

Summer Conservation Update



Reject Roundup The World Health Organization recently announced plans for sweeping controls of residential pesticides in 2018 after finding the popular weed killer, Roundup, possibly carcinogenic to humans.

Rather than wait for legislation to prohibit the use of chemical-laden products (France recently banned Roundup from garden centers), [safely dispose](#) of any herbicides you may currently own, and try these natural alternatives:

- Splash scalding water directly onto weeds -- a great use for water leftover from boiling pasta or potatoes.
- Douse weeds with vinegar (or the leftover liquid from a jar of pickles).
- Cover low-growing weeds, such as crabgrass, with several layers of newspaper and some mulch or rocks to hold the paper in place; the lack of sunlight will eventually kill pesky weeds.
- Pull weeds by hand (water the area around hard-to-pull taproot weeds first or pull them after a rainstorm when the ground is softer).
- Plant ground covers, flowers and garden crops that will naturally beat out weeds for sunlight, water and nutrients.

Even people who don't use Roundup risk exposure through tap water, so encourage others to try these methods as well. And remember to leave a few

dandelions and clovers for the bees and butterflies; they're great sources of nectar before other plants bloom.

A Powerful Call for Swift & Unified Action

What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?

~ Pope Francis



The release of Pope Francis' [encyclical](#) marks a transformation in the way the world thinks about environmental degradation and climate change. Warning of an "unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequence for all of us," Francis cites fossil fuels and human activity as chief causes of the crisis.

"Yet all is not lost," he says. "Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start." Read the 184-page [papal encyclical](#) that Francis hopes will influence energy and economic policy and stir a global movement.

Go Slow on the H2O

This week's summer solstice ushers in longer sunlit days, warmer temperatures and increased water usage. Do your part to conserve this vital resource with these water-wise tips from the [Switch Efficiency Blog](#).



- Collect rain from your roof in a [rain barrel](#) to water your garden. Rainwater has more nitrogen, so plants grow better.
- Select the shortest dishwasher cycle that properly cleans your dishes. Short cycles use less hot water and energy and clean dishes faster.
- Save the water used for rinsing fruits and vegetables and reuse it to water houseplants.
- Water your garden or lawn in the morning, or better yet, in the evening. Temperatures are cooler, evaporation is much less and your plants get the

water they need.

- Install water-saving aerators on faucets and swap out older shower heads for water-efficient ones. They're inexpensive, easy to install and the savings can really add up.
- Dropped an ice cube? Rather than toss it into the sink, put it in a houseplant. The little things really do make a difference.

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