Attorney General Martha Coakley's

2009 Green Calendar

Attorney General's Office
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Boston, MA 02108
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www.mass.gov/ago

A message from Attorney General Martha Coakley

This year's consumer calendar focuses on "being green" – energy efficiency and tips, recycling, environmental health and safety, and many other ways to conserve resources and be mindful of our planet.

The Attorney General's Office provides additional information on energy, utilities, and the environment on our website, www.mass.gov/ago/energy.

I hope you find this to be a valuable tool throughout 2009 and I encourage you to review this calendar and share the tips with those close to you.

To contact the Attorney General's Office, call (617) 727-2200, or visit us at www.mass.gov/ago.

Martha Coakley

Resources

Resources
Resources

Attorney General's Office
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Phone: (617) 727-2200
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Consumer Complaint
& Information Hotline:
(617) 727-8400

Elder Hotline: (888) 243-5337

Springfield Office
1350 Main Street, 4th Floor
Springfield, MA 01103
Phone: (413) 784-1240

New Bedford Office
105 William Street, 1st Floor
New Bedford, MA 02740
Phone: (508) 990-9700

Worcester Office
One Exchange Place
Worcester, MA 01608
Phone: (508) 792-7600

Massachusetts Department of
Environmental Protection (MassDEP)
One Winter Street
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 292-5500
1-888-304-1133 toll-free
1-888-VIOLATE to report crime
www.mass.gov/dep

Massachusetts Department of
Public Utilities (DPU)
One South Station, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02110
(617) 305-3500
www.mass.gov/dpu

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
One Congress St., Suite 1100
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 918-1111
1-888-372-7341 toll-free
1-888-STAR-YES EnergySTAR hotline
www.epa.gov
www.energystar.gov

Massachusetts Association
for Community Action
105 Chauncy Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 357-6086
www.masscap.org

Massachusetts Department of
Telecommunications and Cable
One South Station, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
(617) 305-3580
1-800-392-6066 toll-free consumer line
www.mass.gov/dtc

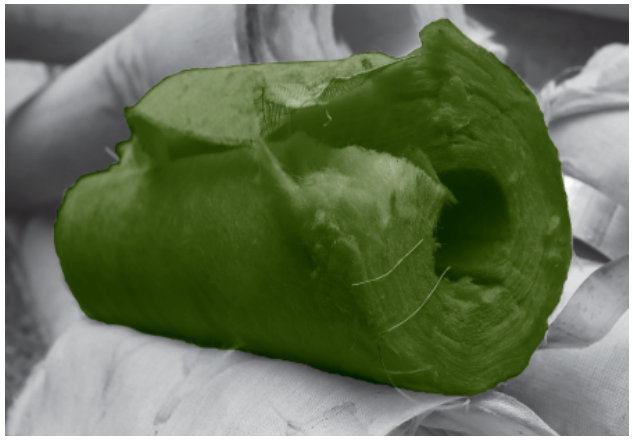
Massachusetts Department of Public Health,
Bureau of Environmental Health
250 Washington Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 624-5757
(617) 624-5286 TTY
www.mass.gov/dph/environmental_health

WEATHERIZATION

WEATHERIZATION
WEATHERIZATION

Every home needs proper ventilation, but cracks or openings in the house may allow too much cold air in the winter and too much moisture in the summer. Insulate rooms and replace old windows. Use caulking and weather-stripping on all doors and windows. Insulate the first six feet of hot and cold water pipes that are connected to the water heater. Weatherizing your home will save money, improve building durability, and prevent mold and mildew from building up that can cause health problems for you and your family.

Types of weatherization include: air sealing to reduce infiltration; insulating attics, sidewalls and floors, as well as pipes and ducts; and updating or repairing windows or appliances.



JANUARY

JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				New Year's Day 1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Weatherization assistance is available to help low-income households reduce heating bills by providing comprehensive home energy conservation services. For more information, visit the AGO website at www.mass.gov/ago/energy and view the "Energy Resource Guide," or visit www.energybucks.com.

