

# Tenx5 Things to Take Toxics Out of the Columbia

Thousands of people work everyday to make sure the Columbia River is clean and healthy. *The cumulative impact of our millions of actions adds up.*

**What can I do? Can I make a difference? You bet!**

## Individuals...

*Each day, we make decisions that can positively impact our environment and our health.*

1. Buy local and organic. Buy American made.
2. Avoid Parabens & Triclosan in soaps, toothpaste, and clothing (disrupts thyroid function & reproductive hormones). Avoid fragranced personal care products that contain allergens (asthma) and phthalates (hormone disruption).
3. Use permeable pavers for patios and collect rain water to use in your garden. Eliminate fertilizers and pesticides in gardens, plant native species, and pick up pet waste.
4. Use natural cleaning products, like vinegar and water or baking soda and water.
5. Don't buy bottled water – *it takes more than 17 million barrels of oil annually to make the plastic to meet the current US demand, enough to fuel 1.3 million cars for a year. 24% of bottled water sold in the US is either Pepsi's Aquafina or Coke's Dasani: both brands are bottled, purified municipal water.*
6. Use bilge socks on boats to contain waste.
7. Drive less. *335,000 people ride Tri-Met and C-Tran each day, reducing contaminants from automobiles that get into our streams and rivers.*
8. Use less paper, recycle more, and buy only paper with high post-consumer, recycled content. *It reduces energy, uses less contaminants, and avoids further harm to the ecosystem by minimizing logging of trees.*
9. Recycle electrical and hazardous wastes at collection events or collection sites.
10. Don't flush unused pharmaceuticals; mix them with cat litter or other waste or turn them in at a collection event.

## Communities...

*Community institutions - local governments, neighborhood associations, conservation organizations, and foundations - provide leadership and funding to serve the public good.*

1. Adopt stormwater standards.
2. Purchase green goods and products to protect people and places. Promote these choices in local stores.
3. Clean up and re-use already developed land. Conserve open space. *Astoria cleaned up Mill Pond, now the site of beautiful waterfront homes.*
4. Provide incentives for disconnecting downspouts. *More than 56,000 residents in Portland have disconnected downspouts, removing 1.3 billion gallons of stormwater each year from the treatment system.*
5. The Estuary Partnership worked with five schools to rebuild their schoolyards to reduce runoff – creating an outdoor learning space.
6. Use green building techniques in civic buildings and projects.
7. Promote farmers markets and use local goods and services.
8. Encourage land uses that are pedestrian-oriented. Promote transit-oriented development.
9. Remove elemental chlorine from wastewater treatment. *Many municipal facilities have already made this switch, keeping a carcinogen out of their systems.*
10. Private foundations provide invaluable support to Estuary Partnership programs and thousands of organizations promote environmental efforts across the region.

## Ranchers, Growers, Foresters...

*Ranchers, growers and foresters throughout the Northwest are leading the way with practices that reduce exposure to toxics and reduce costs.*

1. Fence streams to keep livestock out of waterways to save money and reduce toxic runoff.
2. Use targeted pesticide application through specific techniques like drip irrigation, or avoid application during windy conditions or before heavy rains. *Growers in the Walla Walla Basin reduced one toxic by 90% to less than the allowable limit in just 3 years.*
3. Switch to organic processes to reduce the amount of pesticides used and lower costs.
4. Manage runoff on-site by creating retention ponds or swales.
5. Leave buffer strips along streams.
6. Properly store pesticides indoors and in covered containers.
7. Turn in unused product at collection events. *At one collection event in Kelso, growers turned in 10,000 pounds of pesticides, including DDT, keeping them out of the ecosystem.*
8. Sell local.
9. Stabilize adjacent areas and slopes to reduce erosion and runoff.
10. Seed and replant to reduce erosion and runoff. *GreenWood Resources grows and manages sustainable, environmentally certified tree farms.*

## Businesses and Industries...

*Businesses are setting new standards for sustainable practices, because they are good for business and people.*

1. Remove toxics from processes to reduce discharge and exposure. *Pulp and paper companies have switched to elemental chlorine-free processes to reduce dioxin, a carcinogen.*
2. Go to zero waste, closed loop facilities. *Subaru U.S. plant eliminated waste entirely. It is all recycled or reused.*
3. Know the supply chain. Buy green products from zero waste facilities. *Liberty Bottles are made in America by American workers with recycled materials.*
4. Become a Green Company. Recycle electronics for consumers. *100% of the electricity Staples purchases is green energy, and they offer free technology recycling and credits on empty ink and toner cartridges.*
5. Create demand and fill it. *Paper companies are increasing production of paper from post-consumer, recycled material.*
6. Incorporate eco-roofs, recycled building materials and other sustainable practices and techniques to control and reuse stormwater.
7. Reduce energy consumption.
8. Use biodiesel or hybrid vehicles in company fleets.
9. Buy local. *Restaurants and many grocery stores offer more local, organically grown products.*
10. Invest in the community and encourage employees to volunteer. *REI offers employees incentives to participate in stewardship activities. Georgia Pacific donated over 4,100 native plants to the Estuary Partnership's volunteer projects.*

## Federal, State & Tribal Governments...

*Government agencies use an array of tools to protect public health and to maintain healthy communities and our economy.*

1. Ban harmful chemicals. *State of Washington passed Child Safety legislation that limited the amount of lead, cadmium and phthalates allowed in children's products sold in Washington and requires manufacturers to list chemicals of high concern.*
2. Invest in toxics removal. *Oregon, Washington & EPA collect thousands of pounds of pesticides at collection events.*
3. Remove toxics and clean up contaminated sites. *Tribes are targeting mercury removal to lower exposure that increases risk of neurological damage.*
4. Expand data on human health impacts. *Tribes analyzed fish consumption rates and the impact on human health.*
5. Monitor water quality and species to assess changes in toxics.
6. Buy green. *Oregon and Washington's commitment to purchasing green janitorial supplies is protecting people and the environment and creating a market demand.*
7. Provide streamlined permitting or other incentives to projects that reduce toxics.
8. Include toxics reduction in restoration and species recovery programs. *The Northwest Power and Conservation Council is proposing changes to its Fish & Wildlife Program that will include toxics as an area of focus.*
9. Fund volunteer and outdoor science education.
10. Increase commitment—and funding—to measure and reduce toxics.



