

# The UNM Sustainability Peer Coaching Kit

*Version 1.1*

*Bruce T. Milne  
Mariel Tribby*



<http://www.unm.edu/~sust/>

Bruce T. Milne, Director

[bmilne@sevilleta.unm.edu](mailto:bmilne@sevilleta.unm.edu)

Terry Horger, Program Coordinator

[thorger@unm.edu](mailto:thorger@unm.edu)

## What level of sustainability are you ready for?

•Take this short quiz to find out! It will point you to a row and column in the matrix of sustainable actions on the following slide.

1. Are you willing to spend money on sustainability?

If **yes**, how much are you willing to spend?

If you would spend **a little**, go to row 2 (Affordable)

If you would spend **a lot**, go to row 3 (Expensive)

If **no**, go to row 1 (Really Cheap)

2. Do you want to start off with baby steps?

If **Yes**, you'd like to start small, go to column 1 (Baby Steps)

If **No**, you're ready to do much more, are you willing to commit a significant amount of time to sustainability?

If **Yes**, go to column 3 (Green Hero)

If **No**, go to column 2 (Even More Effective)

Baby  
steps



Even more  
effective



Green  
Hero

Really cheap

Walk more  
Recycle  
Think before you toss  
Start a compost pile

Swap CFLs  
Eat less meat  
Be vegetarian  
Avoid processed, frozen  
food  
Fly less  
Start a garden  
Use paper wisely

Don't fly  
Bike more  
Be vegan  
Use public transit  
Use a car sharing  
program

Affordable

Buy carbon offsets  
for travel  
PNM Sky Blue™  
Buy Fair Trade products  
Green your pet  
Home cleaning products

Eat more local and  
organic food  
Green building materials  
Install graywater system  
Install solar hot water  
Make your yard greener  
Save energy at home

Sustainability  
in your workplace  
Start a community  
garden/farm

Expensive

Switch to a more  
fuel-efficient vehicle  
or hybrid

Install photovoltaics  
on home  
Build/retrofit a  
green home

Develop an  
ecovillage

## **Walk More** – Walking has many health benefits which can include:

- Increasing energy, muscle tone and strength, endurance, and metabolism (how many calories your body uses)
- Boosting mood, reducing stress, and making it easier to sleep
- Lowering the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and stroke  
(<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/walking.htm>)
- Replace short car trips with walking to reduce your use of fossil fuels
- Get to know other communities by walking through them and you can gain appreciation for the diversity in our city. Walking guides are available at <http://www.walkalbuquerque.org/>

**Tip:** Walk with your partner, friend, or family member and keep a journal to track your progress. Set goals with your partner for walking distance or time and call each other to see how you both are doing.

## **Bike More** – Get out of your car, get some exercise, and have fun:

- No harmful CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Less money spent on gas and car maintenance
- Get more physical activity into your day by commuting to work or school on your bike and avoid the traffic congestion
- **Find a bike map for Albuquerque at local bike stores or at <http://www.cabq.gov/bike/pdf/2007ABQBikeMap.pdf>**

**Tip:** Take bike rides with friends and family for a fun group activity. Start riding to work one or two days a week and gradually work up to every day. Call your partner to find out how they're doing with their bicycling goals.

## Use Public Transportation – Make your commute less stressful:

- Riding a bus is 91 times safer than driving a car
- Reduce or eliminate your car use and save money in automobile maintenance and gas
- Improve air quality – Buses emit 80 percent less carbon monoxide than cars  
(<http://www.gocmrta.com/content/pdf/Benefits%20of%20Public%20Transportation.pdf>)
- More efficient use of energy – If only 1 in 10 U.S. residents used public transportation regularly, we would reduce our oil consumption by 40%  
(<http://www.apta.com/media/releases/energystudy.cfm>)

**Albuquerque Bus Routes:** <http://www.cabq.gov/transit/>

**Rail Runner Express:** <http://www.nmrailrunner.com/index.asp>

**New Mexico Park and Ride Shuttles:** <http://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=14635>

**Tip:** Help each other find a bus route to take to work. Explore public transportation to get to activities and events on the weekends.

