
Opinion

SUSTAINABLE MARBLEHEAD: Green Up Your Spring

By Jenn Mann

Posted Mar 3, 2020 at 5:32 PM

Updated Mar 3, 2020 at 5:34 PM

Part 2: Earth-friendly Tips for the Garden and Home

Only two weeks until the first day of spring! Last week we provided eco-friendly tips for the lawn and garden, this week we address spring cleaning the home.

Tips for the Home:

1. Ditch the Chemicals

Many chemicals in household cleaners can be harmful to humans and animals. Consider making your own natural products with simple, low-cost ingredients you probably already have on hand in your kitchen.

All-Purpose Cleaner: Combine 9 parts water to 1 part distilled white vinegar. Add a few drops of lemon juice to make it smell good. Use it to spray down counters and sinks, but don't use vinegar on marble as it can damage the surface.

Window Cleaner: Combine 1 part vinegar to 1 part warm water. Spray onto the glass and use a squeegee to wipe clean. Use more vinegar if your windows are really dirty.

Scouring Cleanser: Sprinkle baking soda on a damp cloth or sponge to clean ovens, burned pans, sinks and bathtubs.

2. Don't Throw It Out

Spring is a good time to go through your house and garage and identify items that you no longer need or want. Please take a few moments to think about ways in which these items might be of use to others. Here are a few ideas:

- The Magic Hat Thrift Shop at the Veterans Middle School on Pleasant Street accepts household goods, clothing, small pieces of furniture, artwork, books, puzzles, and games. All proceeds benefit the Marblehead Public Schools. Check out their Facebook page for hours of operation and more.
- The Marblehead Transfer Station has bins where you can donate clothing year-round to various nonprofit organizations. There is also a volunteer-run Swap Shed that operates every Saturday morning from May-October and the first Saturday of the month from November-April (weather permitting) where you can drop off household and other items you don't need or want and pick up items for free that others have donated.
- The Friends of the Marblehead Public Library accepts used books which it then sells throughout the year to raise funds to support the library.
- Staples will accept and even pay you for your old phones, tablets and laptops. They also accept cell phone batteries, ink and other electronics and recycle them properly.
- Many organizations like the Veterans and the Salvation Army will pick up donated clothing and other items curbside. You can google to find out how to arrange a pick-up.
- St. Andrew's Church has a rummage sale each year, this year it will be on Saturday, May 2. St. Michael's has a thrift shop all year round.
- Foster agencies, women's organizations and homeless shelters often accept used luggage.
- Remember to check recyclesmartma.org to find out what can and cannot be recycled.

3. Hang Your Laundry Out to Dry

Take advantage of a sunny day and warmer temperatures to hang your laundry out to dry. Not only does it conserve energy, the sun is a natural antibacterial and deodorizer. Nothing smells cleaner and more fresh than air-dried bed linens. Drying on a line is also gentler on clothes than a dryer, so you can enjoy your clothes longer.

Wishing everyone in Marblehead a happy and 'green' spring.