


Shavu'a Tov

שבוע טוב



good week sustainable week



**God took Adam and put him  
into the Garden of Eden  
to till it and to tend it.**

**Genesis 2:15**

There has always been a strong connection between Jewish teachings and the environment.

From the beginning, we were commanded to tend the Garden with all its life.

The Torah directs us to care for the earth that God has loaned us and commands us to safeguard this loan.

The way we live and the choices we make have a direct impact on the environment.

If we each take small steps towards living in a more sustainable way, then as a community our combined efforts can make a difference.

This booklet offers simple tips and ideas for a *shavu'a tov* - a good week for you and the environment.

You are not required to complete the task, yet you are not free to withdraw from it.

*Pirkei Avot 2:21*

First Day

יום ראשון

# Energy

God said, "Let there be light";  
and there was light.

Genesis 1:3

# ENERGY

## do

- Switch off lights when you leave a room.
- Replace incandescent globes with energy-efficient fluorescent or LED ones.
- Unplug TVs, microwaves, computers and telephone chargers when they are not in use.
- Dry your clothes on a washing line or clothes rack.
- Wash clothes in cold water.
- Turn down the thermostat one degree for less heating and turn up the thermostat one degree for less cooling.
- Use lids on saucepans, use a microwave, steamer, or pressure cooker; cooks faster and saves energy.

## think

- Heating and cooling your home accounts for almost two-thirds of your energy use. Consider installing insulation, energy-efficient heating systems and adjusting your thermostat to 19-21 degrees in winter. This will help keep winter energy costs down.
- When you replace an appliance consider the energy efficiency of the new appliance. A more energy efficient appliance will damage the environment less and save you more in running costs over its lifetime.
- Appliances in stand-by mode are consuming electricity. All the appliances left on stand-by in your home can add up to 10% of your energy use. Switch them off at the wall.

## info

- Your local council for free globe replacement programs
- [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)
- [www.greenpower.gov.au](http://www.greenpower.gov.au)
- [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)
- [www.sustainability.vic.gov.au](http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au)

**Second Day**

**יום שני**

# **Water**



**I will grant your rains in their seasons, so that the earth shall yield its produce and the trees of the field their fruit.**

**Leviticus 26:4**

# WATER

## do

- Take shorter showers.
- Replace your old shower head with a water efficient shower head.
- Replace washers as soon as there is a leak.
- Put a bucket in the shower to collect the water while you are waiting for the hot water. Use it to water the garden.
- Don't leave the tap running while you brush your teeth.
- Thaw frozen food in a bowl of water or in the microwave, but never under running water.
- Run your dishwasher or washing machine only when it is full.

## think

- Australia is the driest inhabited continent with a limited supply of fresh water.
- There are many ways to save water in the garden such as choosing local native plants, mulching, composting, and using water storage crystals.
- Think about using grey water (water from the laundry, bathing, and dishwashing) for your garden. Before you do so, check the dos and don'ts of using grey water.
- If buying a new washing machine or dishwasher consider the most water efficient appliances. Australia has mandatory water efficiency labelling – the more stars, the more water efficient.
- Think about installing a rainwater tank. Check if there are government rebates available.

## info

- Your local council for shower head replacement programs
- [www.waterrating.gov.au/](http://www.waterrating.gov.au/)
- [www.sewl.com.au](http://www.sewl.com.au)
- [www.sydneywater.com.au](http://www.sydneywater.com.au)
- [www.savewater.com.au](http://www.savewater.com.au)
- [www.watercorporation.com.au](http://www.watercorporation.com.au)

Third Day

יום שלישי

# Transport and Pollution

Regulating air pollution is not a new idea in the Jewish world. Talmudic sages developed regulations for noise, smoke and odour.

A tannery must not be established except on the east side of the city and must be removed to a distance of fifty ells.

*Talmud Baba Batra 24b*



# TRANSPORT and POLLUTION

## do

- Use public transport whenever possible.
- For short distances try walking or bike riding.
- Think before you hop into the car. Can you combine several trips into one?
- Car pool whenever you can.
- Check that your tyre pressure is correct.
- Regularly service your car and keep it well tuned.
- Clean out your boot. Don't carry around extra weight.
- Don't start your car engine until you are ready to go.
- Drive gently and accelerate smoothly.

## think

- Motor vehicles are a major source of air pollution especially in cities.
- Trams and trains are 40 times more energy-efficient than cars. Pressure for better public transport.
- Try to use alternatives to a car trip, such as the phone, internet or a letter.
- If you have more than one car, try to use the more fuel-efficient one whenever possible.
- When it's time to replace your car, think smaller. Changing from a big, heavy car to a small, safe family car could save you 1000 litres of fuel every year!
- Do consider a hybrid or even an electric car.

## info

- [www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au](http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au)
- [www2.acfonline.org.au](http://www2.acfonline.org.au)
- [www.cyclingresourcecentre.org.au](http://www.cyclingresourcecentre.org.au)
- [www.transport.vic.gov.au](http://www.transport.vic.gov.au)
- [www.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au)
- [www.queensland.gov.au/transport/public](http://www.queensland.gov.au/transport/public)

Fourth Day

יום רביעי

## Waste

See my works, how fine and excellent they are! All that I created, I created for you. Reflect on this, and do not corrupt or desolate my world; for if you do, there will be no one to repair it after you.

*Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:13*



# WASTE

## do

- Recycle plastics, paper, metal and glass.
- Compost food scraps or use a worm farm.
- Recycle e-waste (computers, TVs, printers and monitors).
- Take your own reusable bags to the supermarket. Avoid using plastic bags.
- Use your own mug for take-away coffee.
- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Put a "No Advertising Material" sign on your letterbox.
- Avoid buying bottled water. Fill a reusable bottle from the tap.
- Recycle printer cartridges and mobile phones.
- Try to buy products that have minimal packaging.

## think

- Although Australians are good at recycling, we produce more rubbish per person than any other country except the US.
- Food waste generates methane which is one of the worst greenhouse gases. It is estimated that Australians throw away \$5 billion worth of food per year.
- In a year Australians use over four billion plastic supermarket bags. Only about 3% of these bags are recycled. Plastic bags that end up in our waterways are a threat to marine animals.
- Set yourself a challenge to reduce your household waste. There are many websites with tips to reduce waste. Google "reduce household waste". Aim to become a low-garbage household.

## info

- [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au)
- [www.livinggreener.gov.au/waste](http://www.livinggreener.gov.au/waste)
- [www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au)
- [www.cleanup.org.au](http://www.cleanup.org.au)
- [www.environmentvictoria.org.au/content/halve-your-rubbish](http://www.environmentvictoria.org.au/content/halve-your-rubbish)

**Fifth Day**

**יום חמישי**

# **Purchase**



**Who is rich? One who is  
happy with their  
portion.**

***Shimon ben Zoma***

# PURCHASE

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- Buy food that is in season and locally grown.
- Buy products that are produced in Australia where possible.
- Buy products in containers that can be refilled or reused.
- Try to buy products that have minimal packaging.
- Try to avoid using disposable products such as paper plates, cups and foil baking pans.
- Try some "old fashioned" cleaning products such as vinegar.
- Consider buying second hand.
- For equipment you don't use very often (e.g. power tools, lawnmowers), consider renting or sharing with several families.

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- Everything you purchase has an impact on the environment. It is often difficult to see the link between a product and its environmental impact. You can try to choose products that have a lower environmental impact.
- Before you buy something, consider where it was made, what it is made of, and how to dispose of it.
- Your choice of products can influence what is available to purchase. Consumers have the power to bring about change.

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- [www.choice.com.au](http://www.choice.com.au)
- [www.ethical.org.au](http://www.ethical.org.au)
- [www.acfonline.org.au](http://www.acfonline.org.au)
- [www.ecobuy.org.au](http://www.ecobuy.org.au)
- [www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org)
- [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)

Sixth Day

יום ששי

4Rs

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink



Righteous people do not destroy even a mustard seed in the world and they are distressed at every ruination and spoilage they see; they will take any opportunity to save anything from destruction, with all of their power.

*Sefer HaChinuch: D'varim 20:19*  
*Mitzvah 529*

## 4 Rs

# Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink

### do

- Reduce what you buy.
  - Can you repair something rather than replace it?
  - Can you grow some veggies, fruit, flowers or herbs?
- Reuse whatever you can.
  - Use both sides of a piece of paper.
  - Reuse glass jars and bottles.
  - Buy secondhand instead of new. Check local op shops.
- Recycle
  - Paper, cardboard
  - Plastics, glass, metal
- Rethink the way you look at all resources.

### think

- You can reduce your ecological footprint by following the 4 Rs.
- Try to keep to the following hierarchy:
  - Reduce is the most important. It removes the need to reuse and recycle.
  - Reuse is the second most important. Reusing something extends its life and keeps it out of landfill.
  - Recycle is the last option. Recycling helps reduce landfill.
  - Rethink the way you acquire and dispose of everything. Look at products as “whole of life” items – imagine if you did not produce any waste at all!
- Google “frugal living”. Find out how people are living less wastefully.

### info

- [www.frugalandthriving.com.au](http://www.frugalandthriving.com.au)
- [www.gogreeneraustralia.com](http://www.gogreeneraustralia.com)
- [www.cleanup.org.au](http://www.cleanup.org.au)
- [www.ilovetoopshop.blogspot.com.au](http://www.ilovetoopshop.blogspot.com.au)
- [www.opshop.org](http://www.opshop.org)

Seventh Day

שבת





And God blessed the seventh  
day and declared it holy,  
because on it God ceased from  
all the work of creation which  
God had done.

Genesis 1:3

“The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation, from the world of creation to the creation of the world.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel



# THE JEWISH NEW YEAR

The Jewish New Year, “the birthday of the world”, concluding with the “closing of the gates” on Yom Kippur, is a time for us to reflect on our thoughts and actions during the past year.

It is also a time to reflect on how we have behaved as guardians of the earth and to make positive changes in the New Year.

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- An annual audit of all your efforts in relation to the areas of energy, water, transport, waste, purchase, and the 4 Rs.
- Consider what else you and your family might incorporate into your efforts to reduce your overall ecological footprint.
- Look at local and global efforts you might join.

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- Discuss the impact of current efforts you have made.
- What was easy to do and can you do more of it?
- What was more difficult and what might make it easier?

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- *The Jewish Book of Why*, by Alfred J. Kolatch
- *Judaism and Ecology*, edited by Aubrey Rose
- *A Garden of Choice Fruits*, edited by Rabbi David E. S. Stein
- *Judaism and Ecology: World and Revealed Word*, edited by Hava Tirosh-Samuelson



[www.jeco.org.au](http://www.jeco.org.au)

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[www.jnf.org.au](http://www.jnf.org.au)



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[www.bnaibrith.org.au/](http://www.bnaibrith.org.au/)

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