## Use a Car Sharing Program – Pay only when you want to drive:

- If you can commute to work without a car, but would still like to have access to a personal vehicle, car sharing may work for you!
- By sharing a car, rather than owning your own you reduce the cars on the road, air pollution, and oil consumption
- Save money - insurance and maintenance are included in the rental cost, gas costs are also included or can be reimbursed
- Low-emission, fuel-efficient, and hybrid vehicles available for rent by the day or hourly in convenient locations

Visit <http://www.carsharing.net/index.html> to find out if your city has a car sharing program!

**Tip:** Does your city have a car share program? Consider adjusting your driving habits to take advantage of it.

## Recycle – Why you should recycle:



- It employs 1.1 million workers in the U.S. and is a \$236 billion a year industry
- Reduces energy use – an aluminum can made from recycled materials uses 95% less energy than a can made from virgin materials, recycled steel uses 60% less energy, recycled newspaper 40% less, recycled plastic 70% less, and recycled glass 40% less (numbers from National Recycling Coalition <http://www.nrc-recycle.org/>)
- Reduces waste and the need for new landfills

See more benefits and information at <http://www.recycling-revolution.com/recycling-benefits.html> and <http://earth911.org/>

### How to recycle in Albuquerque:

- Curbside and Drop-Off: <http://www.cabq.gov/solidwaste/recycle.html>
- Electronics Recycling: [http://www.nmrecycle.org/pdf/List\\_NM\\_E-Recyclers.pdf](http://www.nmrecycle.org/pdf/List_NM_E-Recyclers.pdf)
- Green Waste: <http://www.cabq.gov/solidwaste/greenwst.html>

**Tip:** Call to remind each other to put aside recyclables and place on curb for pickup.

**Think before you Toss** – Many items that cannot be conventionally recycled can find life in new ways once you are finished with them:

- Clothes - Turn worn-out clothes into cleaning rags that can be washed and reused. If your clothes are still wearable donate them to charity, or hold a yard sale. Send Polartec and Capilene fleece to Patagonia, a clothing company that recycles old fleece into new garments ([patagonia.com/recycle](http://patagonia.com/recycle)).
- Books – Donate to libraries, charities, literacy programs, or sell at a yard sale. The Albuquerque Public Library also takes donations of CDs, DVDs and other media: <http://www.cabq.gov/library/makediff.html>
- If you just want to get rid of something, try Freecycle (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FreecycleABQ/>) or Craigslist (<http://albuquerque.craigslist.org/>) to post free items.

**Tip:** Trade your family's and your unwanted clothes with each other and/or swap with your friends.

## Start a Compost Pile – It's an easy way to naturally break down organic waste:

- Food and yard waste make up 24% of what's thrown away in the U.S.

(<http://www.epa.gov/composting/index.htm>)

- Start composting in your backyard and create natural fertilizer for your garden!

- No yard? Compost under your sink with worms! Visit

<http://www.earth911.org/master.asp?s=lib&a=organics/composting/wormcompost.asp> to get started

Learn more: <http://www.compostguide.com/>, <http://cahe.nmsu.edu/pubs/h/H-110.pdf>

**Tip:** Build compost bins together out of salvaged materials. Share your compost with your partner to put on their garden.

## Start a Garden – Growing your own food is rewarding in many ways:

- Reduce your fossil fuel consumption by eliminating the chemicals, processing, and transport associated with food grown by conventional, nonlocal agriculture
- Include more fresh produce in your diet and can reduce your risk of types of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and stroke ([http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits\\_why.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits_why.html))
- Consider container or rooftop gardening if you do not have yard space  
(<http://www.gardenguides.com/how-to/tipstechniques/containerindoor/container.asp>,  
<http://www.cityfarmer.org/rooftop59.html>)

Learn more about gardening: <http://cahe.nmsu.edu/pubs/circulars/circ457.html>,  
<http://abqmastergardeners.org/index.php>, <http://www.gardenersguild.org/index.htm>