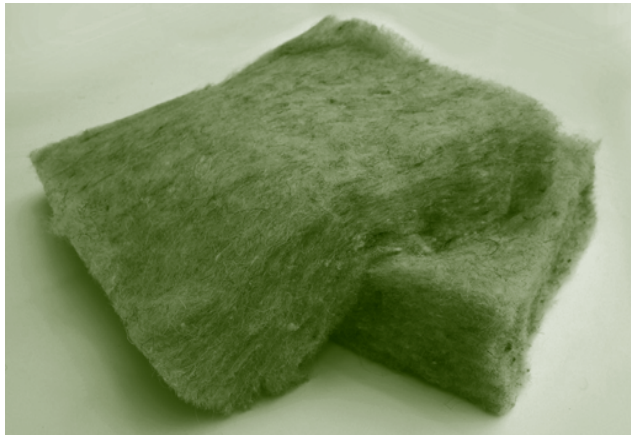
Energy Audits

Energy Audits
Energy Audits

An energy audit helps you to assess how much energy your home consumes and is the first step towards making your home more energy efficient. This will help you save money and be more “green.”

Start by looking for air leaks in places like electrical outlets, switch plates, window frames, baseboards, weather stripping around doors, fireplaces and attics, and wall or window mounted air conditioners.

A professional energy auditor will advise you on the cost savings you could achieve by reducing drafts, adding insulation, and replacing inefficient heating systems and/or windows. A free audit may be available through your electric or gas utility – they are funded as part of the electric or gas utility rates we all pay.



FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	President's Day 16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

For more guidance on conducting energy audits, visit www.massSAVE.com. ENERGY STAR also provides a "Home Energy Yardstick" application on their website, www.energystar.gov, to compare your home's energy efficiency to similar homes across the country and get recommendations for energy-saving home improvements from ENERGY STAR. The tool asks for information such as your zip code, age, square footage, and number of occupants, plus information from your utility bills over the previous 12 months.

EFFICIENCY

Lighting. Energy for lighting accounts for about 10% of your electric bill. Look at the wattage of all of the light bulbs at home and consider switching to lower wattage bulbs. Replace standard incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), especially for areas where lights are on for extended periods of time. CFLs use 75% less energy, last up to 10 times longer, produce the same amount of light, and do not get as hot as traditional light bulbs.

Turn Off Appliances. Approximately 20% of energy is still being used even if the appliance is not on. Unplug small appliances when they are not in use. Consider switching off the appliances by using a surge protector power strip at the end of the day, which is easier and has the added benefit of protecting the appliance as well.

MARCH

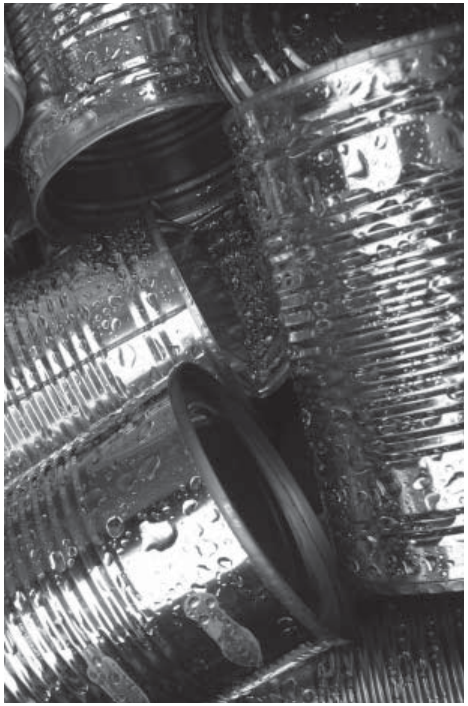
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

For more energy efficiency ideas, or to learn about no-interest loans to replace inefficient systems in your home, visit www.massSAVE.com. To learn about ENERGY STAR rated appliances, visit www.energystar.gov.

Re-Use

Re-use items by repairing, repurposing, or extending the useful life of something that you already have. The benefits include cost savings, energy savings, and keeping unnecessary items out of our landfills. There are more than 6,000 re-use centers around the country, from specialized programs for building materials or unneeded materials to local nonprofit programs.

