

A Brief History of Earth Day



Earth Day is a global holiday to celebrate the wonder of life on our planet and to make us aware of the need to preserve and renew the precious ecological balances we need to sustain life on our planet. Throughout the world, Earth Day is recognized as the symbol of environmental responsibility and stewardship.

Two different dates claim to be Earth Day. The first date, March 21, 1970, was founded by John McConnell in San Francisco. This date reflects the day of the Vernal Equinox, the day when night and day are equal throughout the Earth. The second date, April 22, 1970, was the culmination of Gaylord Nelson's, a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, effort to bring focus on environmental issues nationwide. He proposed his dream of a healthy, vibrant planet; a loving, caring world; and the noblest endeavors of the human spirit, at a conference in Seattle in September 1969. He came up with the idea for a "teach-in" on environmental issues, thus the first Earth Day celebration was held on April 22, 1970 in New York City. Over 20 million Americans marched and peacefully demonstrated to address issues of air and water pollution. Some marchers paraded in gas masks and held make-believe funerals for the automobile. Due to this environmental movement that encouraged us to "Think Green," the U.S. Congress passed important environmental bills such as the Endangered Species Act and the bill that formed the Environmental Protection Agency. Today, we still strive to help our Earth home by dealing with these same issues, as well as, littering, global warming, endangered species, over-population, and many more.

The "5 R's"

- REDUCE** Avoid unnecessary waste. This will save money, landfill space, and natural resources.
- REUSE** Rather than buying disposables, use replaceable, refillable, and rechargeable products.
- RECYCLE** New products can be made from the old – if you recycle! Making products from recycled materials uses less energy!
- REBUY** Purchase products made with recycled materials instead of raw materials.
- RETHINK** Reduce waste right from the start! Make intelligent, environmentally sound decisions at the store, at home and where ever you go!



COMPOST Composting is nature's own way of recycling. Choose a spot in your backyard for a compost bin or area. Layer your organic wastes, keep the pile moist, and turn it often because the bacteria that promotes composting needs lots of oxygen.

Composting 101

DO Compost:

- Leaves, twigs, grass clippings
- Straw, pine needles, sawdust, nuts, corncobs
- Brown and green weeds, vegetation
- Coffee grounds and egg shells
- Fruit peelings and vegetable scraps
- Shredded paper coffee filters, napkins, cereal boxes & paper towels

DO NOT Compost:

- Meat, bones, and meat by-products
- Grease, lard and fatty foods
- Manure and pet waste

Other Ways to Help the Earth

Don't Litter Always throw your non-recyclable trash away in a proper container. Consider adopting a stream, park or roadside and keep it litter-free all year round.
Organize a litter cleanup in your neighborhood, school, or business.

Conserve Energy Keep the windows and doors shut if the heat or air conditioning is on.
Turn off the lights or TV if you are the last person to leave a room.
Instead of driving a car short distances, walk or ride your bike in good weather.
Car-pool whenever possible.

Protect Wildlife Snip each circle of your 6 pack-rings so they won't hurt animals that may get caught in them.
Don't let helium balloons fly away because when they land they can be harmful to wildlife that may mistake the balloon for food.
Hang a bird feeder on a tree in your yard.
Planting a tree will provide shade, give birds and other small animals a home, and stop soil erosion.

Conserve Water Don't let water run while brushing your teeth or washing the dishes. You will save up to 30 gallons of water yearly.
Check for water leaks.