Improve your soil: [http://www.motherearthnews.com/Homesteading-and-Self-Reliance/2007-06-01/  
Eight-Strategies-for-Better-Garden-Soil.aspx](http://www.motherearthnews.com/Homesteading-and-Self-Reliance/2007-06-01/Eight-Strategies-for-Better-Garden-Soil.aspx)

Control weeds naturally: [http://www.motherearthnews.com/Organic-Gardening/2007-06-01/  
Weedless-Gardening.aspx](http://www.motherearthnews.com/Organic-Gardening/2007-06-01/Weedless-Gardening.aspx)

**Tip:** Help each other start and maintain your gardens and share your harvest!

**Use Paper Wisely** – One of our most common materials uses a large amount of resources:

- Paper makes up a large part of landfills and produces methane, a greenhouse gas, as it decomposes

## Eat More Local Food – Support your local economy and farmers:

- Visit growers' markets to purchase food and get to know your local growers (<http://www.farmersmarketsnm.org/index.htm>, [localharvest.org](http://localharvest.org))
- Local food is picked and brought to market within a day or two, therefore it's fresher and tastes better
- Less energy is used in the transportation and storage of the food
- Join a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and get fresh produce directly from the farmer, in Albuquerque try Los Poblanos (<http://lospoblanosorganics.com/>), Erda Gardens (<http://www.erdagardens.org/>), or Dragon Farm at the South Valley Academy
- More reasons to “localize” yourself: <http://www.cityofholland.com/Brix?pageID=766>, <http://www.kidsregen.org/bigStory/print/summer04.php>, <http://www.foodroutes.org/whycare.jsp>

**Tip:** Visit local markets and farm harvest events together, split a CSA box, and look into joining a food co-op (<http://www.organicconsumers.org/foodcoops.htm>)

## Eat Organic Food – Better for the environment and better for you:

- Organic cultivation uses no synthetic pesticides or fertilizers which rely on fossil fuels for their production, it also does not use irradiation, genetically modified substances, or antibiotics and hormones in meat
- Builds up fertile topsoil, protects crop diversity through the use of different seed varieties, and uses water responsibly ([http://www.ota.com/organic\\_and\\_you/10reasons.html](http://www.ota.com/organic_and_you/10reasons.html))
- More nutrients than conventionally-grown produce (<http://www.ota.com/organic/benefits/nutrition.html>)
- **The best way to go? Local and organic!** Visit your growers' markets to see what is available where you live.

**Tip:** Visit local growers' markets, natural food stores, and even regular supermarkets, to find organic options.



## Buy Certified Fair-Trade Products – Support farmers and sustainable agriculture in developing countries:

- Farmers receive guaranteed fair prices, workers get safe working conditions and adequate wages, decisions about profits are reached through a democratic process
- The use of agricultural chemicals is limited and sustainable farming practices are promoted
- Look for the Fair Trade Certified label on coffee, cocoa, chocolate, fruits, sugar, rice, and spices (<http://transfairusa.org/content/support/index.php>)
- Fairly-traded crafts do not receive the label, but adhere to fair-trade principles. Visit <http://www.fairtradefederation.org/>, <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>, [http://www.lucuma.com/content/links/links\\_ft.asp](http://www.lucuma.com/content/links/links_ft.asp)



**Tip:** Look for Fair Trade products at your local store or coffee shop and request them if they aren't available.

## **Eat Less Meat** – Meat production uses resources less efficiently:

- Animal protein production requires 8 times as much fossil-fuel energy as does plant protein production
- 1 kg of beef takes over 1,000 liters of water to produce
- About 70% of the U.S.'s grain is fed to livestock
- The international meat industry generates about 18% of the world's greenhouse-gas emissions—which is more than transportation—according to a 2006 report from the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization.

