



Kids Making a Difference Now! Parent Letter

Hello Orca families,

Tonight our program, Killer Whale Tales, will be working with your student to complete the "Kids Making a Difference Now!" orca conservation activity. The project's goal is to demonstrate that students throughout the region can make an immediate and positive impact on the overall health of the Puget Sound's Killer Whale population.

To do this, they will need your help and assistance in examining and recording their ecological footprint, both in their energy consumption habits and the products that they use around the home.

Simply assist your student in filling out the attached worksheet and return it to the classroom on the date specified by the teacher. The "laundry/checklist" is yours to post on your refrigerator to serve as a reminder to your student to continue to the work they started. There is also a resource sheet if you want to take things even further.

Killer Whale Tales will document their results and add them to the hundreds of other students throughout the region who are also participating in this project. The updated results will be posted on our website at www.killerwhaletales.org.

Hopefully you will have some time to work with your child on this activity and to demonstrate to them the powerful impact each of us can make. Even a tiny bit of change, when added to that of the other students in the class, can add up to an enormous difference in the environment, both for the whales and the planet. As a bonus, everyone who participates will receive orca trading cards!

If you have any questions please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

Thanks and we look forward to working with you!

Jeff Hogan
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Killer Whale Tales
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Kids Making a Difference Now!

Reminder List/ Resources

Post this list on your fridge or some place obvious to remind yourself of the changes you have made and will continue to make! Remember even a tiny change can make a big difference!

To Do:

LIMIT YOUR WATER CONSUMPTION TO THE FOLLOWING:

- When brushing teeth only use the water at the beginning and when finished.
- Limit showers to 5 minutes per day.
- Reduce the bathing water level by 1-2 inches.

For more information and tips go to www.h2ouse.com

REDUCE ELECTRICAL CONSUMPTION:

- Set all thermostats in your house for 68 degrees or less.
- Want to save more? Put on a sweat shirt and you could turn the heat down about 2 degrees. Add a sweater to that and take off another 3 degrees! That's 5 degrees, which will save you 15% on your home heating. That's saving whales and money!
- Turn down your hot water heater. Most manufacturers recommend 120 degrees.
- Want to save more? Put your hot water heater on a timer, set to about one hour before your high use time.
- Go through each room and unplug all rarely used items and make sure to switch off all unused lights.
- Use Compact Florescent light bulbs instead of regular light bulbs to reduce your home's electric bill.

REACH FOR UNBLEACHED:

- Look for paper products with oxygen instead of chlorine. This includes toilet paper, facial tissue, paper towels and office paper. Also buy oxygen bleach for your laundry. Recycled computer/copy paper is available at most Kinko's print shop as well as office supply stores, like Staples.
- On your next grocery run look for paper products that contain the most post-consumer content. Try for 80% or more. Most local groceries offer at least one recycled option.

For more information check out www.watoxics.org or www.rethinkpaper.org or www.seventhgeneration.com or www.ecomall.com

RECYCLE:

- If you don't already, separate your trash from your recyclables. One bag for paper products, one for glass, one for plastics and one for cans.
- Put paper towels out of reach, use a sponge or reusable washrag instead.
- Re-use paper grocery sacks or better yet replace them with sturdy cloth bags.
- Buy frequently used items like popcorn, cereal and soap in bulk.

For more information visit www.metrokc.gov/DNR/kidsweb

BUY ORGANIC:

- Concentrate your shopping dollars on buying as much organic food as possible. Even one piece of organically grown fruit will help. Look for food labeled organic that meets or exceeds the standards set by the USDA (www.ams.usda.gov/nop)

For more information visit www.kids.organic.org or www.pccnaturalmarkets/issues/pesticide.html or www.ewg.org or www.ota.com

SWIM THE EXTRA MILE:

- Can you walk or ride a bike instead of drive? How about busing or carpooling?
- Check out www.earthday.net/footprint/index.asp to see how many Earths it would take if everyone lived like you.
- Get involved! Stay up on current events and write your elected officials. Find their contact information at www.firstgov.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml

Kids Making a Difference Now! Helping Orcas At Your Home

Showering, Bathing and Brushing Facts

Every drop of water in your home has to be pumped from rivers, reservoirs, or underground caverns. That takes a lot of energy. Plus the more water we consume for ourselves and to generate electricity means less for salmon.

