

Dear INFORMers,

In the spirit of reducing our holiday environmental footprints, INFORM has compiled a list of tips and ideas to help you enjoy the holidays in a more sustainable way. See our list of environmentally friendly gifts ideas, our tips on putting a green touch on your holidays, and read our December Profile on the Global Footprint Network. And if you haven't already done so, please consider making a contribution to INFORM this holiday season – the ultimate Green Gift! Now more than ever, we depend on your support. Thank you, and here's wishing you a healthy and environmental sound holiday season!

A Green Touch: tips on how to celebrate sustainably



- Use a potted or balled Christmas tree so you can replant it in the backyard or donate it to the parks department once the season is over. However, if you'd like to buy a traditional cut tree, look into companies that utilize sustainable practices for growing, such as [Fresh Christmas Tree](#). (If you've used a live tree, take note of tree pick up dates in your neighborhood, so that after Christmas is over, it can be mulched for city-wide

landscaping.

- Choose LED bulbs to decorate your tree and home. They're more expensive, but last much longer and use 80% to 90% less power than conventional mini bulbs. LEDs also stay cool to the touch so they won't burn the tree or your child's fingers. Remember to turn off decorative lights at bedtime to save electricity.
- On gift-giving: Look for locally made products (such as those found at thrift stores and local artisan shops), [recycled gifts](#), and battery-free products (According to the EPA, about 40% of battery sales occur during the holiday seasons).
- Instead of driving around to all of the local malls and outlets for your gifts, try to find items online in order to decrease your car's carbon emissions.
- Instead of buying resource-intensive gifts, find a charity or organization your giftee supports and donate in their name.
- Use recycled paper to gift wrap. Paper grocery bags, newspapers, old maps and posters, or magazines are great resources. You can even buy reusable cloth grocery bags as satchels for an even more environmentally friendly gift bag. Using old VHS tape, old Christmas lights, or shoelaces is a fantastic finishing touch to a gift!

INFORM Recommends

For help in deciphering labels and understanding safer and organic products, take a look at National Geographic's [Green Guide](#)

Calculate your [Personal Footprint](#)

Great [alternative energy](#) gift ideas

Quick Links

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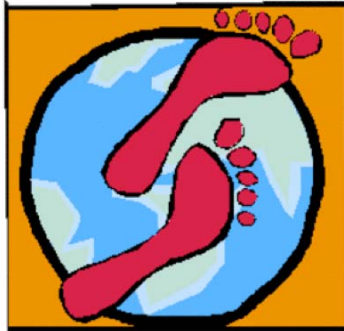
[The Secret Life](#)

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DONATE NOW!

[Thanks for your support! Every contribution helps us raise awareness to protect the planet.](#)

Reduce your gift giving footprint this holiday season



The holiday season is a time of heightened consumption, but remember, the choices you make as a consumer can have a real impact on the environment. Check out INFORM's picks and find companies that you may not have heard of before yet exemplify environmental stewardship in their practices and services.

[The Agroecology Center](#)

[Assemblyman William Colton](#)

[Papergeist](#)

[The Wheat Sheet](#)

[Terracycle](#)

[Larry Zirkle, Total Reclaim](#)

Home/decorating

- [Resource Revival](#) Wall clock made of recycled bicycle parts
- A [Push Reel Lawn Mower](#) that doesn't require fuel to run.
- [Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day Products](#) household cleaning products made of natural and biodegradable ingredients.
- [Whit McLeod's](#) Wine Barrel Folding Chair constructed from discarded wine barrels.
- [Protect our Earth](#) glasses made of recycled wine bottles.
- Hand made notebooks from [Papergeist](#), made with recycled paper and old vinyl record covers.

Wine/Beverages

- [Bagder Mountain](#) Organic Wine: pesticide, fertilizer, and herbicide-free.
- [Brooklyn Brewery](#) beers (The company uses 100% wind generated electricity).
- [Wolaver's](#) certified organic ales made with energy efficient processes by environmentally conscious producers.

Outdoors/sports

- [Simple](#) shoes and boots made from recycled tires and fabrics.
- For the adventurous type, environmentally friendly [camping gear](#) and a planned vacation to the outdoors.
- [Electik Motion's](#) electric bicycles and scooters for environmentally conscious transportation and recreation.

Other ideas

- [Aubrey's](#) organic and natural make-up and body care products.
- Membership to a museum, such as [The American Museum of Natural History](#), showcasing a climate change exhibit, or [The American Folk Arts Museum](#) with a "Recycling and Resourcefulness: Quilts of the 1930s" exhibit.
- [Eco-artware's](#) stuffed animals made from recycled sweaters.
- A subscription to an environmentally friendly magazine (make sure the magazine is printed on recycled paper).
- Reusable [canvas](#) shopping bags for groceries.