[http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354\\_1603074\\_1603171,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354_1603074_1603171,00.html))

- Try eating one meat-free meal a week, recipes at <http://vegweb.com/>,  
<http://www.vegsoc.org/cordonvert/recipes/index.html>,  
<http://allrecipes.com/Recipes/Everyday-Cooking/Vegetarian/Main.aspx>

**Tips:** Have each other over for dinner to showcase your meat-free meals; trade recipes you enjoy over email.

**Go Vegetarian** – Along with the environmental benefits, a well-balanced vegetarian diet is healthier:

- Vegetarians have lower rates of coronary artery disease, hypertension, obesity and some forms of cancer.
- Less fat intake, with more fat coming as polyunsaturated fat rather than saturated fat, which decreases the risk of heart disease and stroke
- High in fiber, which lowers cholesterol and keeps the digestive system healthy

More benefits at <http://www.vegsoc.org/info/health1.html> , <http://www.vegsoc.org/vegweek/reasons.html>

**Go Vegan** – Completely eliminate your consumption of animal and animal-derived products and minimize your environmental impacts while maximizing your health benefits

**Tip:** Try gradually phasing meat out of your life by increasing your meat-free meals each week. Call or email to see how your partner is doing.

## **Avoid Processed and Frozen Food – Cut down on the energy used to produce your food:**

- Frozen food is energy intensive to transport and store
- Processed and single-serving foods usually have excessive packaging, requiring more energy input and creating more waste, a 2-pound box of breakfast cereal requires the same amount of energy as ½ a gallon of gasoline ([http://www.fresh-energy.org/publications/flyer\\_freshfood.pdf](http://www.fresh-energy.org/publications/flyer_freshfood.pdf))
- Processed foods often contain more salt, fat, sugar, hydrogenated oils, and trans fats (<http://health.dailynewscentral.com/content/view/0002301/41/>)

**Tip:** Try squeezing your orange juice fresh and get more vitamin C, while avoiding the packaging from frozen cans. Buy non-perishable foods in bulk to avoid unnecessary packaging and save money as well! Spend more time in the produce department and less in the interior aisles at the grocery store where packaged and processed foods are located.

## **Green your Pet** – They're part of your family, why not make their lives more sustainable too?:

- Adopt from shelters – 70,000 dogs and cats are born each day and pet breeders with only profit in mind may not provide adequate living conditions for their animals
- **Spay and neuter** to prevent pet overpopulation and tag your pet electronically or with hanging tags
- Protect wild birds and other native wildlife by keeping your cat indoors
- Give your pet all-natural or organic food, accessories, toys and use non-toxic cleaning products
- Scoop your pet's poop and keep it from washing into water bodies. Use natural litters for your cats and small animals.

**More tips at:** <http://www.liveearth.msn.com/green/htgpets>

**Tip:** All-natural options in pet care are expanding so be sure to look for them at your pet store and request them if they're not there.

## Natural Cleaning Products – Clean everything from the dishes to your toilet

using natural cleaners:

- Conventional cleaners are full of petroleum-based chemicals, which are potentially hazardous, but do not have to be listed on the package
- Ensure your family and pets stay healthy and aren't exposed to toxic chemicals in your home
- Cut waste by using your own containers for homemade cleaners, while you're at it wash and reuse rags instead of using paper towels
- Natural cleaners are safe to go down the drain and won't harm wildlife and water bodies  
(<http://www.shareguide.com/hazard.html>)

Natural cleaner recipes: <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/8088/clngrn.html>,  
<http://searchwarp.com/swa96569.htm>

**Tip:** Save money by making your own cleaners out of common household products like vinegar and baking soda and reuse containers to store your cleaners. Natural cleaners are also available at most natural food stores.

