

Star-Telegram

New ways to be kind to the Earth

From repurposing cardboard to buying clothes made of water bottles, there are myriad ways to embrace sustainability and leave a softer footprint

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PHOTO COURTESY OF SECOND CHANCE
PALLET

We all know that we should do more to protect the Earth, and valuing the environment usually starts with basic habits like recycling paper, cans and plastic whenever possible.

Big changes often come about from the small actions of many people, however, and today, Earth Day, offers us a chance to consider additional ways to live a “greener” life.

They include taking steps like buying things made with reclaimed and recycled materials, and using products and services that help us leave softer footprints on our beloved planet.

Consider this short list of things to do — and use — to promote a plan to incorporate more recycled goods and sustainable habits into your life, including a few repurposed decorative items that may keep the topic fresh on your mind year-round.

Wood with a story

It has to bring a smile to see sturdy warehouse and product storage lumber get a second life, and reclaimed pallets are both popular and accessible for DIY-ers.

Companies like Second Chance Pallets in Saginaw offer both new and used pallets, and you'll often find such items in businesses like breweries and watering holes, which rock the look with bar stools and tables made from old pallets displaying the original labels and flaws.

Old pallets work in residential settings as well, especially on patios, fashioned into wall panels or rustic furnishings like bookshelves and side tables.

www.2ndchancepallets.com (<http://www.2ndchancepallets.com/>).

Vintage variety

Create a cozy conversational area and some fun table talk with this repurposed coffee urn lamp. You may even be inspired to take out your cups and saucers and serve your guests coffee or tea, *Downton Abbey* style.

Made of recycled silver (that you can enjoy without polishing), it is 23 inches high. The shade is 9 1/2 inches deep and 13 inches wide. \$250, Wreare.

Dream weaver

Adding flair to display or storage options, these mesh-looking bowls practically beg to be touched, although they're made from telephone wire. Designer Marisa Fick-Jordaan began Zenzulu out of a desire to mix traditional weaving with industrial materials while teaching unemployed South African women how to weave.

Available in silver, black, copper and a checkerboard pattern. Small bowls \$115, charger/checkerboard bowl \$150, Kimbell Piano Pavilion gift shop.

Recycling rain

When summer drought conditions bring on watering restrictions, a rainwater-collection barrel can help banish the brown that threatens to overtake many Texas lawns, eliminate water waste and lower water bills to boot.

Whole Foods Market carries 55-gallon Epoch Rain Barrels (about \$115), made of repurposed, high-quality, food-grade containers and produced using “lean manufacturing” processes that Epoch officials say reduce environmental waste.

The drums do not contain any Bisphenol A (BPA), and they guard against sunlight penetration, which thwarts bacteria and mosquito infestation. Screens at the top of the barrels also help keep debris and insects at bay. www.wholefoodsmarket.com (<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/>).

A cardboard reboot

Best Price Moving Boxes in Keller is among companies that sell gently used moving boxes, extending the containers’ usefulness and keeping them out of our landfills longer.

The company also buys them back from customers.

“You’re not going to get rich selling your boxes to us, but you might get your dinner paid for that day,” co-owner Hix Hardy says. “It’s a good combination not to just go green, but to get some green back.”

According to the company’s website, recycling 1 ton of cardboard rescues 17 trees that would have been cut down and used for pulp and saves 7,000 gallons of water and 11 barrels of oil. Who knew? www.bestpriceboxes.com (<http://www.bestpriceboxes.com/>).

Rewired

A thoughtful gift for the techies in your life, this picture frame constructed from pre-consumer computer parts and fiberboard pays it forward to artisans from a group called Village Crafts in Sarai Tarin, India.

Through a fair trade program called TARA (Trade Alternative Reform Action), the workers are able sell their products internationally and enjoy benefits like skills training, a savings program and medical insurance.

Frames are sized 6.5 by 8.5 inches (fitting a 4-by-6-inch photo). \$24, Ten Thousand

Villages.

Sustainably stylish

If you're looking for a fashion find that lets you wear your earth-friendly views on more than just your sleeve, look to the Threads 4 Thought line, available at stores ranging from Nordstrom to Whole Foods.

The company uses earth-friendly materials such as organic cotton and recycled water bottles to produce sleek, stylish designs that seem to get softer with each wash. (Environmental experts say that, although most plastic water bottles are 100 percent recyclable, from 80 to 90 percent are inappropriately discarded instead.)

Threads 4 Thought is a forward-thinking company, and its spring collection of vibrant-patterned skirts and dresses has just hit the shelves and is also available online at www.threadsforthought.com (<http://www.threadsforthought.com/>).

WHERE TO SHOP

Best Price Moving Boxes

500 N. Main St.

Keller

817-337-2699

www.bestpriceboxes.com (<http://www.bestpriceboxes.com/>)

Nordstrom

Multiple locations

<http://shop.nordstrom.com> (<http://shop.nordstrom.com/>)

Renzo Piano Pavilion Gift Store

Kimbell Art Museum

3333 Camp Bowie Blvd.

Fort Worth

817-332-8451

2nd Chance Pallets

213 E. McLeroy Blvd.

Saginaw

817-847-8005

www.2ndchancepallets.com (<http://www.2ndchancepallets.com/>)

Ten Thousand Villages

4601 West Freeway, Suite 220

Fort Worth

817-570-0371

www.tenthousandvillages.com (<http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/>)

Whole Foods

Multiple locations

www.wholefoodsmarket.com (<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/>)

Wrare

2955 Crockett St.

Fort Worth

817-885-8881