Recycle your Cell Phone this holiday season



During the holidays, many people will be replacing old cell phones with newer, shinier models. Cell phones contain hazardous substances, so please don't throw them out in the trash! Instead, **RECYCLE YOUR CELL PHONES and other e-waste this holiday season. It's as easy as 1-2-3:**

1. Watch INFORM's video, [The Secret Life of Cell Phones](#)
2. Find out more about how to [keep your old phones out of landfills.](#)
3. Download our [free mail-in label](#) today to make sure your cell phone is recycled responsibly.

If you live in New York, Maine or California, you can drop off your used cell phones at any service provider for easy recycling (they are required by law to take them back).

Get those old cell phones out of the sock drawer, collect them from friends, family members and neighbors (along with batteries, chargers and accessories), and keep these valuable but toxic objects from polluting our environment and our health! Help us get the word out by [sharing this message with a friend.](#)

PROFILE: Global Footprint Network



According to the Global Footprint Network, humanity uses the equivalent of 1.3 planets to provide the amount of resources we consume and absorb the waste we produce. This means it now takes the Earth one year and four months to regenerate what we deplete in a year. [Read more.](#) {see article below}

Support our Work

If you have ever turned to INFORM to learn more about an issue or to help you solve a challenge, [please contribute \\$10, \\$20, or \\$30 to our online fundraising campaign](#) and help us reach our goal of raising \$25,000 by year-end.

You count on INFORM to bring you well-researched, ground-breaking information about what government, business and citizens can do to safeguard the environment.

We count on you to make our work possible. It is the support of individuals like you that enables us to pursue our mission of educating the public about the environmental impacts of our economy. Today, in these difficult times, we need your support more than ever.

Please make a donation on behalf of increased environmental literacy. [Give to INFORM today!](#)



Help us **PRESERVE** the environment, **PROTECT** human health and **INFORM** the public.

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INFORM, Inc. is dedicated to educating the public about the effects of human activity on the environment and public health. Our goal is to empower citizens, business and government to adopt practices and policies that will sustain our planet for future generations.

PROFILE

Global Footprint Network

“We could go to ecological bankruptcy, if we continue to use more than what nature can regenerate.”
-- Mathis Wackernagel, co-founder

According to the Global Footprint Network, humanity uses the equivalent of 1.3 planets to provide the amount of resources we consume and absorb the waste we produce. This means it now takes the Earth one year and four months to regenerate what we deplete in a year.

In 2006, the global ecological footprint outpaced the Earth's biological capacity by 30 percent. This trend is increasing. In fact, on September 23rd of this year, we passed “[Overshoot Day](#),” the day the human ecological footprint exceeded the Earth's biocapacity¹ and began living beyond its ecological means. Since then, we have been engaged in the ecological equivalent of deficit spending: our rate of resource consumption is exceeding the rate at which those resources can be naturally replenished.

Conceived of in 1990 by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees at the University of British Columbia, the ecological footprint is used by scientists, businesses, governments, agencies, institutions, and individuals working to monitor ecological resource use and to advance sustainable development. The ecological footprint has emerged as the world's premier measure of humanity's demand on nature. It uses current technology to quantify the amount of land and water area a human population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb the wastes it produces.

Want to find out about your personal footprint? Click [here](#).

The Global Footprint Network was formally established in 2003 and encourages the use of this resource accounting tool to help us manage our ecological assets more wisely and take personal and collective action enabling all people to live well, within the means of one planet.

Coupled with various other environmental groups, the Global Footprint Network biennially publishes ‘[The Living Planet Report](#),’ revealing the “extent of human pressure on the planet, how it compares across nations, and how it is impacting the natural world.”² As stated on Ecological Footprint Network's website, it is likely that the countries and regions with surplus ecological reserves, and not the ones relying on continued ecological deficit spending, will emerge as the robust and sustainable economies and societies of the future.

¹ This is calculated by dividing world biocapacity by the global ecological footprint, then multiplying by 365= 267th day= 9.23.08

² The Global Footprint Network website (December 2008):
http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/world_footprint/

The Network seeks to incite decision-makers at all levels in society and within powerful institutions to use the Footprint and kindle a global movement to end ecological overshoot. Through its [programs](#), it intends to engender solutions and expects to achieve results that will redirect billions of dollars of investment flows toward making sustainable human development a reality.

Together with hundreds of individuals, 200 cities, 23 nations, leading business, scientists, NGOs, academics and their 90-plus global partners on six continents, the Network aims to apply the Footprint to practical projects and spark a global dialogue about how we can facilitate change to create a “one-planet future.” **Accurately measuring human impact on the Earth so that we can make informed choices about consumption is the important first step in creating a one-planet future.**

For more information on which Footprint Calculator to use, check out:

http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/frequently_asked_questions/

For more detailed information about The Global Footprint Network, please visit:

<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/>