

Celebrated every April 22, Earth Day is the largest and most celebrated environmental event worldwide. The original concept for Earth Day was born in 1962 out of concerns regarding the environment and conservation issues. The “brain child” of former U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisconsin), Earth Day has played a significant role in putting environmental issues into the mainstream national political agenda.

To this day, Earth Day continues to be a day to create new ideas for environmental progress, as well as a way to celebrate gains that have already been made and renew a commitment to save the planet.

HISTORY

In 1963, Nelson persuaded President John F. Kennedy to call attention to such issues, and in September of that year, Kennedy began a five-day, eleven-state conservation tour. Another six years passed before Senator Nelson proposed the idea to hold an Earth Day event in the form it is today.

At that time, anti-Vietnam War demonstrations were being held on college campuses nationwide, and Nelson believed the same kind of demonstration could be held to teach the country about changes that needed to be made to help the environment.

In the early spring of 1970, Nelson proposed to hold a nationwide grassroots demonstration. On April 22, the first Earth Day was held. About twenty-million people, two-thousand colleges and universities, ten-thousand grammar and high schools, and one-thousand communities came together to organize coast-to-coast rallies. Since then, Earth Day has spread all over the planet. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was established and clean air and water acts were passed by the U.S. Congress as a result of the event.

EARTH DAY EVERY DAY:

Ten Small Actions That Can Make a Big Difference!

1. Recycle More

- Recycle aluminum, plastic, glass, cardboard, and newspapers whenever possible.
- Buy recycled paper (and other products) and then recycle it again.

2. Reuse More

- Use fewer plastic grocery bags or use your own cloth bag. Recycle your plastic bags.
- Don't use disposable silverware or dishes.

3. Pollute Less

- Carpool to work, utilize public transportation, or ride your bike to reduce CO₂ output.
- Buy products with the least amount of packaging to encourage less waste.

4. Use Less Energy

- Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs. They use ¼ of the energy that incandescent bulbs use.
- Purchase Energy Star qualified appliances and furnaces. They use less energy and meet energy efficiency criteria set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy.

5. Use Less Water

- Check for leaks and repair them quickly.
- Don't over water your lawn or garden.

6. Preserve Water Quality

- Be sure to dispose of motor oil, antifreeze, and lawn/garden chemicals properly. If put into the ground, these end up in our wells, reservoirs, rivers, bays, and oceans.
- Test your drinking water for contaminants and filter your water if necessary.

7. Protect Your Health

- Make sure your school or office building does not have indoor air quality problems.
- Avoid household cleaning products containing hazardous ingredients, when possible. Follow precautions.

8. Protect Forests

- Print on both sides of a piece of paper whenever possible.
- Use certified lumber, which supports responsible forest management.

9. Preserve Ocean Life

- Avoid purchasing over-fished populations like Chilean Sea Bass and Atlantic Swordfish.
- Try other options harvested on a sustainable basis like Wild Alaskan Salmon and Mahi-mahi.

10. Protect Endangered Species

- Don't buy souvenirs that are made with endangered species' body parts, such as ivory.
- Buy fewer natural resources: overuse can lead to habitat destruction.

GET INVOLVED:

Ways to Celebrate Earth Day in Your Community.

- Have an Earth Day parade with alternatives like bikes and other non-motorized vehicles
- Organize a community clean-up day
- Have a food festival with locally-grown, organic produce
- Plant trees or shrubs
- Hold poster or essay contests with environmentally-friendly prizes
- Paint an Earth Day mural
- Have a community-wide hazardous waste collection
- Collect donations to give to the environmental protection organization of your choice
- Give awards or plant trees in honor of environmentally-responsible community members
- Hold a walk-a-thon or hike in a local park or nearby forest
- Create a community garden

Did You Know?

- 2.5 billion bags a year would be saved if 25% of U.S. families used 10 fewer plastic bags a month.
- If you wanted to account for all the trees being cut down each day in the world, you would have to shout “Timber” more than 50 times a second.
- If every 75 watt light bulb were replaced with energy efficient bulbs, one ton of carbon dioxide would be prevented from being released into the air.
- The glaciers of Glacier National Park are expected to disappear by 2030 because of rising temperatures from climate change.
- 380 gallons of oil are saved for every ton of recycled office paper used.
- The energy from one recycled aluminum can could operate a TV set for three hours.
- Over the next century, ¼ of all mammal species will be threatened with extinction.
- 6.6 gallons of drinking water can be contaminated with one drop of oil.
- Per car, driving 15 miles less each week would save 900 lbs of CO₂ per year.

For more information about Earth Day, visit:

- www.earthday.gov
- www.earthday.net

Remember the 10 Easy Ways You Can Make a Difference!

- Recycle More
- Reuse More
- Pollute Less
- Use Less Energy
- Use Less Water
- Preserve Water Quality
- Protect Your Health
- Protect Forests
- Preserve Ocean Life
- Protect Endangered Species

Earth Day is Every Day!



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Dedicated to a greater understanding of the science and value of chemistry

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CHEMICAL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

SOLUTIONS BULLETIN

Earth Day

Presented by the contributors of the Chemical Educational Foundation, furthering a shared goal of promoting chemical safety and protecting the environment.

An Informational Bulletin on Earth Day and How You Can Participate in Your Community

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