



Tips for a Sustainable Lifestyle

There are a lot of simple things you can do to live more sustainably and decrease your carbon footprint without impacting your lifestyle. Many of these tips are free or low-cost, and may even save you money in the long-term. Reducing your energy usage will help decrease greenhouse gas emissions, which helps our entire community. Start saving today!

Waste Reduction

Recycling

The Town of Bethlehem has a mandatory recycling law in place for all residents and businesses. Some of the Town's waste haulers offer single stream recycling, though others do not so be sure to check with your hauler before you combine your recyclables in one bin. A full list of all mandatory recyclables can be found on the [Town's website](#). Additionally, the Town also holds [Hazardous and Special Waste Collection Events \(adobe .pdf\)](#) periodically for residents to drop off items that should not be included in the normal waste stream.

Backyard & Town Composting

As much as one third of waste sent to our nation's landfill is organic waste that decomposes into methane gas (a greenhouse gas 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide). Grass clippings, weeds, and a variety of green kitchen waste (vegetables, egg shells and coffee grounds) can be composted in small-scale, backyard compost heaps. After the natural cycle of decomposition, the waste is turned into rich, fertile soil that can be used in flower gardens or for growing your own produce. The [Capital Region Recycling Partnership](#) has a useful guide on [backyard composting \(Adobe PDF\)](#) for beginners and seasoned veterans.

The Town also provides yard waste pickup by the Highway Department, which hauls the material to the Town's Compost and Wood Chipping Facility. Yard waste should be deposited into a reusable container or paper bag not in excess of 50 lbs., while brush can be stacked neatly near the curb. Paper bags can be purchased at a number of locations. **DO NOT PLACE YARD WASTE IN PLASTIC BAGS.** Town residents and businesses can purchase the compost from the town for a small fee at the Compost Facility located on Feura Bush Road. Visit the [Town's Compost Facility web page](#) for more details or to find out when your [pickup day](#) is.

Large-scale Composting

Composting at large institution can be very challenging; but it can result in big savings in tipping fees at the landfill and prevent harmful methane emissions. Institutions with large land holdings can choose to compost organic waste onsite, the most economical option. Smaller institutions can look to partner with other institutions in the Town or neighboring municipalities to have their organic waste transported to an industrial composting facility for processing.

Transportation Alternatives

Biking

Biking releases no emissions and is great exercise and recreation. Bethlehem has been promoting its [PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee \(Pathways To Hamlets, Homes & Healthy Hearts\)](#), which is designed to increase bicycle safety, awareness, and ridership throughout the Town. Additional signs and bike lanes are raising awareness and making it considerably easier for commuters to give up their cars and ride a bike.

Mass Transit

The [Capital District Transportation Authority \(CDTA\)](#) operates buses throughout the Capital Region. Using the tools on their website you can search for routes for your commute and find time tables. Using mass transit saves you money on parking, gas and the hassle of driving through traffic. CDTA buses also have bike racks on the front so that people can transport their bikes between destinations.

Carpool

Carpooling reduces the number of vehicles on the road, helping lower our greenhouse gas emissions and save on fuel costs. [iPool2](#) is an excellent resource for finding carpools in the Capital Region. Members can sign up (for free!) to find others who share their commute, as well as other options including Park & Ride locations, how to form a vanpools, and other transportation options.

Capital Moves

[Capital Moves](#) is a new website designed to help Capital Region residents find alternative transportation options throughout the region. The site consolidates information found on CDTA's, iPool2's, and Amtrak's websites, offering visitors a wealth of information all in one place. Capital Moves also offers assistance to employers in the area on how they can encourage their employees to adopt alternative modes of transport for their daily commutes.