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BARBARA ARMSTRONG

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Go Green This Spring Clean

A very important extension of your house is your outdoor living spaces, be it the patios, gardens, lawns or furniture. Bring life back to those areas this spring. Here are some "go green" tips for adding curb appeal to any home.

Lawns

G Y Don't mow as often or as short. Lush grass looks better and uses less energy (the fuel kind and the people kind). And don't rake up mowed grass clippings; leave them on your lawn as free fertilizer.

Gardens

Use plants that are native to your area (instead of exotics); they are naturally better adapted to the soil and weather conditions and therefor generally use less water, fertilizers or pest controls to grow well. Instead of buying potted plants in non-recyclable plastic pots, look for ones in biodegradable containers. Or better yet, don't buy anything - plant seeds!

Flora and Fauna

Celebrate your neighborhood wildlife. Decorate your backyard with attractive bird houses; you help out local wildlife and they control some of your unwanted insect pests. Add flowers in a garden that attract bees and butterflies and hummingbirds – it's a win-win beauty treatment.

Wipe Away Winter's Grime

Try hot water with either biodegradable liquid dish soap or baking soda + vinegar. Use material scraps (old rags, towels, old shirts) to clean with instead of paper towels or sponges. Reuse the morning newspaper to clean glass and windows. Instead of buying disposable paper yard waste bags, use a designated garbage pail or recycling bin to collect yard waste (labeled appropriately).

REDUCE (buy less now, throw away less later) REUSE (find second uses for non-recyclable, and even recyclable, items) RECYCLE (everything your city allows)

It all means better conservation, less waste and an overall cleaner and brighter place to live!

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