You can consider: bringing a coffee mug to the office instead of using a paper cup each day; keeping your car longer instead of buying a new one; donating unwanted clothing or household goods to charity; sharing tools and machinery with neighbors; repairing clothing and shoes instead of throwing them away; and bringing reusable bags to the supermarket in lieu of taking your items home in paper or plastic bags each time you shop.



APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 Patriots' Day	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

For more tips on reuse, visit the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection website at www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reducere.htm. For more information on reusing and recycling household items, visit www.freecycle.org, www.myrecycle.org, or www.reuseitnetwork.org.

Recycle

Recycle
Recycle

We could recycle 75% of what we throw in the trash each week. However, only 25% of Massachusetts residents recycle each year. In addition to keeping plastics and other items out of landfills, recycling also saves energy while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2006, it took more than 17 million barrels of oil to produce all the plastic bottles we used. Recycling just one ton of plastic bottles saves approximately 3.8 barrels of oil and 7.4 cubic yards of landfill space. Recycled plastic bottles make hundreds of everyday products, including fleece jackets, carpeting, and lumber for outdoor decking.

Though curbside recycling differs in every community, the most commonly included materials are aluminum, glass, paper, plastic and steel.

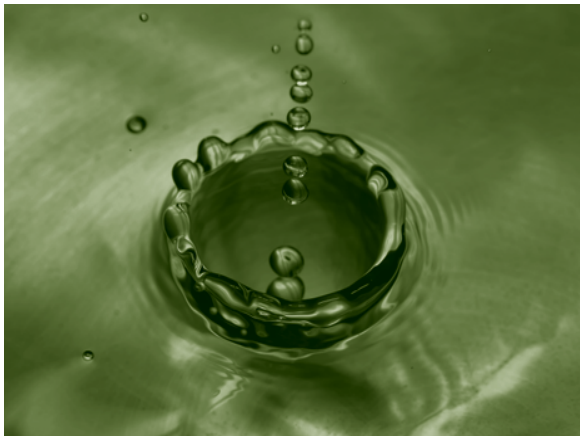
MAY

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	Memorial Day 25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

To find out about recycling in your city or town, call your local Department of Public Works, or visit the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection website at www.mass.gov/dep.

Healthy Homes

Healthy Homes
Healthy Homes



Some items in the environment can pose health risks: asbestos, carbon monoxide, mold, smoke, sun, radiation, poor air and water quality. Take simple precautions in your own home to protect yourself.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) can be found in household products like cleaning supplies, paint, adhesives, markers and others. To reduce the amount of VOCs in your home, read and adhere to product precautions, increase ventilation when using products that release VOCs, and buy or make your own non-toxic cleaners to wash, dust and freshen your home.

Lead. Some older homes may have unsafe lead levels, not only in old paint but also in your water. According to the EPA, most water filters do not remove dissolved lead. If you are concerned, call your local water and sewer department for lead testing.

JUNE

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

For more information on reducing your exposure to VOCs, visit the EPA's website at http://www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html. To learn more about lead in water, call the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Summer Tips

Summer Tips

Saving energy helps households save money and decreases peak demand on the electric grid during heat waves. Avoid non-essential power usage during the peak hours between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Cooling. Regularly service and clean your central air conditioner unit. Use properly-sized room air conditioners. Turn your air conditioner thermostat to 80 degrees or higher and turn the air conditioners off when no one is home. Use an attic fan to draw hot air out of the attic, and use a whole-house fan to draw fresh air in through windows and exhaust through roof vents.

Cooking. Use a microwave instead of the oven, or cook on a grill outside to keep cooking heat outdoors. Gas grills cause less air pollution and fewer environmental health hazards than coal or wood grills.

