



MEDIA RELEASE

Easy steps to make every day Earth Day

Immediate Release

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'It's our turn to lead.' The theme for this year's Earth Day calls on all citizens around the globe to unite and show support for the protection of a beautiful and green environment. The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) encourages all South Africans to take this challenge of a clean environment head-on by reducing consumption at home.

Earth Day is celebrated annually on 22 April. Now in its 45th year, Earth Day is one of the largest observances in the world with one billion people participating in activities each year*. The IWMSA urges South Africans to take a stand all year round and join its plight for a healthy future for everyone.

"To reduce personal consumption is not always an easy task to tackle, but there are a few doable steps you can follow throughout the year to help protect our environment for future generations; you may also save money in the process," says Dr Suzan Oelofse, President of the IWMSA.

Here are five easy steps to reduce consumption and make every day Earth Day:

1. Sort your cupboards and closets first before hitting the shops

"With the winter months approaching, sorting your cupboards and closets will help you to focus on the things you really need," guides Oelofse. Sort clothes that are too big, too small or is simply not you anymore and donate these items to the less-privileged. "Donations are a form of re-use which will cut your waste while helping people in need, especially during winter time," adds Oelofse.

2. Plan your shopping trip

Window-shopping only leads you to temptation to buy the things that you don't necessarily need. "Impulsive purchases are often left unused and eventually ends up in the dustbin," shares Oelofse. "Rather draw up a shopping list of the things you need beforehand. This is especially important when purchasing perishable food as it usually gets spoiled and ends up at landfill sites. The challenge to this step is to stick to the shopping list!"

3. Set up a meal planner

When cooking food, try to use the oldest ingredients first before its shelf life expires. Oelofse advises to regularly rotate or sort cupboards according to shelf life as it will help you to access your oldest

stock quicker and easier. "Prepare just enough food for the amount of people that will be enjoying the meal. If there is food left over, use it for a delicious soup or start your own home composting system. Cooking just enough food will cut your waste and even save electricity," shares Oelofse.

4. Challenge yourself to see how little you can get by with

"Rather than spending money on the latest and newest products, challenge yourself to see with how little you can get along with. A little really does go a long way," suggests Oelofse. This will not only save you money, but save the environment's valuable resources.

5. Buy eco-products

Melissa Baird, editor of Green Home magazine, says, "We are seeing more eco-products making its way onto shopping shelves that are good for the environment and great for your home as they don't contain harsh chemicals. Consumers should shop around and find out what works for them when making new choices." For those who are unsure where to start, visit The Green Home Fair at Brooklyn Mall from 27 to 28 June 2015. The Fair forms part of the annual Sustainability Week and consumers will be treated to the latest in-home and décor products.

With these easy steps, everyone can make every day Earth Day. "Protecting our earth through reduced consumerism, saves you money! It is a win-win situation," concludes Oelofse.

For more information on the IWMSA, visit www.iwmsa.co.za. The IWMSA is also on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/IWMSA>) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/iwmsa>).

Sustainability Week is taking place from 23 to 28 June 2015. For more information on Sustainability Week and the Green Home Fair, visit www.sustainabilityweek.co.za.

* <http://www.earthday.org/node/68>

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