

Checklist for Green Congregations: Building, Grounds, and Practices
Edited for use in Eastern Canadian Congregations
Correlated with pages in
“Environmental Guide for Congregations, Their Buildings and Grounds”
See under “manuals” at www.webofcreation.org.

Section 1. Worship (6-15)

1. ___ Use locally-grown living flowers or plants on the altar to be kept, shared or planted later outside.
2. ___ Place living plants or trees in the sanctuary to purify air.
3. ___ Use acoustic instruments as often as possible.
4. ___ Recycle where possible or safely dispose of batteries from wireless microphones.
5. ___ Use beeswax candles rather than paraffin (oil-based) wax candles.
6. ___ Provide local wine or grape juice for communion.
7. ___ Practice intinction (dipping the host/bread into the wine/juice) or have re-usable glasses (not plastic) for communion.
8. ___ Wash communion vessels/ glasses with EcoLogo dish-washing detergent.
9. ___ Provide communion bread that is whole grain, organic, and locally grown.
10. ___ Purchase fair trade palm fronds for Palm Sunday.
11. ___ Limit or eliminate use of paper for bulletins. Re-use where possible.
12. ___ Use post-consumer waste/ recycled paper for bulletins.
13. ___ Place basket near exit for recycling worship materials.
14. ___ Use natural light when and where feasible.
15. ___ Use live Christmas tree(s), and then plant outside, or send real trees to be chipped and composted.
16. ___ Use natural decorations for holidays.
17. ___ Worship outdoors on occasion.

Section 1: Office (6-15)

1. ___ Use post-consumer/ recycled paper.
2. ___ Use white or pastel color paper. Bright colors do not recycle.

3. ____ Establish paper-use guidelines to limit consumption and for efficient use/reuse.
4. ____ Limit mailings. Use e-mail.
5. ____ Recycle paper.
6. ____ Recycle ink cartridges.
7. ____ Use refilled/recycled ink and toner cartridges where possible.
8. ____ Properly dispose of batteries, computers, printers, copiers.
9. ____ Unplug computers, printers, coffee makers, and microwaves when not in use.
10. ____ Have printers and laminators in a separate room with an exhaust fan.
11. ____ Use fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate.
12. ____ Promote healthy snacks.
13. ____ Use tap water and filters rather than bottled water.
14. ____ Purchase Energy Star appliances when replacing equipment.
15. ____ Cut down on junk mail. Notify senders.

Section 1: Education (6-15)

1. ____ Art projects: avoid craft foam products and wax (oil-based) crayons.
2. ____ Use low-odour markers.
3. ____ Save on paper with reusable worksheets/word puzzles.
4. ____ Use recycled paper.
5. ____ Provide recycling bins in classrooms.
6. ____ Limit photocopies of material.
7. ____ Encourage outdoor sessions when possible.

Section 2: Coffee hour, receptions, and congregational meals (16-22)

1. ____ Use Fair-Trade coffee, tea, chocolate, etc.
2. ____ Choose healthy, organic, locally grown food items for snacks and meals.
3. ____ Share leftover food.
4. ____ Compost vegetable peelings.

5. ___ Eliminate Styrofoam, plastic cups, and disposable paper and plastic products.
6. ___ Provide a personal mug rack for coffee hour.
7. ___ Encourage people to bring their own plates, cups, and utensils to potlucks.
8. ___ Provide/collect ceramic plates and cups, glasses, and stainless-steel utensils.
9. ___ As an interim measure, use compostable plastic options now available. (Do not use biodegradable)
10. ___ Purchase efficient Energy Star dish washer and other appliances.
11. ___ Use a tankless water-heater for dish-washing.
12. ___ Use Canadian EcoLogo dish-washing detergents and cleansers.
13. ___ Use post-consumer, unbleached paper products for napkins and towels.
14. ___ Stock cloth napkins/towels. Have members launder them at home.
15. ___ For dishwashing and laundering, establish a church team, rotate use, or take a collection each time to pay a person who especially needs the money.
16. ___ Avoid running water unnecessarily.
17. ___ Turn out lights when not needed.
18. ___ Unplug stove, microwave, coffee makers and other appliances) when not in use.
19. ___ Get rid of drink machines. Use a refrigerator and honour system.
20. ___ Establish guidelines for the congregation and for outside groups using the facility.

Section 3: Energy usage: Electricity (24-40)

1. ___ Get off the grid with renewable energy: photovoltaic panels or wind turbine.
2. ___ Replace all incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs. Exit lights.
3. ___ Retrofit fluorescent lighting with the most efficient available.
4. ___ Use electric timers on some indoor and outdoor lights.
5. ___ Use motion sensitive lights.
6. ___ Use photovoltaic panels for exterior lighting or church sign.
7. ___ Use dishwasher only when full.
8. ___ Foster practices among members to turn out lights when not in use.

Section 3: Energy Usage: Heat (24-40)

1. ___ If possible, use renewable energy: geothermal, wind, passive solar for heat and hot water.
2. ___ Inspect, adjust, and clean all heating and air conditioning systems.
3. ___ Remove obstacles from vents and registers.
4. ___ Moderate heat throughout building to times and areas of use.
5. ___ Use ceiling fans for cooling, and balancing air temperature.
6. ___ Raise thermostat for cooling in summer. Lower it for heating in winter.
7. ___ Insulate hot water pipes and water heater. Use tank-less water heater.
8. ___ Purchase high-efficiency, Energy Star water heater and dish washer.
9. ___ Insulate walls and ceilings.
10. ___ Install energy-efficient windows.
11. ___ Limit meetings to certain nights/ times to reduce energy consumption.

