

Simple Daily Gestures



INSTITUTE OF
SISTERS of MERCY
OF AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA





Introduction

With the launch of the Institute's new Integral Ecology policy in October 2021 and the launch of the Laudato Si' Action platform in November 2021, the 'Simple Daily Gestures' booklet that was developed back in 2017 has been updated with more voluntary behaviours to showcase how individual commitment can be incorporated through simple actions into everyday activities.

This booklet links very well into the Laudato Si' goal of "Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles" and as you will see through the booklet, many behaviours and actions can address many of the Laudato Si' goals.

It is well acknowledged that many sisters and staff have been living sustainable lives for a long time and included here is a list of simple daily gestures or hints to help you, as an individual, to support the goals of Laudato Si' and our own policy.

This is completely voluntary and provides a simple checklist of activities that will assist you in becoming more sustainable at your place of residence. Many are applicable in office settings as well.

This booklet is environmentally friendly.

To honour the intentions of the Integral Ecology Policy, printing this document is discouraged. Each box in each table is interactive. If using your computer, click into the box/es that are most applicable to you and a tick will appear. To save your answers simply save the document to your files.

Energy Hints

"To save energy I turn off power points for appliances not in use."

Sr Helen Kearins





Energy Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

N/A

Turn off your computer, monitor and printer when you finish using them or when you leave work at the end of the day.

Turn off lights in rooms you are not using.

Turn off air-conditioning (if applicable) when you go out or leave work at the end of the day.

Turn dishwashers off when dishes are not being washed.

Use dishwasher only when full and use on economy cycle.

Run the dishwasher at off peak times to lessen your electricity costs (Generally after 9pm and before 7am).

In winter, open your curtains in the middle of the day to let the warm sun in. In summer, use your blinds to block out the sun's heat.

Dress for the weather – in winter, wear extra layers inside and lower your heating thermostat. By setting your heating thermostat between 18-20°C, you can decrease your running costs by up to 10%. In summer, wear lighter clothing and keep your air conditioner's thermostat between 24°C – 26°C.

Use the "Dry" function instead of the "Cool" function in your air conditioner in the warm months. It will take a few degrees off the temperature, save energy, and allow you to keep some doors and windows ajar.

Only heat or cool the rooms you are using and close off doors to unoccupied rooms.

Your fridge runs 24 hours a day 365 days a year. This adds up and makes it the most expensive appliance to run. Make sure that the door seal is tight and free from gaps so cold air doesn't escape.

