

WHERE TO GET MORE INFO ON HOUSEHOLD SUSTAINABILITY

Energy

Natural Resources Canada 'EnerGuide'
www.oeenrncan.gc.ca/energguide/index.cfm

Energy Alternatives www.energyalternatives.ca/conservation.asp
BC Hydro's Power Smart program www.bchydro.com/powersmart/

Water

Surrey's Volunteer Water Meter Program www.surreywatermeter.com

Environment Canada's guide to conserving water
www.ec.gc.ca/water/en/info/pubs/nttw/e_nttwi.htm

Metro Vancouver's Water Supply and Conservation Tips
<http://public.metrovancouver.org/services/water/conservation/Pages/residential.aspx>

Waste

Surrey's Garbage and Recycling www.surrey.ca

Recycling Council of BC www.rcbc.ca or their infoline at 604-732-9253

Compost hotline 604-736-2250 or more info at www.cityfarmer.info

Metro Vancouver's Solid Waste and Recycling:
www.metrovancouver.org/SERVICES/SOLIDWASTE/RECYCLING/Pages/default.aspx

Local Food

Surrey's Farm Fresh Guide www.surrey.ca/farmfresh

100 mile diet Vancouver www.100milediet.org/category/vancouver

BC Association of Farmer's Markets
www.bcfarmersmarket.org/web/index.htm

Alternate Household Cleaners

Metro Vancouver's "Better Solutions" brochure
www.metrovancouver.org/about/publications/Publications/BetterSolutions.pdf

Home Renovations

Lighthouse Sustainable Building Centre
www.sustainablebuildingcentre.com

Green Home Makeover by National Geographic
www.thegreenguide.com

Home Drainage

BC Ministry of Environment Clean Water
www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/brochures/cleanwater.html

Impervious Surfaces www.duluthstreams.org/citizen/pervious.htm

For more information about sustainability ideas for your home please contact us at 604-591-4383 or at environment@surrey.ca


Nature Matters
protect • enhance • enjoy

Around Your Home

SUSTAINABILITY & YOU

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN?

Sustainability is about living and working in ways that meet existing environmental, economic and social needs without compromising the well-being of future generations.

This means using our resources wisely; developing in a way that protects wildlife, natural areas and the overall environment.

It also means doing our part to minimize our impacts on the surrounding environment by making informed choices that preserve resources while being compatible with our lifestyle.

YOUR HOME is at the center of everything that you do in your life and all that you care for. For this reason it should also be the place where you initiate actions that help you care for the future of the surrounding environment for you, your family and generations to come. Being more sustainable in the house promotes a healthier environment and community.



Energy

As our population increases, there will be greater stress put onto our energy supply. Energy conservation will reduce the need for new energy plants or imports which can result in impacts to the environment. Energy-efficiency improvements can also make your home more comfortable and yield financial rewards, like reduced energy bills.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: heating, air leaks, household appliances, thermostats, light bulbs

FACT: 17 percent of all energy used in Canada goes toward running our homes. – Natural Resources Canada

Water

In the Lower Mainland we are used to living with a lot of rainfall, but not year round. Only a portion of the rain that falls gets stored within the Metro Vancouver water reservoirs for use. The storage capacity in these reservoirs is limited, therefore as our cities grow in size and we consume more water there are more demands on this limited resource. Small water conservation efforts in the home add up to big differences in the amount of water the region consumes since over half of the water that is consumed in the region goes to residential uses.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: leaking taps, inefficient washing machines, showerheads



Waste

Reduce... Reuse... Recycle! Reduction is the key to the 3R's since if we can reduce the amount of waste that is produced, we are conserving resources and limiting the need to reuse or recycle. Waste reduction can occur in many forms in the home from recycling and composting items, reducing the amount of garbage you produce, reducing packaging in products by purchasing in bulk, to using cotton tote bags rather than plastic bags while shopping.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: recycling electronics, selling unwanted items for reuse, using reusable meal containers, composting organics

FACT: In a lifetime, the average North American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. A 68 kg adult will leave a legacy of 40,825 kg of trash! - Natural Resources Canada



Household Cleaners

Conventional cleaners and chemicals that we may use in our home could contain hazardous substances that are dangerous to people, pets and the environment. Some of them can be so harsh that they have the ability to corrode sewer pipes! Conventional cleaners can be switched to non-toxic alternatives with minimal effort and they are often made from basic ingredients found around the home so you may even save money! Another option is purchasing the non-toxic cleaners found in many grocery and health food stores.

For soap, detergents, shampoos and other cleaners that create suds try using less product. Metro Vancouver's soft water allows us to use less product (up to half as much!) while getting the same results.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: tub and tile cleaners, drain cleaners, laundry soaps, glass cleaners

Home Renovations

Home renovations are an excellent way to incorporate green technologies that can improve your home's sustainability and its livability for you and your family. Conventional home renovation products, such as paints, varnishes, fabrics, woods and carpets, can contain metals and toxic chemicals which could be inhaled or accidentally ingested leading to health issues. In addition, the making of these products could cause environmental harm. An increasing number of products are becoming available that are less toxic and incorporate environmental sustainability principles through evaluating the entire life-cycle of the products.

When working on home renovations, consider the origin of the products you are using. If the wood products that you are using are foreign, consider if the lumber was harvested in a sustainable manner. Possibly not. Another increasingly popular home renovation trend is to use salvaged products from other homes. Reuse depots are great to see what products are available for your renovation projects, while also diverting these products from the landfill, reducing the need for the shipment of new products from other countries and possibly saving you money.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: alternative flooring products, recycled content tiles and counters, paints free of volatile chemicals, untreated and natural fabrics, salvaged wood products

Local Food

You can greatly reduce your impact on the environment by purchasing locally grown or manufactured food. The shorter the shipping distance, the less fuel consumed in the transport process and the less greenhouse gases that were emitted to get the product to stores you shop at!

Buying local food products is a great way to help the environment. In addition to the environmental benefits, buying directly from a local farm means foods are ripe and fresh, and produce is less likely to go through preservation or ripening processes used during international shipping.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: groceries, such as honey, produce, meats, dairy products

FACT: Ingredients of a typical meal in North America have traveled on average 1500 miles (or 2414 kilometres!) to get to your plate. - 100 Mile Diet webpage

Home Drainage

Your Lower Mainland home protects you from an average of 165 days of rainfall per year. It's important to know where the water that runs off your roof goes since too much water entering the City's storm sewer system too quickly can cause harm to our local streams and rivers. Gutters and downspouts from your roof are typically connected to drains that lead to the City's storm sewer system. By changing the connection to these drains to allow the water from your roof downspouts to drain to the ground enables the water to filter into the soil in a more natural way that also protects our streams.

Rainwater running off properties can also carry with it chemicals and organic wastes that can pollute local streams and rivers. Because the contents of storm drains are not treated before it enters Surrey's streams, we need to keep storm drains clear of contaminants.

AREAS IN YOUR HOME TO CONSIDER: roof gutter connections, chemicals used on paved areas on property, grass clippings and soil on paved areas on property