## **Switch to Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFLs) – Save energy and money:**

- CFLs can last up to 10 times longer than standard bulbs
- Save \$25 - \$30 over the lifetime of the bulb

**Other benefits:** (<http://fcgov.com/utilities/powertosave/lighting-cfl.php>)

Make sure to dispose of bulbs properly, as they contain a small amount of mercury

(<http://www.nema.org/lamprecycle/epafactsheet-cfl.pdf>)

**Tip:** Call to remind each other to purchase CFLs and replace traditional lightbulbs.

## Support Wind Energy in New Mexico – Subscribe to PNM’s Sky Blue Program:

- Power is produced at the New Mexico Wind Energy Center  
(<http://www.fplenergy.com/portfolio/pdf/newmexico.pdf>)
- You can purchase blocks of wind power or cover 90% of your monthly usage
- Visit [http://www.pnm.com/customers/sky\\_blue.htm](http://www.pnm.com/customers/sky_blue.htm) to sign up

**Tip:** Calculate the amount of blocks you can afford to purchase and remind each other of your new budgets.

## Switch to a more Fuel-Efficient Vehicle or a Hybrid –

- Getting more miles to the gallon means less CO<sub>2</sub> emitted per mile
- Save money on gas with fewer fill-ups
- Get tax incentives for the purchase of hybrid vehicles, learn more about hybrids at <http://www.hybridcars.com/>
- Use biodiesel if your vehicle runs on diesel and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 78%, there are currently two public pumps in New Mexico  
(<http://www.biodiesel.org/buyingbiodiesel/retailfuelingsites/showstate.asp?st=NM>)

**Tip:** If you are in the market for a new car, do research together on the best car for your needs.

## **Reduce or Eliminate Airplane Flights** – Flying puts out the most CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of any form of transportation:

- High CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the fact that these emissions are produced at high altitudes give airplane travel a more harmful impact
- Since 1990, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from air travel have increased by 83%  
([http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate\\_Change/What\\_You\\_Can\\_Do/air\\_travel.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate_Change/What_You_Can_Do/air_travel.asp))
- Use carbon offsets if you have to fly

**Tip:** Think about ways you both can reduce your flying. Take vacations closer to home, travel by train, bus, or car instead, and encourage your company to use web cameras in place of meetings that require travel.

**Purchase Carbon Offsets** – First, reduce your driving and flying as much as possible. Next, consider an offset to *compensate* for the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions you will still produce.

Carbon offsets:

- Help fund renewable energy projects, including wind and methane power, thereby reducing energy generated by polluting fossil-fuel sources
- **For more information and to purchase offsets try**  
<https://www.greentagsusa.org/greentags/newmexico.cfm> or <http://www.nativeenergy.com>  
or for a list of more vendors,  
[http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate\\_Change/What\\_You\\_Can\\_Do/carbon\\_neutral.asp](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate_Change/What_You_Can_Do/carbon_neutral.asp)

**Tip:** Brainstorm together about ways to reduce your driving and travelling.

Try setting up a carpool, planning when you will drive to eliminate multiple trips, and using public transportation, riding your bike, and walking.

## Use Green Building Materials – For your next construction or renovation project:

- Buildings have a huge impact on the environment, using 12% of our water, 70% of our electricity, producing 30% of our greenhouse gas emissions, and 65% of our waste

<http://www.architecture2030.org/>

- The U.S. Green Building Council (<http://www.usgbc.org/>) assigns ratings to green buildings using its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) system, which takes into account site planning, water management, energy management, material use, indoor environmental air quality, and innovation & design process

More information and educational events in New Mexico: <http://chapters.usgbc.org/newmexico/> ,  
<http://www.thegbi.org/newmexico/default.asp>

What materials are green?: <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=76&#3>,  
<http://www.toolbase.org/ToolbaseResources/level4FAQ.aspx?ContentDetailID=1122&BucketID=2&CategoryID=17>, <http://www.yourgreenhome.com/>

Look for reclaimed building materials to keep waste out of the landfill and save money:

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Green-Home-Building/2005-08-01/Used-Building-Materials.aspx>

**Tip:** Research green materials before starting projects and update each other on your progress.

## Install a Graywater System – It makes sense in any climate:

- All water that is used in the house, except from toilets, is classified as graywater and includes water from sinks, showers, and washing machines
- This water can be used for irrigation or as toilet water
- Benefits include reduced use of fresh water, less energy and chemical use for water treatment, and increased plant growth in graywater-irrigated areas
- Implement other water recycling fixtures, such as rain barrels and get a rebate in Albuquerque!  
(<http://www.cabq.gov/sustainability/green-goals/water/water> )

More information on graywater systems: <http://www.oasisdesign.net/greywater/index.htm>

Learn to harvest rainwater with rainbarrels: <http://www.rainbarrelguide.com/>

**Tip:** Start out with installing rainbarrels and then look into installing a graywater system.

Call or email your partner to remind them to take the first step and explore rebates in their area.