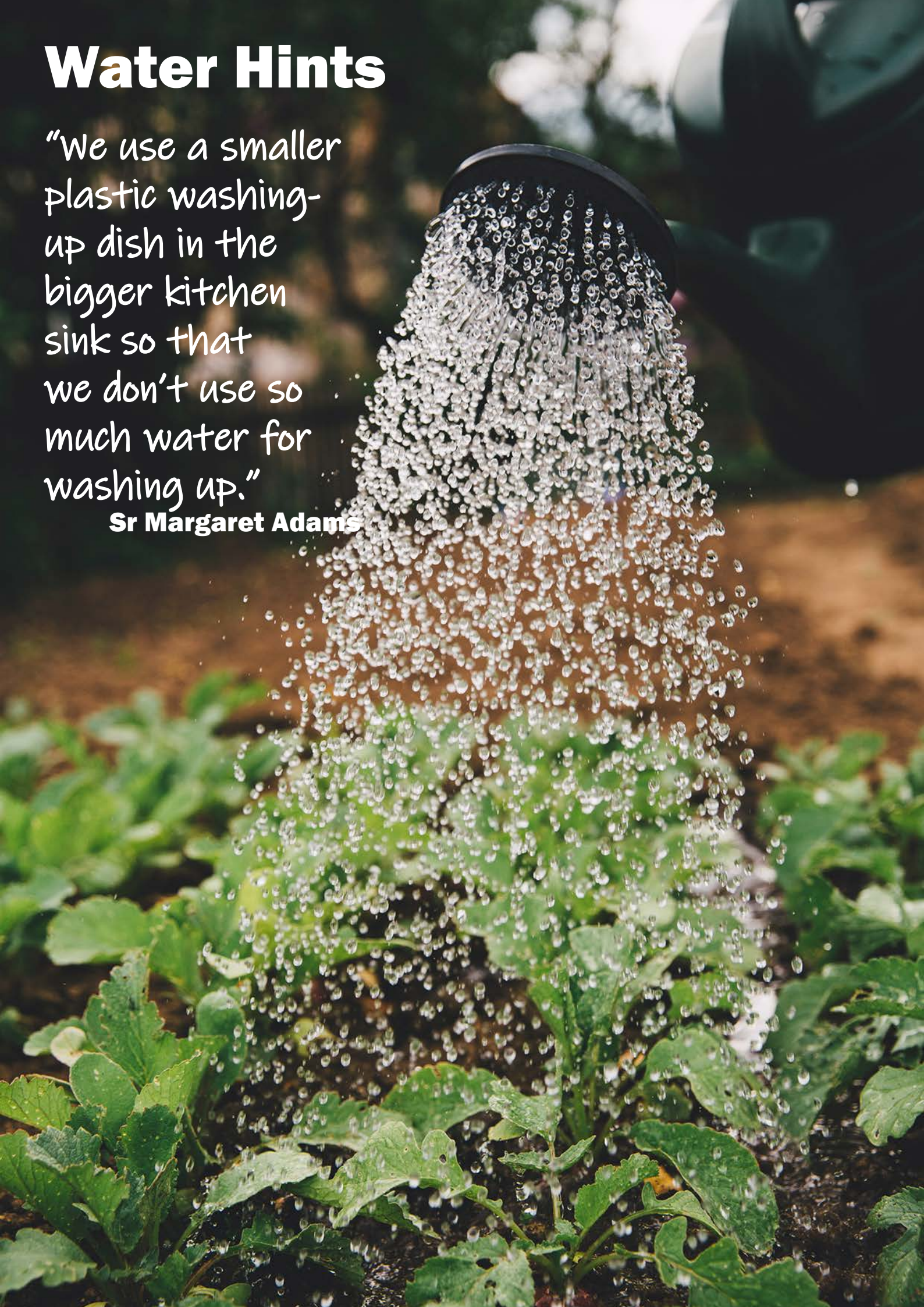
If you have solar- run as many of your appliances, such as dishwashers, dryers, and clothes washers during the day.

If possible, hang your clothes so they can air dry, rather than using a clothes dryer.

Water Hints

"We use a smaller plastic washing-up dish in the bigger kitchen sink so that we don't use so much water for washing up."

Sr Margaret Adams





Water Hints

**Doing
Now**

**Will
Do**

N/A

Use a refillable water bottle instead of purchasing bottles of water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only use the dishwasher when it is fully loaded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjust the water level of your washing machine if doing small loads.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash your clothes with cold water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turn off water while brushing your teeth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shorten your shower by a minute or two to save water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When watering your garden, only apply water as fast as the soil can absorb it, and water, if possible, in the morning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cover garden beds with mulch as this will reduce evaporative water loss.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
While you wait for hot water, collect the running water, and use it to water plants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Select the proper pan size for cooking. Large pans may require more cooking water than necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report any water leaks to the property team or contact a plumber so they can be fixed as soon as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your toilet does not have a dual flush option, fill one or more soft drink bottles with water and place them in the cistern.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider installing a water efficient shower head.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Waste Hints

"We try to reduce by buying only what we need and purchasing products with as little packaging as possible. We try to reuse any plastic bags, plastic containers, paper bags, cardboard boxes, glass jars or printed paper. We try to rarely use our garbage bin and recycle all plastic, paper, metal, and glass. We put organic waste into our worm farm or council green waste program."

