

# 13 Easy Ways to Go Green in Indy

BY SHARI HELD

You can't miss the buzzwords: Eco-friendly, energy-efficient, remanufactured, biodegradable, renewable, non-toxic. All mark ways to help you live greener. Here are a baker's dozen to get you started.



**1** Buy a batch of reusable cloth bags and take them shopping with you. They're available everywhere. Lowe's, Kroger, and T.J. Maxx offer them for 99-cents. Trader Joe's has totes and six-pack wine bag for that price, along with a roomy, insulated bag for \$6.99.

#### NO PAPER, NO PLASTIC:

Plastic bags are so tricky to recycle, you may want to reuse them instead. Better yet, invest a few bucks in cloth shopping bags like this one from Whole Foods.

**2** Enroll in Indianapolis Power & Light's Green Power Option. For a small premium you can specify that 10, 25, 50, or 100 percent of your electricity be generated from clean, renewable energy sources like wind, solar or geothermal. At the current premium (6/10 of a cent per kilowatt hour), if you use 1,000 kilowatt hours per month and are enrolled at the 100-percent level, you would pay \$6.50 extra on your monthly IPL bill.

**3** Wear eco-friendly fibers. Mari-gold in Broad Ripple carries contemporary clothing in bamboo, organic and other natural materials, and also offers a

go!green

line of purses made from recycled leather jackets by local company ReFind Originals. Nurture on Mass Avenue carries Baby Soy, a line of baby clothing made from soybean fiber and cotton.

**4** Use remanufactured, refilled ink cartridges. Many major office supply chains offer ink refill programs. Cartridge World in Carmel refills ink and toner cartridges. Besides helping the environment, you'll save from 30 to 50 percent.

**5** Bring your own doggy bag (reusable Tupperware) to the restaurant when you go out to eat. Some restaurants, such as Café Patachou and Broad Ripple Brew Pub, use compostable, biodegradable take-out containers. Styrofoam lasts forever.

**6** Clean green. Hire a green cleaning company. Green Sweep in Fishers ([teamgreensweep.com](http://teamgreensweep.com)) is Green Clean Institute Certified and uses all-natural products created locally by Tracey-Clean ([traceycleannaturalproducts.com](http://traceycleannaturalproducts.com)), also available for sale on the company's Web site.

**7** Donate magazines and books to a nursing home or to the library for resale. You can also take used books to Half-Priced Books and make a little

green yourself.

**8** Recycle old electronics, such as your computer. Indianapolis-based Green Wave Computer Recycling ([gweri.com](http://gweri.com)) recycles 100-percent of computer materials, including hazardous toxins (mercury, lead, cadmium), plastic and metal for a few dollars. As an added bonus, all data on your computer is wiped clean per Department of Defense standards.



**9** Sign up for Green Piece's free newsletter ([greenpieceindy.com](http://greenpieceindy.com)). The local organization keeps tabs on what establishments support green living practices and offers tips on going green each month.

**10** Grow your own vegetables. Even the White House is doing it. Better yet, make it an organic garden. Worm's Way in Bloomington has organic fertilizers and other earth-friendly indoor and outdoor products available.

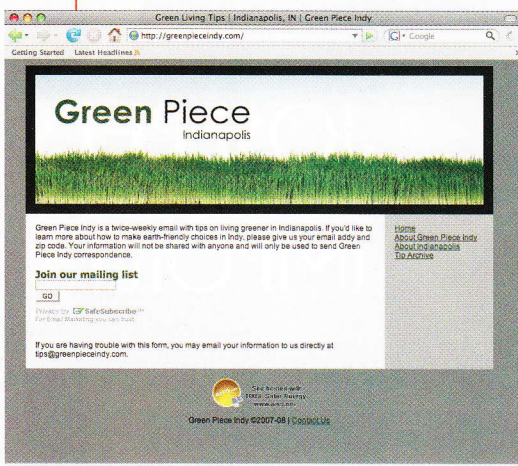
**11** Start composting. Save appropriate table scraps in a compost pail and help replenish mother earth. Compost pails are available in a variety of price ranges at retailers from Williams-Sonoma to Target. Or go to Starbucks and pick up a few free bags of coffee grounds to mix into your soil.

**12** Recycle. When it comes to recycling, every little bit helps. Recycle bins for #1 and #2 plastic containers; aluminum, tin and steel beverage and food cans; glass; and, newspaper and magazines are located all over Indy. Other items, such as plastic bags, batteries and hazardous materials can be recycled at specific sites. Check [sustainindy.org](http://sustainindy.org) for

NATURE AND NURTURE: Nurture carries baby clothes made from eco-friendly soybean fiber, a.k.a. "vegetable cashmere."

the latest city recycling information. Need motivation? According to [recycling-revolution.com](http://recycling-revolution.com), a used aluminum can that gets recycled is back on the grocery shelf in 60 days, but an aluminum can thrown in the trash will still be around in 500 years.

**13** When remodeling or building a home, use green products. Greenway Supply in downtown Indy carries earth-friendly building supplies including cork, bamboo, and recycled tire flooring countertops and cabinetry made from renewable and recycled products. Porter Paints has a whole system of "Ecological Solutions," and many stores carry low- or no-VOC paints.



THINK LOCAL: The tips in Green Piece Indy newsletters are tailored to Indianapolis.