

Everyone Can Benefit by Going Green!

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Going green does not necessarily require spending extra money or sacrificing your way of life. Going green simply means that one begins to think about his or her individual impacts on our environment and looks for ways to reduce their negative impacts.

Going green can be easy and can save you money. Simply turning off your lights when you leave a room will help and reduce your electric bill. Setting your air conditioner thermostat a bit higher, especially when not at home will also reduce your electric costs.

As more and more “green” products come to market their prices are becoming more in line with traditional “non-green” products. Fluorescent light bulbs are an example of this. They are not nearly as expensive as they once were and last a lot longer than incandescent light bulbs. Ultimately you save money both by not having to purchase replacement light bulbs and by reducing your electric bill.

Going green can be fun. Buy yourself a jacket with flexible solar panel on the back to power your portable electronic devices while you take those cool weather walks or bicycle rides.

Going green can help you prepare for hurricanes and other disasters. What will you do if we lose electricity for extended periods of time? Do you keep your refrigerator and freezer fully stocked? Imagine how hot it can get without even a fan. Hurricanes are the obvious cause of potential electrical disruption, but other unforeseen events can also sever our fragile electrical connection to the mainland. A few solar panels with battery backup and an inverter can power most if not all of your emergency electrical needs except air conditioning. Imagine how much less stress we would experience in the aftermath of an emergency if we did not have to hear multiple generators running 24/7 in our neighborhoods.

Going green will help your grandchildren live in a more hospitable environment and have a better quality of life. Some items like solar hot water heaters and “on-demand” water heaters are more expensive to purchase than traditional water heaters. But over their lifetime you will spend less on hot water and be significantly reducing your negative impact on the environment. *Solar Today* magazine reports that according to research at the University of Wisconsin Solar Energy Laboratory, a typical hot water heater generates as much carbon dioxide at the family car. Using solar water heating to replace the traditional electric water heater would provide environmental benefits equivalent to doubling the fuel efficiency of the family car.

Global warming concerns have been debated more than any other environmental subject not only because it is the largest threat to our future security and well-being but also because corporations oppose any type of regulation, especially if it might increase their operating costs.

It is time for us all to quit letting our short-term interests govern our decision-making and make decisions based on what is best for us in the long-term. According to recent studies, even within the Pentagon, global warming has been identified as a potentially greater threat to national and world security than terrorism.

Global warming is an indisputable fact. It is time to take it seriously! If we do not begin to take steps to reduce our fossil fuel consumption and the production of the unavoidable waste product of carbon dioxide, we, our children and their children may have to dramatically alter their life styles to accommodate more desperate measures needed to reduce global warming effects.