**Sr Elizabeth Young and
Sr Michelle Goh**





Waste Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

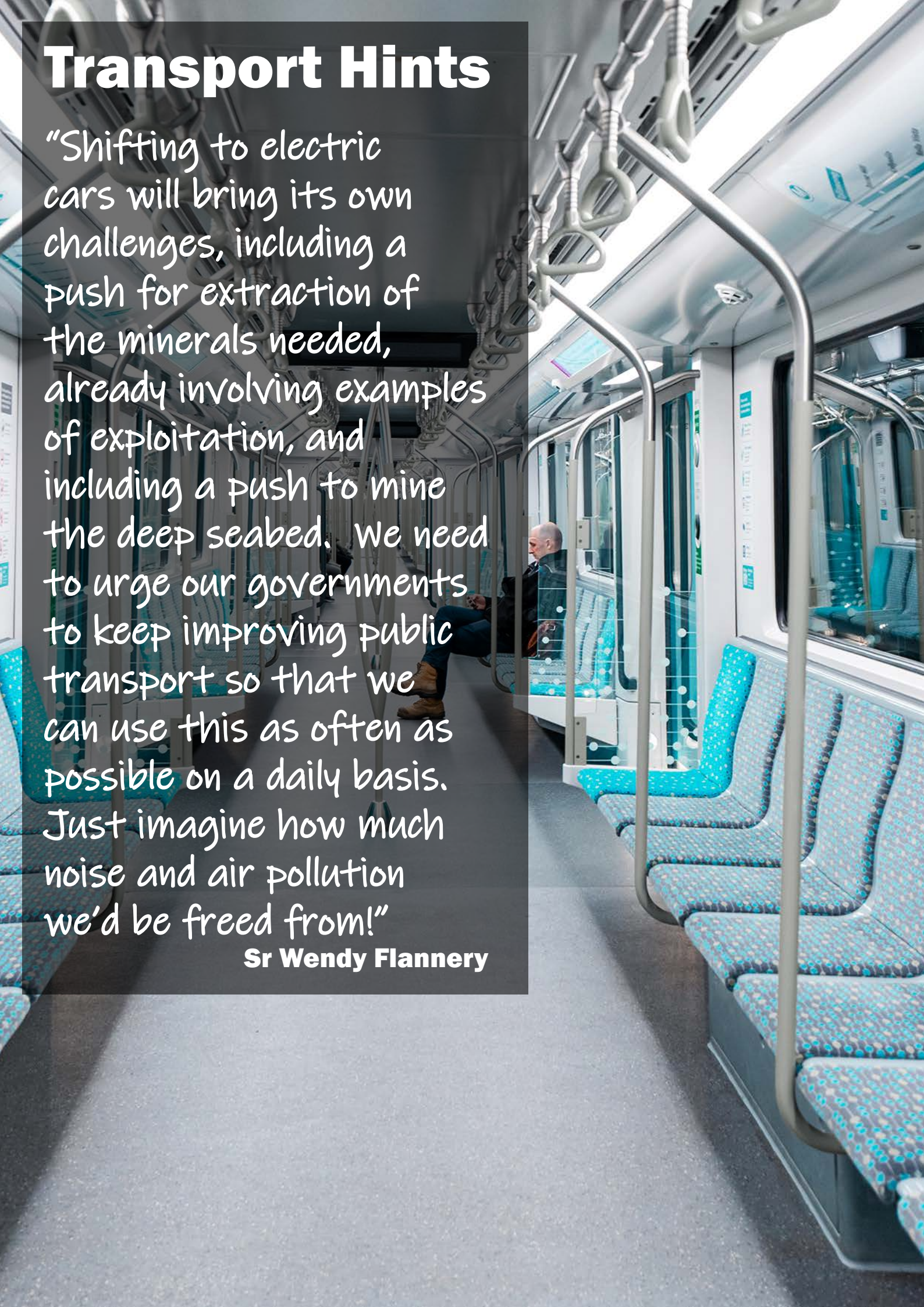
N/A

REFUSE – plastic bags, take your own reusable bags when shopping.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REFUSE – put a “no junk mail” sign on your letter box to discourage advertising material.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REDUCE - paper consumption by printing on both sides.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REDUCE - printing by only printing when necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use recycled or carbon neutral copy paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before throwing something out, consider if it can be recycled or used by someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donate unwanted goods to charity or the Freecycle network.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bring your own ‘Sustainability Keep Cup’ when purchasing coffee and/or ordering hot drinks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Separate recycling waste from general waste (if available in your area).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get into composting with a compost bin, a Bokashi bucket or a worm farm and reduce your organic household waste by up to 40%.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shop at food cooperatives or other food retailers which allow you to purchase only as much as you need.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Link in with the ISMAPNG recycling guide .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swap out the plastic cling wrap for beeswax wraps or containers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don’t buy fruit and veggies wrapped in plastic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy a silicone oven try mat to replace baking paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use bar soap, shampoo and stain removers that aren’t packaged in plastic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stop paper bank statements and pay your bills online or via your mobile device.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Transport Hints

