

## It's easy being green: *Celebrate Earth Day, Monday, April 22*

### The climate crisis is affecting Canadians across the country whether it's extreme weather events, flooding, or wildfires.

Sometimes the problem seems so large and daunting that people wonder what they can do to help planet Earth. But like a lot of challenges every effort can start with some simple eco-friendly enhancements residents and managers can make to their property or condo.

And Earth Day on April 22, might be the perfect time to continue taking some of those steps.

#### HERE'S A LIST OF THINGS YOU CAN DO IN YOUR JOURNEY OF GOING GREEN:



**Use LED lighting** — Using LED lighting has tremendous benefits for the environment. One LED light can reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) by some 50% compared to traditional, older methods of lighting.

Since they take less energy to generate light, this reduces power consumption and takes pressure off the power grid. LEDs don't contain hazardous chemicals, have minimal heat loss that can escape into the environment, and they cost you less!



**Take a close look at your windows** — Other eco-friendly approaches include replacing older windows with new energy efficient ones.

Another option is to repair any broken windows, applying weatherstripping to stop air getting in or out and even installing shutters and awnings in south facing windows in warm and hot parts of the country. There are often grants available for installing new energy efficient windows too. These upgrades reduce energy consumption and lower utility bills.



**Consider eco-friendly appliances** — Appliances are large consumers of energy whether it's a dishwasher, washer and dryer, fridge, or stove. Be sure to select Energy Star products, the internationally trusted mark of high efficiency, and take simple power saving steps like using cold water for laundry and other tips to cutting energy use.

When it comes to your morning Joe, consider a traditional coffee maker rather than a single-use machine which takes more energy and leads to wasteful pods that accumulate in landfills.



**Inspect heaters and air conditioners** — Air conditioners and heaters require a lot of energy (and therefore generate a lot of GHGs) to keep our homes at a comfortable level. Air conditioners also require refrigerants, which if they leak can contribute to global warming.

As we head into summer, it might be worth considering updating an older system to ensure you have an eco-friendly refrigerant or perhaps replacing the entire system which could pay for itself over the long term.

Other simple steps include setting the air conditioner to allow for a warmer house, check for leaks in the system, keep curtains and shades closed, and check the filters in your system.

Many consumers are making the switch to heat pumps as they are cheaper to operate, use clean hydroelectricity, reduce use of fossil fuels and can be up to 50% more efficient for cooling compared to a typical window air conditioning unit.



**Save water** — Recent Canadian meteorological measurements show that the country is experiencing a drought with as much as 70% of the nation experiencing “abnormally dry” conditions.

So, to conserve water, it’s important to limit use by fixing leaky faucets, installing low-flow shower heads, restricting watering of gardens and flowers, and planting vegetation that requires less water.



**Make your insurance green** — BFL CANADA offers eco-friendly enhancement coverage which allows clients to replace their damaged property with an eco-friendly option at no additional cost to them.

This means that insurance is extended to include: any increase in the direct costs to repair or replace damaged property insured using “environmentally friendly” material or modes of construction or “energy efficient” materials or modes of construction, or additional fees incurred for an accredited professional certified by Canada Green Building Council/LEED Canada® to participate in the design and construction for repairing or rebuilding physically damaged insured property as “environmentally-friendly” or “energy-efficient.”

When you celebrate Earth Day this year, consider the steps you can take to cut down your energy consumption, save some money and give the planet a break!

**Happy Earth Day.**