

TOP 10 WAYS TO BE “BLUE”

Conservation with Water in Mind

According to studies, zoo and aquarium guests like you are more knowledgeable and interested in conservation than most people. Discover below how you can increase your impact in making our world a better place for animals and each other.

1. Reduce Thirsty Lawns

An average lawn adds up to 100,000 gallons a year on your water bill – the same as flushing a toilet over 170 times every day for a year. You can trim your water bill by evaluating your space needs and replacing excess grass with native trees, plants, and flowers. Native plants thrive in regular rainfall and require far less upkeep than fast growing grass.

2. Save Water in the House

Modern low-flow showerheads can save a family of four up to 20,000 gallons of water a year while still providing an invigorating shower – you can increase the savings by taking shorter showers and turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth. Test the water-saving setting on your dishwasher to see if it works for your family -- or wash dishes with water in the sink, instead of letting the water run. These simple strategies also save money on your energy bill as heated water isn't running down the drain.

3. Enjoy a Cold Drink

Ever find yourself standing around running the faucet waiting to get a drink of cold water? Save time and get a much cooler drink by filling a pitcher and keeping it in the refrigerator.

4. Keep Water Safe

Many of the storm sewers in our neighborhoods drain directly to a local water source. Materials like paint, oil, and other household products dumped in them will end up in our water – affecting all of us as well as aquatic plants and animals.

5. Tidy Up after Fido

Animal waste is a big factor in bacterial contamination of streams, rivers, and lakes resulting in beach closings. When walking your dog, be sure to bring along a plastic bag or pooper-scooper. Relationships with your human and aquatic neighbors will be the better for it.

6. Eat Smart

Many of the world's fisheries are at risk -- as are livelihoods of the people who earn a living on the sea. To supply consumer demand, some fish like swordfish and shark are being caught faster than they can reproduce. Other creatures like sea turtles and dolphins are accidentally caught in nets. You can help by enjoying seafood that is caught or raised sustainably as recommended by marine conservation organizations like Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program.

7. Reduce Litter

Besides making an area ugly, garbage can kill. Ordinary trash like discarded fishing line, balloons, and especially plastic bags choke or entangle marine life killing an estimated 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles and one million birds each year. Keeping trash where it belongs saves our dolphins, seals, and more!

8. Use Chemicals Carefully

Save money and time by making wise choices when it comes to applying fertilizers and pesticides. Excess runoff from lawns pollutes rivers and oceans poisoning amphibians, fish, and other creatures as well as closing lakes and bays for swimming and fishing.

9. Plan Trips

By planning and combining trips, you save time and gas money by driving less. You'll also help ocean life and people who live or vacation along the coasts. Scientists have documented massive coral reef die-offs caused in part by climate change, which scientists attribute in part to burning fossil fuels. Reefs help protect coastal communities from weather disasters, bring tourism dollars, and provide food for millions of people. Adjusting the thermostat a couple degrees helps in the same way!

10. Learn for the Future

Almost every day researchers gain new understanding about our rivers, lakes, and oceans and the wondrous life they contain. Explore your local aquarium or zoo to discover for yourself some of these wonders so you can make informed decisions about our water planet for yourself, your children, and your children's children.

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