"Shifting to electric cars will bring its own challenges, including a push for extraction of the minerals needed, already involving examples of exploitation, and including a push to mine the deep seabed. We need to urge our governments to keep improving public transport so that we can use this as often as possible on a daily basis. Just imagine how much noise and air pollution we'd be freed from!"

Sr Wendy Flannery





Transport Hints

**Doing
Now**

**Will
Do**

N/A

Reduce the number of car trips by using public transport, walking, car-pooling, and/or riding a bike.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write a list and make just one trip per week to purchase everything at once.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shop on your way home from another outing, or from work instead of making an extra trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shop with a nearby friend - two friends can get their groceries in one car trip.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plan to do several errands in one trip rather than several trips and save both time and fuel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drive Smoothly - Stop/start driving is much less efficient and more polluting than driving at a constant speed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep your vehicle well-tuned and regularly maintained. Get your car serviced at the intervals specified in the manufacturer's handbook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your household has two or more cars, use the more fuel efficient one wherever possible. Get into the habit of using the others only when necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When travelling, figure out the most efficient routes in advance, and try to avoid peak hour traffic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When flying, try and book the most direct flight to your destination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use tele- or videoconferencing such as Skype / Zoom / Facetime to reduce car and plane trips.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimise your emissions where possible by travelling short distances by train or bus instead.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Correctly inflated tyres are not only safer and last longer, but they will also reduce drag on the road, improving your overall fuel economy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Purchasing Hints

"Being aware of the need to reduce our carbon footprint, I research where products are manufactured before I purchase."

Sr Anne Ryan





Purchasing Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

N/A

When buying new white goods, choose ones that have a five- or six-star rating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
With regards to clothing, look for a 'Made in Australia' label or choose Fairtrade when purchasing products made overseas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy clothing from Charity shops and donate a piece of clothing back at the same time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before buying new furniture, consider contacting your local office or your neighbours/friends to see if there is any good quality secondhand furniture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Look for natural furnishings that have been or can be recycled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy items with less packaging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy locally where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Size it right—if you buy something like a car or live in a home that's bigger than what you require, you are committing yourself to larger energy or gas bills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't buy it—before making a purchase, consider whether you will really use it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Share with friends—Share things like books, magazines, movies, games, and newspapers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access a library for books, magazines, and movies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have the garden space, grow your own vegetables or herbs, and share and swap with other gardeners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bring your lunch rather than buying if possible and take it in a reusable container.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abstain from eating meat and fish or any animal products on one day or more each week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include a plant-based meal(s) into your menu every week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Purchasing Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

N/A

Consider green gifting – intangible gifts - experience vouchers, gifts of service and time, membership vouchers, in lieu of gift donation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider Green gifting – Food and Drinks – Home grown fruits and veggies, Organic Farmers markets, Community and Co-op Food hubs, Buy Organic and fair trade.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider Green Gifting – Tangible gifts – Upcycle and repurpose, Buy secondhand or sustainable gifts, Make or craft unique items, Make or bake from organic ingredients.” – Can these be listed under the other green gifting behaviour.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning products – look at using refillable bottles and or organically friendly alternatives to chemical options.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider using eco laundry strips – less plastic and healthier water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research where products come from and what ingredients are used. e.g., Avoid products that include palm oil.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refer to the Sustainable Living Procurement Guide when looking to buy items.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

“More than half of Australians (56%) believe it’s important for people to consider how their purchases impact people overseas.”

The Australian Ethical Consumer Report 2021





Investment Hints

"I participate in climate action for better public policy and the protection of the environment."