JULY

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	Independence Day 4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

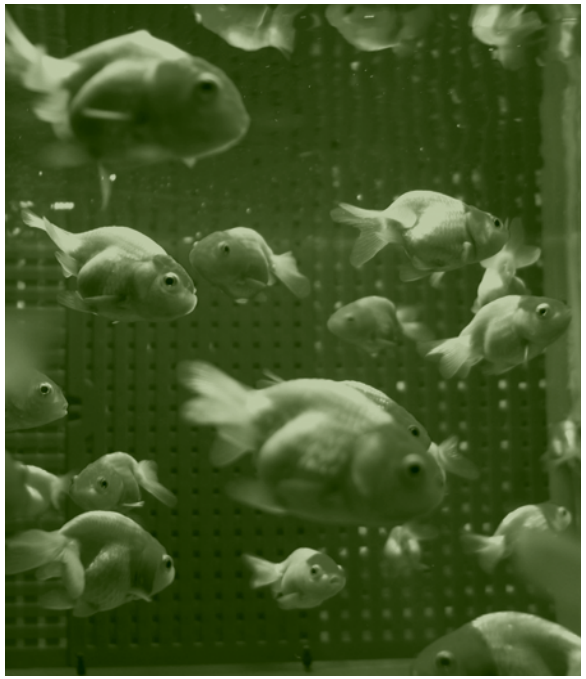
Obtain a free copy of "Guide to Energy-Efficient Cooling and Heating," by typing the word "cooling" in the search box at www.energystar.gov, or by calling 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937).

Land, Air & Water

Massachusetts residents can help preserve our natural resources by taking steps to safeguard our land, air and water and by reporting environmental violations to the appropriate agency.

Land. Avoid the use of pesticides; learn about non-chemical alternatives. Keep items out of landfills by recycling, reducing or reusing the items you have.

Air. Plant a garden or a tree which will convert carbon dioxide into oxygen. Take public transportation instead of using a car.



Water. Replace lawns with other ground covers that use less water. Shower instead of taking a bath – a 40% savings in water use. Install low-flow shower heads.

August

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

For hazardous emergencies, contact your local fire department and call the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's 24-hour Emergency Response section at 1-888-304-1133.

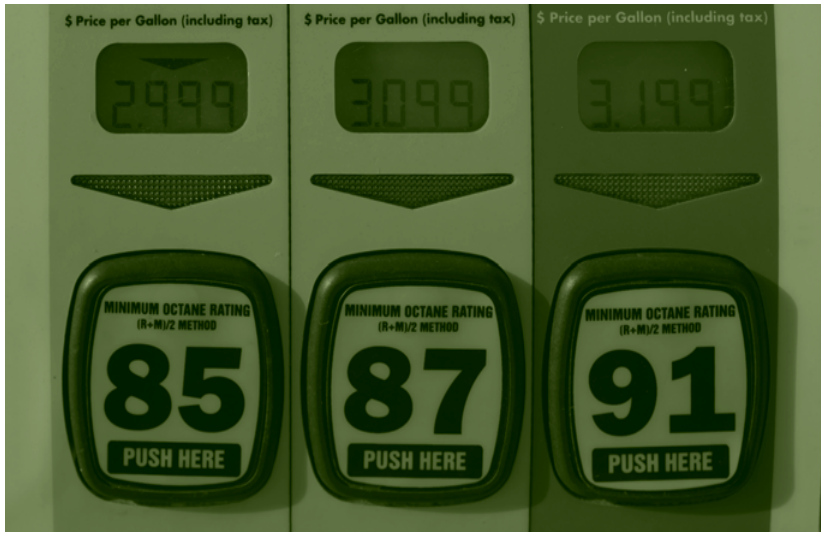
TRANSPORTATION

The U.S. Department of Energy reports that about half of all air pollution and more than 80% of air pollution in cities is produced by cars and trucks.

Your Car. For optimum fuel efficiency, always maintain and service your vehicle. Unload any unnecessary objects from your vehicle to lessen the weight. When possible, avoid stop-and-go traffic. Try to plan your errands to consolidate many outings into one or a few.

New cars. If you're in the market for a new car, consider purchasing a hybrid-electric vehicle which combines the benefits of gasoline engines and electric motors.

Alternatives. If possible, take public transportation or car pool when commuting. Try to find other ways to drive less, by using alternatives like walking or biking.