Section 4: Paper and wood products (42-49)

1. ___ Set guidelines for paper use for office, worship, and education.
2. ___ Use recycled, chlorine-free or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) –Certified office paper and envelopes.
3. ___ Reduce paper use in office, worship and education.
4. ___ Provide handy paper recycling bins in appropriate rooms and classrooms.
5. ___ Reduce junk mail. Request senders to eliminate or ask for single catalogues.
6. ___ Purchase products—furniture/flooring/altars - using only certified wood.
7. ___ Plant trees on church property, at homes/ businesses of members, in community.

Section 5: Water use (50-63)

Kitchen

1. ___ Repair leaky faucets.
2. ___ Do not let faucet run while doing other tasks.
3. ___ Use dishwasher only when full.

4. ____ Do not contaminate water. Use only eco-friendly dishwashing detergent.
5. ____ Limit use of garbage disposals. Compost food waste.
6. ____ Install low-flow (aerator) faucets and sprays heads.
7. ____ Insulate hot water pipes.

Bathrooms

1. ____ Replace automatic flush systems with sensor, use-based flush system.
2. ____ Use hand-motion sensors on faucets.
3. ____ Install low-flow (aerator) faucets and shower heads.
4. ____ Repair leaky faucets and toilets.
5. ____ Install low-flush or composting toilets.
6. ____ Install waterless urinals.
7. ____ Insulate hot water pipes.

Fountain

1. ____ Eliminate constantly running drinking fountains.
2. ____ Repair leaking fountains.

Outdoor church property

1. ____ Landscape with diverse indigenous grasses, plants, shrubs, and trees that require little or no water.
2. ____ Landscape to absorb runoff. Avoid bare areas.
3. ____ Mulch trees, shrubs, flowers, and gardens.
4. ____ Use a mulching or reel mower and leave the clippings.
5. ____ Eliminate pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer. (Use compost instead of chemical fertilizer).
6. ____ Use a rain barrel to collect for watering.
7. ____ Water seeded areas only at dawn to avoid evaporation.
8. ____ Plant a community vegetable garden.

9. ____ Install a roof-top garden.
10. ____ Install a rain water collection system for use in toilets and laundry.

Parking areas

1. ____ Use gravel, wood chips, or permeable paving to allow water percolation in parking areas.
2. ____ Provide spaces in the parking area for trees and ground absorption.

Section 6: Environmentally Preferable cleaning products (65-70)

1. ____ Avoid the use of chlorine bleach.
2. ____ Use Canadian EcoLogo disinfectants for restrooms, kitchen, dining areas, and other surfaces that need to be sanitized. (See www.ecologo.org)
3. ____ Use vinegar and water to clean floors and windows that do not need to be sanitized.
4. ____ Use EcoLogo-certified cleaning products and waxes for all cleaning and polishing including vehicles.

Section 7: Food choices (71-80)

1. ____ Provide healthy food for snacks and meals.
2. ____ Purchase organic, locally grown food.
3. ____ Purchase Fair Trade products where feasible.
4. ____ Have a vegetarian potluck. Educate about the environmental impact of meat.
5. ____ Sponsor a world hunger meal with beans and rice or other solidarity food.
6. ____ Become a drop off point for Community Supported Agriculture. Encourage members to participate.
7. ____ Plant a community garden to share with local food banks.

Section 8: Transportation (71-80)

1. ____ Install bike racks. Encourage walking to church.
2. ____ Provide information about public transportation.
3. ____ Organize car pooling for church events.
4. ____ Purchase/ use a van to transport people to church.
5. ____ Reward pastors and other church workers for using high-mileage cars.

6. ____ Designate car-free Sundays or months for worship.
7. ____ Have the youth group check and correct tire pressure of cars in the parking lot once a season as a fund raiser.

Section 9: Indoor air quality (89-94)

1. ____ Test for asbestos, lead, formaldehyde, radon.
2. ____ Address issues of mold, mildew, bacteria, and dust mites.
3. ____ Remove carpeting.
4. ____ Avoid volatile organic compounds from certain cleaning products, furnishings, fabrics, carpets, and paints.
5. ____ Provide openable windows for air circulation.
6. ____ Put selected plants indoors to serve as air purifiers.

Section 10: Nature inside and out (95-98)

1. ____ Place plants inside entrance, near windows, at the altar, around the baptismal font, in the office, in the narthex and other gathering spaces.
2. ____ Create an outdoor worship and prayer space.
3. ____ Create a garden sanctuary or memorial garden with benches.
4. ____ On an open lot, create a wildflower meadow, a small preserve, an orchard, or a vegetable garden.

Section 11: Recycling and waste (99-110)

1. ____ Find out the recycling system in your area for all items. Aim for 100% recycling.
2. ____ Assess what you buy and the packaging involved. Avoid Styrofoam. Pre-cycle!
3. ____ Resist buying single-use items.