



# The Conservation Corner Earth Day 2009



Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District  
PO Box 166, Route 8 Lake Pleasant NY 12108  
Phone: 518-548-3991 Email: hcsxcd@frontiernet.net  
Website: [www.hamiltoncountyswcd.com](http://www.hamiltoncountyswcd.com)  
Hamilton County Online Mapping System: [www.hamcomaps.net](http://www.hamcomaps.net)

A publication developed to highlight conservation efforts, programs and events throughout Hamilton County  
Authored by Conservation Educator  
Caitlin Stewart  
Earth Day 2009

## Earth Day April 22

The American environmental movement began in 1970, resulting from such degradation as a fuel rod meltdown at the Savannah River nuclear plant in South Carolina, industrial waste, air pollution, and the use of leaded gas in cars.

Earth Day was founded by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson who believed that initiating a nationwide environmental protest “to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda” was a gamble. The gamble worked.

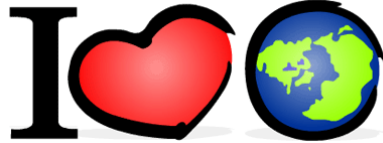
Groups had been riding the environmental wave for some time, wanting to stop and prevent oils pills, factory and power plant pollution, toxic dumps, raw sewage, herbicides and pesti-

cides, species extinctions, and habitat degradation. On April 22, 1970, the environmental wave crested and flooded with power as 20 million individuals gathered in streets, auditoriums, and parks to advocate for a sustainable, healthy Earth. The people’s concern for the environment

was heard, and as a result of the 1970 Earth Day, the United States Environmental Protection Agency was formed, and the Endangered Species, Clean Air, and Clean water acts were passed.

In 1990, the reaches of Earth Day spread beyond the borders of the United States, and the national Earth

Day coordinator, Denis Hayes, organized a world wide event to raise awareness of environmental issues. 200 million people spread across 141 countries participated. As Y2K approached, Hayes’ message turned to the adverse impacts of global warming and the necessary use of clean energy. The Internet linked activists in 184 countries as people discussed Earth Day activities. Join the fight for a flourishing, sustainable environment, and make every day Earth Day.

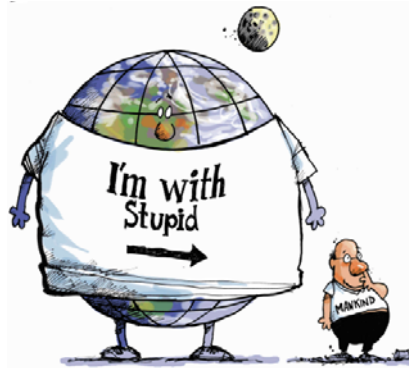


# Count Down Your Carbon

It's your turn. Here are 10 actions you can take to reduce your carbon footprint.

1. Change light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They last for years, produce more light, and use 1/3 less energy than regular bulbs. Even though CFLs are more expensive than regular bulbs, you will save hundreds of dollars due to their long life.
2. Drive less, bike, carpool, plan your errands so you make one trip, and take your car to the shop for a tune up. Purchase a Hybrid.
3. Replace household heating and cooling systems with energy efficient products. Keep your furnace clean, lubricated, and adjusted. Clean vents, close unused vents, change filters. Install a programmable thermostat. Seal air leaks, add insulation. Do not use the AC, install

4. Lower the refrigerator's temperature 1 degree or more. Relocate the refrigerator if it is near sunlight or a heating vent. Turn the energy saver switch on. Clean condenser coil.
5. Turn the hot water heater down to 120°F or lower. Insulate hot water heater and pipes. Install a timer that shuts off hot water at night and turns it on in the morning. Wash dishes by hand. If using a dishwasher, don't pre-rinse. Wash clothes in warm, not hot water. Line dry.
6. Plant trees for wind breaks



- and shade. Plant native, hardy plants that need less water and use moisture retaining mulch. Water lawn infrequently.
7. Buy green energy. Invest in renewable energy companies and green stocks through socially responsible funds.
  8. Go organic. Purchase locally grown food. Eat produce that is in season to reduce transportation costs. Plant a garden.
  9. Become a minimalist. Use less, buy less. Bulk items reduce packaging. Buy only one. Donate or recycle old clothes. Purchase ENERGY STAR products.

## Spring Clean, Zero Waste

1. Take Back Programs - turn in old electronics. The HCSWCD recycles cell phones.
2. Yard Sales - don't throw it out. Sell it.
3. Donate - clothes, goods, and food to organizations with a cause.
4. Clothing Swaps - trade unopened cosmetics and clothing at get-togethers.
5. Upcycled Paper - use old bills, taxes, receipts, magazines, and newspapers to decoupage furniture or make a recycled note pad.
6. Green Cleaning Products - use old t-shirts instead of paper towels, and vinegar and baking soda for household cleansers. Use plant based, biodegradable cleaning products.



## How to Celebrate

1. Reduce, reuse, and recycle - purchase as little as possible, avoid items in bulky packaging, buy local and organic, use silver wear and mugs instead of plastic and Styrofoam.
2. Rid litter from roadways.
3. Learn about the environment, then teach others.
4. Wear green and brown.
5. Ride your bike or carpool.
6. Cook an Earth Day Meal with local and organic foods. Decorate with recycled, hand made centerpieces and light soy or beeswax candles.
7. Purchase a carbon offset that fund projects such as wind farms that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Enjoy the beauty of the outdoors with a camera, hiking boots, or paddle.
9. Don't spray pesticides.



## Just For Kids

1. Decorate canvas bags that are a durable, reusable option instead of plastic bags.
2. Explore the park or pond and discuss conservation.
3. Check out Earth books from the library.
4. Volunteer to plant a tree or pick up trash.
5. Visit a planetarium, natural history museum, aquarium, or zoo. Learn about extinction and biodiversity.
6. Carry re-usable lunch boxes and pack food in plastic containers. Use cloth napkins and silver wear.
7. Create a bird feeder from a plastic jug. Cut a hole in the opposite side of the handle, fill with seed and hang.
8. The HCSWCD offers conservation presentations including stream biomonitoring, tree identification, watersheds, and pollution. Call for more details or to schedule a presentation.