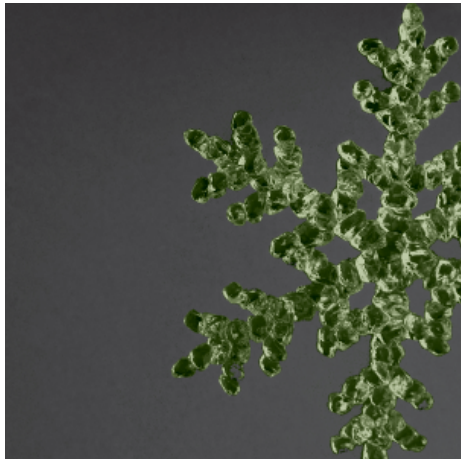


SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 LABOR DAY	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

The U.S. Department of Energy's website, www.fueleconomy.gov, provides information on fuel-efficient and environmentally-friendly auto options. The MBTA's website, www.mbta.com, provides commuters with online tools such as trip planners and service alerts.

WINTERIZE



Install programmable thermostats which can lower heat at set times when the home is not occupied. Use locks on windows and doors to make them tighter and draft resistant, and close curtains and shades at night to keep the home warmer.

Homeowners should inspect their heating and cooling equipment annually, and heating and cooling filters should be replaced at least once a year.

To prevent heat loss and keep rooms warmer, roll out rugs on floors and, if possible, replace lighter-weight curtains with heavy curtains to prevent air from leaking in.

Remove or cover air conditioners to prevent cold air from seeping through. Seal any fireplaces not in use. Close off rooms not in use.

OCTOBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Columbus Day	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

For more energy savings tips, visit the AGO website at www.mass.gov/ago/energy. NSTAR also provides seasonal energy savings tips on their website: http://www.nstaronline.com/residential/energy_efficiency/fall_winter.asp.

Shopping & Gifts

Shopping & Gifts
Shopping & Gifts

Shopping with the environment in mind will conserve resources, prevent waste, and save money.

Think Before You Buy. Consider choosing gifts made from recycled materials. Buy gently used items online or at resale shops. Buy in bulk to save money, reduce packing material waste, and save fuel with fewer trips to the store. Buy gifts that are biodegradable.

Other Tips. Invest in re-chargeable batteries. Send a free e-card instead of mailing a paper birthday or holiday card. Wrap gifts in newspaper or in a reusable cloth gift bag or basket. Bring reusable bags when shopping.

Instead of buying a gift, make a donation in someone's name to their favorite charity.

NOVEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	Veteran's Day 11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	Thanksgiving 26	27	28
29	30					

To find environmentally-friendly bags or gift ideas, search online with the keywords "reusable shopping bags" or "green shopping," or visit www.earth911.org and click on "green your shopping."

Winter Tips

Winter Tips
Winter Tips

To reduce your energy consumption, wear layers of clothing instead of turning up the thermostat. Set your thermostat no higher than 68 degrees and lower the temperature when you go to bed or when you are not at home.

Place a sheet of aluminum foil between the radiator and the wall to reflect heat back into the room. Keep shades and curtains open during the day on the south side of your home to allow solar heating, and close them at night to retain the heat.

Holiday Efficiency. For the holidays, purchase Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) instead of bulbs. LEDs use 90% less energy, are more durable, and can last years longer. Operating 10 strings of mini-LED lights as compared to 10 strings of standard mini-lights can save nearly $12 in energy costs in one month.

DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	Christmas Day 25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Community Action Programs are nonprofit organizations that help low-income people move toward greater participation in the economy at large. They offer programs that may provide fuel assistance, heating emergency assistance repairs/replacements, and/or weatherization services. Visit www.masscap.org for more information.

This calendar was printed by Standard Modern Company using soy inks on Mohawk Via paper that consists of 30% post-consumer recycled fiber. According to the leading environmental organization, Environmental Defense Fund, by using 30% post-consumer recycled fiber in the production of this calendar, the Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley has saved 8 trees, 6 million BTUs of energy, 742 pounds of carbon dioxide, 3081 gallons of wastewater and 396 pounds of solid waste. The use of 100% Green-e Certified wind power in the printing and binding of this calendar also reduces the carbon footprint of this calendar.

Many of the photos used in this calendar were offered by photographers under a Creative Commons license. Photos were provided by: Paula Bailey (May), Johnson Cameraface (April), Doug Floyd (January), Eszter Hargittai (December), Kyle McKinney (April), David Tames (May), and Suzie Veser (July).

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