

*“Green Living” Sidebar  
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## **Living Green: How to Get Started**

Kermit the Frog had it all wrong. It *is* easy being green. Just follow these tips to get started.

Andy Pace, owner of Safe Building Solutions in Waukesha, suggests that you first decide what your green motives are: energy efficiency, saving the planet or personal health? Once you make that decision, you can determine where to start getting eco-friendly.

- If energy efficiency is your goal, then, among other things, you’ll want to shop for appliances that conserve energy.

Lighting is another area to investigate. Lyn Falk, president of Cedarburg’s Solterra Studios, encourages clients to consider full-spectrum fluorescents, which are better for personal health as well as energy efficiency. Think about maximizing natural lighting, perhaps by adding a skylight.

- According to the Clean Air Council (CAC), Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour. This is part of the five pounds of trash the CAC estimates every person creates each day. If global health is your concern, then go for recycled products.

Recycled materials cut down on trash, reduce the need to use virgin natural resources and take less energy to produce. It also usually creates less air and water pollution to produce recycled items than those from virgin materials.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consistently ranks indoor air pollution among the top five environmental risks to public health.

If your issue is personal health, then look for low- or non-toxic, natural materials including paints and coatings, carpeting, floor and wall coverings, fabrics, window treatments and even bedding.

To enhance air quality, get a HEPA filter on your vacuum, change the filter on your furnace regularly and get an ionic air purifier.

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One of the easiest ways to move to greener pastures is to simply review your household cleaners. Conventional supplies often include hazardous ingredients. Using chemical-free cleaners is a health win for both you and the Earth.

Want to learn more or research products? Check out these resources:

The Healthy House Institute at [www.hhinst.com](http://www.hhinst.com)

[www.ecomall.com](http://www.ecomall.com)

[www.greenpages.org](http://www.greenpages.org)

[www.ecodesignresources.com](http://www.ecodesignresources.com)

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