Sr Mary Tinney



Investment Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

N/A

Bank your money with organisations which refuse to finance coal mines, or which actively support the development of renewable energy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Become involved with a local environmental group, land care group or local climate action group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Share your knowledge and ideas about sustainable living with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow the divestment campaigns of groups such as the Laudato Si' Movement , Catholic Impact Investing Collaborative , and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If working, consider investigating the ethical investments portfolio of your superannuation fund.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is ethical investing? "Ethical investing, also known as responsible or sustainable investing, simply means factoring in people, society and the environment into investment decision-making."

Chris Hill



Home & Garden Hints

"We installed two water tanks to capture the rainwater from the roof for the garden, laundry and toilet."

Sr Veronica Lawson





Home & Garden Hints

Doing Now

Will Do

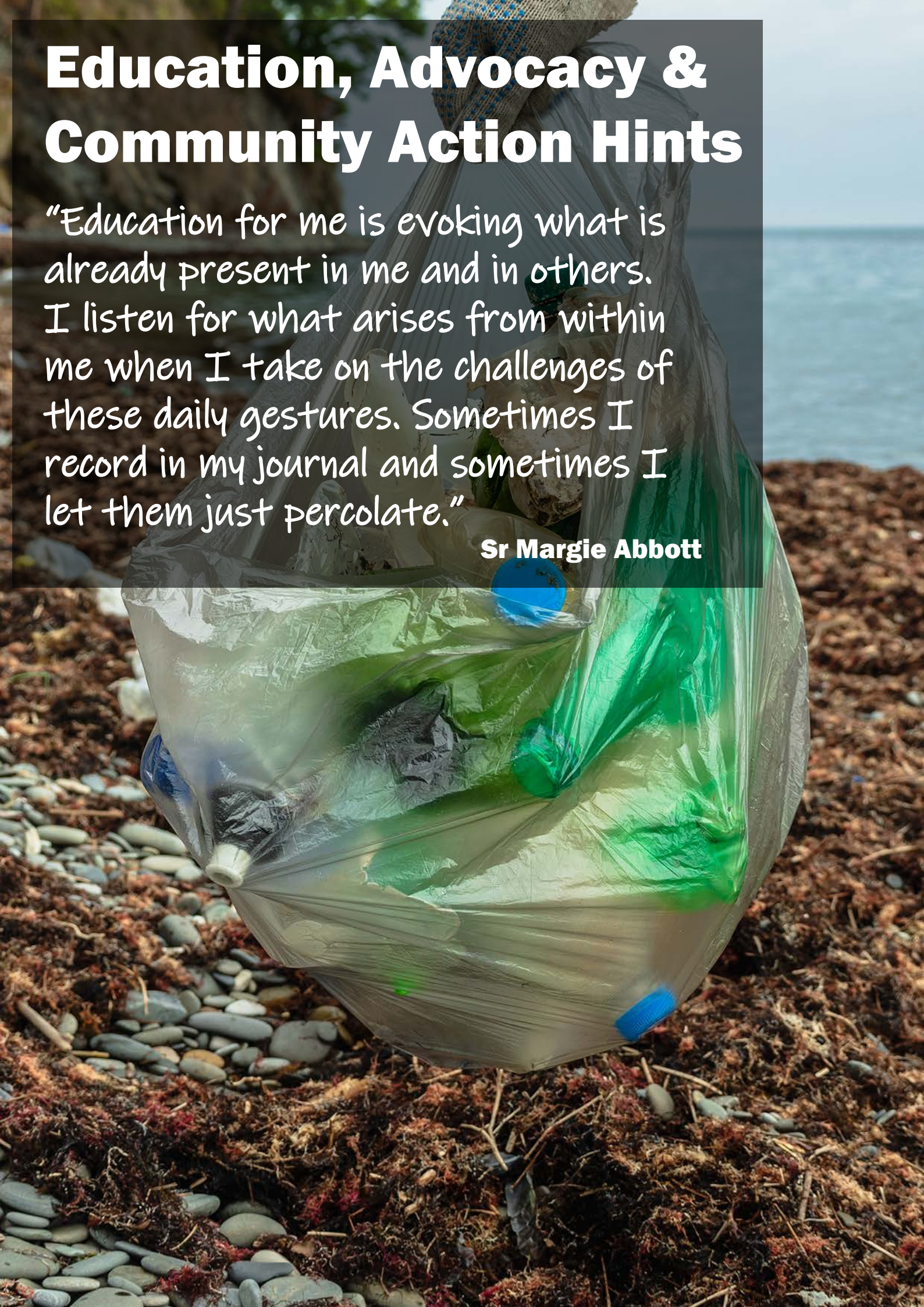
N/A

If safe to do so, open windows to allow a cross breeze.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plant deciduous trees along the western side of your house to keep off the hot summer sun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have some indoor plants to brighten your space and they will also absorb airborne pollutants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider Investigating if your property can accommodate and is suitable for a water tank.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider a rain water garden .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider planting a herb or vegetable garden.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plant trees and/or other vegetation to retain water on site.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure the soil is mulched, composted, and is kept in the best condition (with organics) to retain water so that less watering is necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Block drafts that may be affecting the heating or cooling of your residence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider good quality blinds / curtains to improve heating and cooling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include biodiversity into your home. Consider plants or a garden that attracts local species and pollinators such as bees, birds, and butterflies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact your local council for advice on which plants are local to the area and would support the appropriate birds and insects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask your gardener (or yourself) to phase out use of chemical herbicides and pesticides and find organic solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consider Mowing grass at a higher level to increase healthier soils that absorb carbon and naturally reduce weeds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support Biodiversity by placing plates of water for birds and bees in hot months – keep it refreshed every few days.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plant flowering plants that attract native bees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use eco-friendly pest removal - in the house, trap unwanted pests and place them safely outside.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Education, Advocacy & Community Action Hints

