions from your daily routine.

**16. Buy a High-Efficiency Car.** See the U.S. Department of Energy's list of most fuel efficient cars at <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/best-worst.shtml>.



*Source: U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). For more information on green building, go to their website [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).*

## **WHAT IS A GREEN HOME?**

A green home incorporates smart design, technology, construction and maintenance elements to significantly lessen the negative impact of the home on the environment and improve the health of the people who live inside. No matter your location or living situation, the opportunities for living a greener life at home are limited only by your imagination.

A home can be built green, or you can make it green later. A green makeover can happen all at once, or it can be a gradual process. But what it all comes down to is a new way of thinking – and a new way of living. From a more energy-efficient kitchen to a tree-filled backyard paradise, your home can be green top to bottom, front to back, inside and out. And it doesn't matter whether you rent or own, live in an apartment or single-family home, or live in the city, the suburbs or the country.



## **COMMITMENT TO BUILDING GREEN**

Making your home a greener place is a commitment – to yourself, your family, your community and the world. But more than that, it is a learning process. As exciting new technologies, products and scientific breakthroughs constantly emerge, staying educated on the hows – as well as the whys – of maintaining a green home is the best way to ensure your efforts are as effective and beneficial as possible.

# **THINK GREEN!**



## **BUILD GREEN!**

**Lower the Impacts of  
Everyday Living!**



[www.moline.il.us](http://www.moline.il.us)

# 16 WAYS TO GREEN YOUR HOME

## LOWER YOUR UTILITY BILLS

**1. Switch to Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs.** Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) can be a huge energy saver. Replace some (or all) of your incandescent bulbs with fluorescents and enjoy reductions in heat production, energy use, and electric bills! **Savings: Changing five of the most frequently used light bulbs in your home can save you \$100 per year on electric bills!**

**2. Program Your Thermostat.** When you are at home, keep the thermostat at 78° F or higher in the summer and 62° F or lower in the winter. Programmable thermostats allow you to program the systems to reduce output when they are not needed (e.g. when no one is home during the day or in the evening when everyone is sleeping). **Savings: Reduce your energy bill by \$100 per year or more!**

**3. Plug Air Leaks.** This simple step can go a long way toward keeping your home at the temperature you desire, saving money on heating and air conditioning bills and more. Common leaks occur around windows, doors, and other wall penetrations. Plugging those leaks with weather stripping and caulk can be a simple task for anyone! **Savings: Reduce your energy bill by \$100 per year or more!**

**4. Tune up your Heating and Cooling (HVAC) System.** Have a checkup for your HVAC system every 2 years to make sure it is running efficiently. Be sure to clean the filter monthly during times of peak usage; a dirty filter can significantly reduce the efficiency of your HVAC. **Savings: Reduce your energy bill by \$100 per year or more!**

**5. Choose ENERGY STAR Appliances.** ENERGY STAR qualified products meet a high level of energy efficiency, which can translate into savings on elec-

tric bills. When considering the price of a new appliance, take into account not only the purchase price, but also the long-term savings associated with an energy-efficient appliance. **Savings: Reduce your energy bill by \$50 per appliance per year or more!**

**6. Reduce Water Use.** Indoor: Use less water by adding aerators (available for a few dollars at your local home supply store) to your sink faucets and changing to low-flow showerheads; Outdoor: Incorporate native plants in your landscape plan and minimize high-maintenance landscaping such as turf grass to conserve water, while still maintaining a beautiful lawn. **Savings: Reduce your water bill by as much as \$100 per year!**

**7. Switch to Green Power.** Green Power is an optional utility service for customers who want to help expand the production and distribution of renewable energy technologies. With green power, you do not have to change your electricity provider. Instead, customers choose to pay a premium on their electricity bill to cover the extra cost of purchasing clean, sustainable energy. More info on green power can be found at: <http://www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/markets/index.shtml>.

## CHOOSE GREEN PRODUCTS

**8. Buy Local.** Buying local produce reduces the amount of fossil fuels required for the transportation of products from other parts of the country or the world. It also reduces the amount of plastic and paper products consumed in the packaging of such far-traveling products. Buying local reduces consumption of valuable natural resources.

**9. Use Low-VOC Products.** Improve your indoor

air quality by switching to products that don't give off "volatile organic compounds" (VOCs). Some common low-VOC or no-VOC products include: Paint: A low-VOC paint is available from most major paint brands; Cleaning products: Low-VOC cleaning alternatives are available for sale or you can make your own VOC-free cleaning products using simple household materials like baking soda, vinegar and borax.

**10. Use Wood Alternatives or FSC-certified Wood Products.** The type of flooring and cabinetry materials you use can have a positive effect on your health and pocket-book while reducing your environmental impacts: Consider using environmentally preferable and rapidly renewable products such as linoleum, bamboo, recycled-content tile or non-VOC carpet; Choose wood products from sustainable managed forests, such as those certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); Use locally sourced products when possible to reduce carbon emissions associated with the transportation of those products.

**11. Use Rapidly Renewable Flooring Materials.** Now there are affordable, durable, and rich-looking flooring options made from grasses and trees that mature in roughly half of the time (or less!) than it takes hardwoods to reach market size. Bamboo, cork, and eucalyptus flooring products are a sustainable alternative to traditional hardwoods.

## GREEN YOUR YARD

**12. Plant Trees to Provide Shade and Wind Protection for Your House.** This simple step can help you save money on heating and air conditioning bills while providing beautiful views around your home.