## Install a Solar Hot-Water Heater – Use the Sun to provide your hot water:

- Water circulates through a solar collector to get hot with a small photovoltaic cell to keep the water pumping ([http://www.nmsea.org/Downloads/NMSEA\\_Solar\\_Hot\\_Water\\_FAQ.pdf](http://www.nmsea.org/Downloads/NMSEA_Solar_Hot_Water_FAQ.pdf))
- Get Federal tax credits up to \$2,000 and New Mexico tax credits for installing a solar hot-water heater ([http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go\\_Solar\\_Guide.pdf](http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go_Solar_Guide.pdf))
- Reduce your energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions

**Find Solar Professionals in New Mexico:** <http://www.nmsea.org/prodirectory05/prodirectory05.htm>

**Tip:** Research and plan carefully with your partner if you decide to install a solar hot-water heater. Using the New Mexico Coalition for Clean and Affordable Energy's Go Solar Guide will help you understand the complexities ([http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go\\_Solar\\_Guide.pdf](http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go_Solar_Guide.pdf)).

## Make your yard greener – It's more than just planting a tree:

- Plant based on your climate, xeriscape to conserve water in arid climates (<http://www.xeriscape.org/whatis.html>)
- Plant native species of trees and shrubs and add a pond to create a refuge for wildlife (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/BkPond.html>)
- Fast-growing plants will remove more CO<sub>2</sub> from the air, try bamboo, which also makes a natural fence ([http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354\\_1603074\\_1603213\\_00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354_1603074_1603213_00.html))
- Water responsibly, use soakers hoses instead of sprinklers to target specific plants without watering the sidewalk

**Sustainable Lawn Information:** [http://www.eartheasy.com/grow\\_lawn\\_care.htm](http://www.eartheasy.com/grow_lawn_care.htm)

**Low-Impact Yard Tips:** <http://www.lowimpactliving.com/pages/newsletters/newsletter-gardening-march-2007>

*Tip:* Visit your local garden store to find native plants, soaker hoses, and mulch. Ask neighbors with yards you like if you can have clippings of their plants.

**Save Energy at Home** – Not only will your electricity bills be lower, but you'll also be putting less CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere:

- Do a home energy audit (<http://hes.lbl.gov/>) or get one done by a professional. You'll find the areas of your home that leak, need more insulation, or could otherwise be more energy efficient.
- Buy EPA Energy Star Products ([http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find\\_a\\_product.](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.)), they perform the same or better than comparable products, but use less energy.
- Receive tax credits for making some energy efficiency improvements ([http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr\\_tax\\_credits](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits))
- Drafts bothering you? Improving your home's insulation can increase your comfort.

**More tips at:** <http://www.energystar.gov/>

*Tip:* Follow the checklist at <http://hes.lbl.gov/hes/makingithappen/tips.html> for a series of steps you can take now that are no-cost or low-cost!

## Encourage Sustainable Practices at the Workplace – Suggest your company

look into:

- Switching to renewable energy, such as wind or solar
- Adopting a green travel policy – replacing meetings that require travel with video conferences and providing carbon offsets for necessary travel
- Setting up a carpool, allowing telecommuting, or switching to an alternate work schedule (four ten-hour days a week) to reduce the amount of commuting by employees
- Implementing a recycling program and purchasing recycled products
- Installing occupancy sensors to turn lights on only when a person is present in the room or based on the amount of daylight
- Installing energy-efficient light fixtures
- Installing water-saving fixtures, such as low-flow toilets and waterless urinals
- Using non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning supplies
- Serving local and organic food in the cafeteria and removing overly packaged and processed snacks from the vending machine
- Participating in community service projects
- Creating a sustainability policy and pledging to go carbon neutral by 2030

<http://www.architecture2030.org/>

**Tip:** Brainstorm together with your partner about which practices to encourage your workplace to adopt first. Start small, but make sure you know the benefits so you can include those in your proposal.

