

Make Recycling Fun And Easy For The Whole Family

(StatePoint) You may be surprised to learn a small change in habit can make a huge impact on Mother Earth. Getting your whole family involved in something as simple as recycling can really make a difference and can even be fun and easy.

Now's a great time to get the family started on recycling in honor of Earth Day, which is being celebrated on April 22.

Take glass, for instance. All those jars of pasta sauce, beverage bottles and mayonnaise containers you burn through can really pile up.

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to power a 60-watt bulb for four hours, a computer for 30 minutes or a television for 20 minutes. That's just one bottle!

Each American discards approximately 500 pounds of glass per year, sending more than 11 million tons to landfills. Sadly, every ton that ends up in the landfill could have been recycled.

Here's how to get the whole family involved in recycling:

- Set basic ground rules for different family members. Figure out who will be responsible for what recycling jobs and then have a practice session.
- Reward good behavior! Let the family member in charge of recycling choose a special treat. Rotate this task so everyone enjoys the fruits of your family's recycling labor.
- Post some easy instructions near your recycling area, listing what items should be recycled and any necessary handling instructions for them.
- Make sure your storage containers are low enough for kids to reach, but high enough to make sorting easy. Consider placing them on wheels to make moving them a snap.
- To make things simpler for young children, label your recycling containers or bins by putting pictures on them of what goes inside or by color-coding or marking them.
- You can make decorating your containers a family affair – especially if they will be visible to family members and



Recycle your family's used bottles instead of throwing them out.

visitors. You can paint them, cover them with wallpaper or even decorate them more fancifully to match your room's decor. If your recycling is collected curbside, be sure decorated bins meet local regulations, or use different containers outside.

- Always have supplies on-hand, such as liner bags or twine for bundling newspaper. Package everything according to local regulations.

Of course, the best incentive for your family may be knowing you are doing your part to help the environment by helping food packagers reuse such materials as glass.

"Because glass is made from all-natural raw materials, it is the only type of packaging that is 100 percent recyclable. Better yet, it's endlessly recyclable, which means it remains as pure and strong as the original container each time it goes through the recycling system," says Paul Smith, manager of recycled glass for O-I, the world's largest manufacturer of glass containers and largest consumer of recycled glass.

By relying on recycled glass to make new containers, manufacturers like O-I save energy and materials, decrease greenhouse gas emissions and lessen landfill loads.

"We need to save energy, our landfills and our planet," says Smith. "Every recycled bottle helps create a cleaner, more efficient planet."

To learn more about how you and your family can do your part one bottle at a time, visit www.GPI.org on the Internet.
