

Here are some green tips that feature two great ways to start 2009. They help you regain some of the money you spent over the holidays (buying eco-conscious gifts, of course!) while kicking off the New Year as a green year. Have you ever considered the cost savings of...

- **Switching from disposable plastic water bottles to a reusable, high-quality canteen.** Bottled water ranges from \$1 to \$4 so a bottle of water a day for a month can cost anywhere from \$30 to \$120. The EPA estimates that the average cost of tap water in the U.S. is \$2 for 1,000 gallons. That is 2/10<sup>th</sup> of a cent per gallon! Even the purchase of a new water bottle (\$12-\$20) is less than a bottle a day habit. Reusable containers also help eliminate the almost 38 billion plastic water bottles that end up in U.S. landfill annually. Speaking of water, why not consider...
- **Filtering your own water.** Know about the benefits of your own water bottle, but wary of tap water? Tap water in the U.S. is the safest in the world, but often only because water companies use chlorine to eliminate the other chemicals mistakenly dumped into the supply. Home water filters (\$20~\$30) come in varying shapes that range from pitchers to on-sink filters. Even a replacement filter (\$7) is cheaper than a month's supply of bottle water (see above).
- **Bringing your own bags when shopping.** Plastic grocery bags may not cost anything at checkout, but each sack is just one in an annual worldwide consumption of 1 trillion bags. Those bags must go somewhere and end up cluttering landfills, sewers, and wilderness. Just one reusable tote bag, like Chico Bags (\$5), can replace over 1,500 plastic bags over a lifetime of use. Some stores offer discounts to shoppers that bring their own bags!
- **Replacing your shower head.** Low flow shower heads give you the same shower experience while only releasing 1.5 gallons a minute about a gallon less than older, traditional shower heads. The national average length for daily shower use is 13 minutes, so a low flow showerhead can save over 4,200 gallons of water and \$60 a year depending on your location.
- **BYO coffee/tea mug.** Paper coffee cups account for nearly 3.7 million tons of garbage a year. Curtail that by switching to insulated, personal reusable mugs (\$10~\$25). Nearly all coffee shops, from the big chains to the sidewalk café, offer a discount on reusable mugs that usually ranges from 5 to 25 cents. Hence, a reusable mug can save you anywhere from \$1.50 to \$7.50 on your monthly caffeine budget. And that is only if you have a one cup a day.

You can find items like these and more at our Planet Green store at 19054 Old Detroit Road in Rocky River, OH and online at [www.planetgreengoods.com](http://www.planetgreengoods.com). Enjoy your New Year's eco-investing and save some money for the next even greener holiday season.