

# PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN

By the MLGCC Natural Resources Committee - March 2018

*"We're in a giant car heading towards a brick wall and everyone's arguing over where they're going to sit" (David Suzuki).*

*Approximately 40% of the lakes in America are too polluted for fishing, aquatic life, or swimming. The Mississippi River carries an estimated 1.5 million metric tons of nitrogen pollution into the Gulf of Mexico each year, creating a "dead zone" about the size of New Jersey. Each year 1.2 trillion gallons of untreated sewage, storm water, and industrial waste contaminate US waters – and four billion pounds of garbage end up in the ocean – add to this 49 million tons of electronic waste.*

*Time to change our consumer consumption and waste practices. The shortsightedness of the "dilution" philosophy is now evident. In 2010, recycling and composting measures prevented 85 million tons of material of being disposed of as waste compared to 8 million tons in 1980. Here is how you can continue to help.*

Do not flush pharmaceuticals (prescribed medication) down the toilet. Unfortunately, both Walgreen's and CVS do not offer a "take back drug program" in this area. Pharmaceuticals are active compounds with numerous chemical properties. Drugs flushed down the toilet end up in Charlotte harbor. Unused medications can be taken to the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department drop box located at 3280 Tamiami Trail in the Promenades Mall. NRC plans to initiate a community collection service next year.

Don't dispose of food waste using your sink garbage unit (garburator if your Canadian). Food contains a large amount of soluble nutrients and organic carbon. Disposal via waste water has a marginal economic advantage compared to landfill and the environmental costs are not factored in. Put your waste in the garbage. Compost food waste when possible.

Don't use Styrofoam and plastic bags. Both are non-biodegradable. Twenty-five billion Styrofoam cups -and other Styrofoam products occupy 30 % of landfill capacity - and many of the four billion plastic bags end up as litter! *(Marine creatures swallow plastic bags because they think they are edible jellyfish).*

Increase your use of recyclable materials and reusable cloth bags. Club events can feature "bring" your own cutlery and organizers can arrange to bring their home recycling bins to most events. Take recyclable materials (glass bottles, cans, paper etc.) back home for disposal. Utilize the Fire Clubs' can recycle program as most buildings have receptacles. Your efforts will reduce Corporate waste costs.

Why buy bottled water – it's no better for you than tap water. Fill a re-use container – even a plastic one from your tap or refrigerator (most are equipped with chemical filters).

Reduce energy consumption. Turn off lights and raise the thermostat temperature in park buildings after your event finishes. Replace your burnt out light bulbs with LED bulbs – they last about 8 times longer and use one eighth the electricity. Your NRC promotes the use of programmable and sensor enabled equipment in our buildings.

Don't dispose of oils, toxic waste, electronics, and pesticides by dumping them unto the ground or placing them in waste bins – they eventually enter the environment. Take hazardous waste to the hazardous waste depot at 19765 Kenilworth Blvd. near Veteran's Blvd. and Cochran Blvd in Port Charlotte.