"Education for me is evoking what is already present in me and in others. I listen for what arises from within me when I take on the challenges of these daily gestures. Sometimes I record in my journal and sometimes I let them just percolate."

Sr Margie Abbott





Education, Advocacy & Community Action Hints

Doing
Now

Will
Do

N/A

Attend and participate in Education and formation offerings through ISMAPNG forums and scheduled events as well as from outside agencies to learn more about an area of sustainability or ecology interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in or put your name to any action or pledge that supports limiting the impact on the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Become involved with a local environmental group, land care group or local climate action group.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduce yourself to your local Indigenous Elders and go along to any immersion programs available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Join your local community climate action network and consider getting involved in their actions or contributing to their newsletter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know your local bioregion (highest point in land to the water ways surrounding it) and learn about 10 local plants, 10 local foods, 10 local birds/pollinators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stay informed about local environmental issues through getting in touch with community groups eg, river use, ocean pollution, mining, protecting sacred Indigenous sites.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write to or organise a meeting with your local MP to ask questions about issues like biodiversity, climate, water, and others that you are concerned about.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sign online petitions from reputable groups whenever you get a chance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find out about local celebrations in your community such as Clean Up Australia Day , council tree planting, Sustainability festivals, School Strike 4 Climate , Harmony Day etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spend some time outdoors each day or evening, looking, touching, smelling, feeling, tasting if appropriate, recognising that Earth and her people are sacred, revealing God. All are part of the same Earth community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post your good ideas and suggestions for all things sustainable in the sharing space of the Sisters area of the website and App.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post your research on a particular product that may not be sustainable in the sharing space of the Sisters area of the website and App.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Well done, hopefully you are already achieving many of these simple gestures and perhaps you can consider others you were not doing.

References:

Australian Ethical – 22 tips for going plastic free
Greenfleet

Householder guide to Sustainable Living

Meat and Fish free day – Sr Mary-Ann Duigan

Origin Energy Saving tips

Sustainability Victoria Top 10 energy saving tips

Sustainable Growth – John Dee

Thanks to Sisters and staff of ISMAPNG for assisting with the suggestions in this booklet.

The Lazy persons guide to saving the world

Water use it wisely



INSTITUTE OF
SISTERS of MERCY
OF AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA

“Living our vocation to be protectors on God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue: it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” **Laudato Si’, paragraph 217**