

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

It's that time of the year again. Christmas has come and gone; the dinners are over but not forgotten. Everybody is thinking about those few extra pounds and the extra debt the holidays brought. For many, it is time for New Year's resolutions!

The first resolutions that often come to mind are: "I'm going to go to the gym, time to lose those few extra pounds" and; "This year I am going to get out of debt and/or save money."

This year, let's achieve our goals and do it in an environmentally friendly way. Here are some ideas for your waist line, your wallet, and your local environment. No matter what your thoughts are on the environment, everybody realizes that pollution is a problem and so is the drought we are in.

### 1. Reuse before landfilling

After the holidays and the beginning of the New Year it's out with the old and in with the new. However, old items that are still usable shouldn't be thrown away. Old items that are still usable can be donated to some of the thrift stores, the upcycle store, The Bridge Emergency Shelter, or Second Chance, and Renew/Wings. Trying to dig out of debt or set aside a little money for a rainy day? Consider selling some of those usable items on one of our Facebook sale sites, eBay, or having a yard sale.

### 2. BYO

Bring your own shopping bags and to go containers. Using your own shopping bags cuts down on waste and helps the landfill staff by cutting down on windblown litter in the spring. Additionally, when you go out to eat in 2018 consider taking your own reusable containers with you. This will also benefit your health goals for the New Year as most of the Styrofoam to go containers are not really microwave safe. Keep those chemicals out of your body and those non-recyclable containers out of the landfill.

### 3. Recycle your packaging.

All of those cardboard and paperboard containers that get thrown away throughout the year are recyclable. Even better though, cardboard is one of the commodities that retains its value. Did you know that you can sell your cardboard to the landfill for recycling? That's right, for measurable amounts of cardboard, the landfill will pay you the fair market value of the commodity at the time less the cost to process it. Call in advance to find out what the prices for the month are. Keep the recyclables out of the landfill, put a few extra dollars away, and burn a few calories loading and unloading.

### 4. Use a reusable mug.

Brew your own coffee, use your own mug, and cut out all of the sugary extras. You will help your wallet, your waist, and save room in the landfill.

5. Change the way you wash produce.

Fill a bowl or dishpan with just enough water to soak your fruits and vegetables. If they have a tough skin, use a produce brush to scrub them thoroughly. Then dunk them in a second bowl of water to rinse them. Save the water to use later for watering house plants or garden plants. Home grown produce is a great way to eat healthy in the New Year.

6. Save cooking water to water your house and garden plants.

When you strain the water off of your potatoes, pasta, or vegetables, consider straining the water into another pan or bowl to reuse on your plants after the water cools. Not only will you be reusing the water, but you will be adding extra nutrients to the plants you water. If you make a habit out of using your water twice you can save money on your water bill to put away for later.

7. Repair leaks.

If you notice leaking faucets, drains, or hoses this year fix them as soon as possible to conserve water and your check book.

8. Use native, drought resistant plants and shrubs.

Do you have landscaping plans for 2018? Landscaping is a great way to burn calories while being productive. If you choose native, drought resistant plants you will also cut down on water consumption and save yourself some money when it comes time to maintain the work.

9. Use compost.

When you consider your landscaping needs, consider using compost from the landfill. The compost made at the landfill keeps organic materials out of the landfill. If landfilled, those organics could produce leachate and methane which could have potential to pollute groundwater or create explosions. Not only does compost keep organics out of the landfill, it will add nutrients to your soil, adjust the pH of the soil, and help your soil utilize water more efficiently.

10. Compost your food scraps.

If you have a home garden consider making your own compost from your food waste. If you are not interested in making your own compost, bring your food scraps to the landfill when you come to sell your cardboard. We will accept it at no charge. It is estimated that Montezuma County landfills approximately twenty-one tons of food each week. Help us to change that.

## 11. Do it right!

Learn what is acceptable or unacceptable in your recycling program. If you put items in the recycling bin that are unacceptable, not only will that item not be recycled, it may contaminate everything around it, causing materials that may have been recycled to be landfilled instead. If you have any questions, call the landfill.