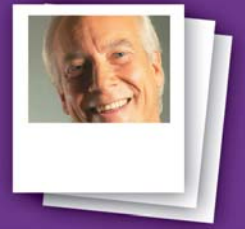




# Sustainability Snapshots



## At the shops

Simple changes can save you \$\$ as well as saving our environment.

### Better Buying

- *Check your purchases for "packaging overload" - how much plastic, cardboard, paper is wrapping your latest buy? How much can be recycled?*



Packaging, particularly for smaller products, is a major cause of household waste. Increasingly manufacturers and retailers are getting the message that we want only essential packaging. By choosing products with the least packaging we can reinforce this message.

- *Buy concentrates; buy refills; buy in bulk (it's cheaper!).*

Grandma was right about this one and there are lots opportunities out there to take advantage of this now. Most household cleaners offer refills in more easily disposable options (such as bags) to purchase, thus reducing waste and saving you money in buying bottles everytime. Similarly if you have the storage space, buying in bulk also saves. A great example is laundry powder - old ice cream containers make great and accessible storage for this so it doesn't get damp and clump up and they store well under the laundry tub - you can just pull out a new container when needed. Give it a try next time you're out shopping.



- *Buy local produce to save on transport costs.*

When you purchase things that are made in Australia, rather than overseas, not only are you supporting Australian industries and jobs, but also you're reducing the air pollution and greenhouse emissions caused by transport. By choosing local products less fuel is used to transport the product from the factory to the shop. Look for products that say "Product of Australia". Even better attend local farmers markets and support local business.



### Plastic Bags

- *Say NO to plastic bags whenever you can.*

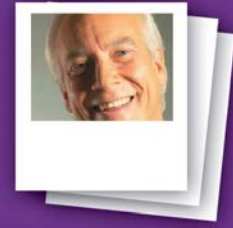
On average each Australian family uses 20 plastic shopping bags a week in 6 trips to a shop or supermarket. That's 1,000 bags a year. If each Australian family used one less plastic shopping bag each week, Australians would save 253 million plastic bags a year. Once let loose into the environment, plastic bags can cause considerable harm, blocking drains, harming animals and being unsightly.

- *Keep bags in your car or handbag to reuse when shopping.*

Always keep a couple of reusable bags in the car so you always have one handy for those little shopping trips and look out for fold up bags to keep in your handbag for those impulse buys. Every little bit really does help.



# Sustainability Snapshots



## Appliances and Homewares

- *Purchase appliances with high energy stars and water saving ratings.*



The Energy Rating label enables consumers to compare the energy efficiency of domestic appliances. It is now mandatory for refrigerators, freezer, clothes washers, clothes dryers, dishwashers and air-conditioners (single phase only) to carry the label when they are offered for sale. The energy label is an estimate of the energy an appliance will consume in kilowatt-hours (kWh) under standard conditions.

- *Ask the store to take back the packaging (eg for large appliances).*

You can ask manufacturers and retailers about returning some packaging - for example, retailers will often take back large cartons and bubble wrap which they can reuse. You need to ask about this before having the product delivered.



- *Look out for power-saving features on computers and other appliances.*

ENERGY STAR is an international standard for energy efficient electronic equipment. ENERGY STAR reduces the amount of energy consumed by a product by either automatically switching it into a 'sleep' mode when it's not being used and/or reducing the amount power used when in 'standby' mode. While most office equipment now has the *potential* to save energy in this way, not all machines, particularly PCs, have actually been *enabled* so that the energy saving features are activated. Ask your retailer for instructions on how to do this.



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For more information and tips check out:

The Shop Smart Buy Green Booklet at:

[www.deh.gov.au/settlements/industry/corporate/eecp/publications/pubs/consumersguide.pdf](http://www.deh.gov.au/settlements/industry/corporate/eecp/publications/pubs/consumersguide.pdf)

[www.energystar.gov.au/index.html](http://www.energystar.gov.au/index.html)

[www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)

[www.cleanup.com.au](http://www.cleanup.com.au)

Or ring Maitland City Council on 49349700