

## Green Pet Tips for Earth Day

**Here are a few green tips to help your pet reduce its “paw print” on Mother Earth and help build your brand.**



- Clean up after your pets.
  - Use biodegradable bags to collect your dog's waste. Ordinary plastic bags can take decades to decompose in landfills.
  - Avoid clumping clay litter for cats. Not only is the clay strip-mined (which is bad for our planet), there are usually several chemicals added to this type of litter which can be harmful for the cat and the environment. There are several environmentally friendly alternatives such as litter made of plant sources or recycled newspaper.
- Walk to the Dog Park vs. driving. It saves on fossil fuel and is healthy for both of you.
- Feed a natural or organic pet food for optimal health and well-being. These foods provide nutrients which are minimally processed and preserved with natural substances.
- Limit the amount of "fish food" you give your pet. Pets represent a threat to fish stocks worldwide. The pet food industry uses approximately 10% of the global supply of forage fish. Too much of certain fish may also pose an increased risk of mercury exposure for your pet. Consider alternating between fish and other meat sources to keep your pet happy.
- Try recycled toys and beds. There are now many toys and bedding made from recycled materials or sustainable fibers to help lessen your pet's carbon pawprint! You can even try making toys out of old socks and rope and beds out of old blankets and towels. Also, try recycled ID tags on for size!
- Water conservation. Instead of leaving the spigot running during bath time, try a handheld attachment that turns on and off to decrease the amount of water used during bath time. Use warm (not hot) water to save energy.
- Keeping cool and warm: To save energy during the winter months, use pet sweaters/clothing to keep your pet warm instead of turning up the thermostat. In the summer, instead of turning the air-conditioner on full blast, consider chilled pet bed inserts to keep your pet comfortable. Ice cubes are a nice cooling "treat" for dogs.
- Spay or Neuter your pet. Pet overpopulation is a real problem—shelters are over-run and homeless pets are everywhere taxing environmental resources. Only one in four dogs finds a permanent loving home. When it comes time for your next pet, support adoption as part of a green lifestyle.

- Grooming: use all environmentally safe bath products including shampoo, conditioner, and moisturizing spray. Select shampoos and grooming products that are phosphate-free and free from chemicals so the dirty bath water is as environmentally friendly as possible.
- **Adopt a “recycled” pet**  
Pets at shelters and rescues can become your recycled pet! Someone careless may have thrown away their pet, but that doesn’t make them any less valuable or wonderful as your “new” family friend.

#### Marketing Ideas for your clinic:

- Post Green Tips on your website, newsletter or on Facebook.
- Provide a list of environmentally friendly pet products and services in your area or online.
- Hold a recycling drive: Collect newspapers, blankets/towels and pet food; donate them to the local animal shelter.
- Post pets available for adoption all week on your Facebook page from your clinic or a local shelter.
- Ask clients to share their best ‘rescued pet’ story on Facebook; offer prizes.
- Offer a “clinic special” to anyone who adopts from a local shelter this week. (i.e. food, vaccines, toys provided by your vendor partners)
- Offer eco-friendly bathing and grooming specials.

Here are a few fun signs to use:

