

LEAN AND GREEN: Money and Earth Saving Tips

Dana Mayar

New Television Series to Catch: Whale Wars on Animal Planet Fridays 9:00pm EST

"Only one group stands between a 750-ton whale-killing machine and its prey."

Not your average reality show, this controversial series documents the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's efforts at saving the destruction of the whales in Antarctica... more specifically from the Japanese whaling expeditions.

Four Corners Pick: An old favorite, Book: 50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth (there is a kids version too!)



This book launched the green revolution, if you haven't read it by now, it's long overdue!

50simplethings.com

No, I'm not going to give you yet another suggestion to change your light bulbs. I get that eco-fatigue has some of you wishing you could donate to Bono's causes or buy those \$200 organic sheets, but you just can't afford it. And yet, other greenies will ride their bike to work no matter which way the winds of the economy blow. I swing back and forth depending on my mood, cynical one day, optimistic the next. But whatever my inclination, I always love saving green. I love a sale, a deal, and every bargain.

Here's how I'm cutting back on spending and helping Mother Nature at the same time. Feel free to add your ideas.

Saving With Solar For many years, adding solar panels was too expensive for me to install. But new leasing programs like those offered by Solar City help people with utility bills over \$150 save money by switching to solar. As a penny pincher, I get very excited watching the dial spin backwards on my utility meter. Take that APS!

Throw in the Towel The average American has \$497 worth of cleaning products in their house and only uses three of them more than once a year. Paper towels and tissue costs go up every few days. I've given up 80% of

my cleaning products and paper towel use.

Dura-hooked microfiber cloths and hot water can replace chemicals and cleaners. I didn't believe it until I tried it, but it cleans better than abrasive cleaners or fume-filled sprays for most cleanups. As for getting rid of the unused products, if I have just a small amount of cleaner left, I wash or flush it down the drain with lots of water. For large quantities, I check Earth911.com to see how to dispose of it.

Give it Up Cutting back on spending for me means less cash to donate to my favorite causes. Instead of feeling guilty, I'm cleaning out closets and clutter to recycle unwanted, unused household items through Freecycle.org. Artwork that no longer fits my decor and jewelry I no longer wear goes to the local silent auction.

I gave up shopping alone and joined a warehouse club with friends. BJ's, Sam's Club and Costco can take a big bite out of shopping expenses. They also allow member's to bring a guest. I drive and shop with my friends for more fun, less gas, and lower fees. I also pick up tips about coupons and specials and new items by shopping with someone else.

The nearest health food store is 20 minutes away from my house by car. I've cut back on driving by buying in bulk from Amazon.com. Shipping is free when you sign up for auto delivery.

Cut the Plaque Research makes a connection between poor dental health and heart health. Realizing that keeping your teeth clean now might prevent health care costs in the future, some health insurance companies have started offering inexpensive dental plans. My husband and I spent \$600 on routine cleanings on our last visit to the dentist. All of that is covered in our new plan for \$10 a month, no co-pays. We have to use the HMO providers, but there were two green dentists on the list which made going HMO easier to swallow.

All Washed Up I switched from my expensive, organic soaps to Kirk's basic bar and saved \$4.97 a bar.

Check what food is in season locally and therefore, usually less expensive. Lime.com has a map for the entire US to help you find it.

For me, eco luxury is about making life easy on me and the planet, it's not about one or the other, it's both.

ecoluxuryliving.blogspot.com

Give the Gift of Green This Holiday Season!

1. Habitat For Humanity- Not only can you donate \$ but you can recycle by donating housing materials/building supplies at Habitat ReStores. You can also donate your time by volunteering to help build a project. habitat.org
2. The Food Bank- This holiday season the food bank has reached out asking for specific items that each region needs. No matter what our economic status is, we can all afford to give at least one can of food to others this month. Search online for a food bank in your area. For Arizona residents: azfoodbanks.org
3. Click to Give: Just a click away (no excuses!) oneclickatatime.org
4. Animal Charities of America- Choose among an extensive list of members on this site, so you can target an animal organization that strikes a chord with you. animalfund.org
5. Organic Consumers Association- A Four Corners favorite for receiving green/food news, without the fluff. Subscribe to their e-newsletters to stay on top of the latest developments that impact our world, donate or get involved in one of their projects. organicconsumers.org



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