## **Start a Community Garden or Farm – Turn vacant land into productive land and invigorate your community:**

- Community gardens have many benefits beyond increasing food production and greening the neighborhood, they have psychological benefits, bring neighbors together, and provide a refuge from the urban environment (<http://www.communitygarden.org/whatgood.php>)
- Start close by, in your own backyard, a nearby empty lot, or in alleyways (<http://www.alleygardens.org/>)
- Consider approaching a neighborhood school that has space for a garden, agriculture can be a valuable part of their curriculum
- Find support from your neighbors, city officials, local nurseries, and gardening shops

**Detailed guidelines for starting a community farm: <http://www.communitygarden.org/starting.php>**

*Tip:* If you and your partner live nearby each other, why not embark on this project together? Otherwise help each other with planning and organizing.

## Install Photovoltaics on Your House – Use the Sun for all your energy needs:

- The sun provides clean, renewable energy that doesn't produce greenhouse gases or other air pollutants
- A solar electric system generally consists of three things: a photovoltaic (PV) module connected to the building, a battery if the system is off-grid, and an inverter which converts direct current (DC) produced by PV into alternating current (AC) (<http://www.ecw.org/infopackagedetail.php?infopackageid=11>)
- If you connect your PV system to the grid you can be paid by PNM for the renewable energy credits (RECs) you create and for the extra power you produce (<http://www.pnm.com/customers/pv/program.htm>)

Find Solar Professionals in New Mexico: <http://www.nmsea.org/prodirectory05/prodirectory05.htm>

More information about tax credits and incentives in New Mexico:

[http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go\\_Solar\\_Guide.pdf](http://nmccae.org/Downloads/Go_Solar_Guide.pdf)

**Tip:** A PV system is a large investment and may be a very long-term goal. Talk with your partner about a timetable that is feasible.

## **Build or Retrofit a Green Home – Reduce the impact of your house on the environment:**

- Generate your own power with PV or wind turbines or purchase renewable energy, strive toward making your home carbon neutral, with no net carbon dioxide emissions produced from your home's energy usage
- Minimize the size of your new home, a smaller house takes less energy to heat and cool
- Install efficient fixtures and appliances to reduce your use of electricity and water
- Use green building materials and practices (see the “Use Green Building Materials” slide)

**More information:** <http://www.sustainablebuild.co.uk/>,  
<http://realestate.msn.com/Improve/Article.aspx?cp-documentid=440485>,  
<http://www.greenhomeguide.com/>

**Tip:** Retrofitting your home or building a new home is an extensive process. Make a checklist with your partner of all the green features you want to include in your home.

**Develop an Ecovillage:** Form a community that treads lightly on the Earth and is dedicated to sustainability:

- Ecovillages build on three dimensions: social/community, ecological, and cultural/spiritual, to create a community which is "**successfully continuable into the indefinite future**"

(<http://gen.ecovillage.org/>)

- Start with an assessment of your community's sustainability -

<http://gen.ecovillage.org/activities/csa/English/index.php>

- Educate yourself about the dimensions of an ecovillage - <http://ecovillagedesignsouthwest.org/>

**More information:** <http://www.hopedance.org/new/issues/51/article4.html>,

<http://www.thefarm.org/etc/index.html>

**Find an ecovillage near you:** <http://ena.ecovillage.org/English/ecovillages/index.html>,

<http://directory.ic.org/>

**Tip:** Decide whether you want to start an ecovillage in an urban or rural setting. Then, begin to look for others who may be interested. Ask your partner for ideas, visit already existing ecovillages, and look into taking an ecovillage design course.