Time yourself. When brushing your teeth tonight how long is the water on?

_____ seconds

In the morning, when you brush again I cut that time by:

_____ seconds

Do you shower? If so, for how long?

_____ minutes

During my next shower I cut my time by:

_____ minutes/seconds

Or do you take a bath? If so, measure with a ruler the depth of the bathwater you use.

Normal Bath _____ inches

I reduced the amount of water in my next bath by:

_____ inches

Thermostat fact:

If we all turned down the heat by 5 degrees during the winter we would save the energy equivalent of 475,000 barrels of oil everyday. That means less pollution and a smaller chance of a catastrophic oil spill!

Check the thermostat in your house and record what it is set at. Can you turn it down? Make note of the change you made!

Temperature before: _____

Temperature after: _____

Electricity fact:

Here in the Northwest we get a lot of our power from hydro-electric dams. These dams generate electricity by blocking the free flow of river water and allowing gravity to draw the water through a turbine. These waters are also the habitat or our salmon.

Count the number of lights and electronic equipment currently using electricity.

(Make sure to include TV's, VCR's, DVD players, computers, especially those with remotes as they usually draw power even when they are off.)

Enter that number here: _____

I turned off or unplugged the following number of Lights/Equipment: _____

Have you replaced any conventional light bulbs with long lasting/energy saving fluorescent ones?

Yes No We will next time

Please list any other things that your family does to reduce their environmental impact:

Thanks for your help! Return this to your teacher and
 get your orca trading cards!



Kids Making a Difference Now!

Helping Orcas At Your Home

First name: _____

It is up to us to do something for the whales and the planet. A great deal of what is affecting the orcas can be fixed if we are all willing to make some changes at our homes. Investigate your ecological "foot print" by filling out the sheet below. Try your best and make changes where you can. Record the results and return them to your teacher by the due date. Remember, even a little change, when added to what everyone else is doing, can add up quickly.

Recycling Fact:

Packaging alone makes up 64 million tons by weight or 33% of all of our garbage. Last year alone King County residents threw away 4 pounds of trash per person each day! Recycling one aluminum can saves enough electricity to power your television for 3 hours. That's a lot of hydroelectric power saved, which means more safe habitat for salmon and more food for whales.

Do you recycle? (Circle one)

- Yes
- I started today
- Sorry, no recycling centers in our area
-

If so, what do you recycle: (Circle all you do)

- Paper
- Plastics
- Glass
- Newspaper
- Food (worm bin?)
- Cans

Organic Food Fact:

Organic food is produced using sustainable agricultural production practices. Not permitted are most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients, or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation. Organic meat, poultry eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. The USDA National Organic Program website has more information including inspection and certification information.

Checkout the food in your fridge and kitchen cabinets. Do you use products that have this label on the packaging? (Circle one)

Yes No



On your next shopping trip can you replace at least one of your normal food purchases with an organic product? (Circle one)

Yes No We will from now on

Recycled/Chlorine Paper Fact:

*If every household in the US replaced just **one** 12 pack of virgin fiber bathroom tissue with 100% recycled ones we could save 4.4 million trees and avoid 275,000 pounds of pollution! More trees means more habitat for salmon, which are orcas' main food source. Bleaching paper with chlorine compounds to make it whiter is one of the largest causes of toxic pollution in Washington State. This toxic contaminant is called Dioxin and is one of the most toxic chemicals known to man. Dioxin causes all sorts of immunological and reproductive problems in mammals.*

Check the packaging on the paper products in your home. Do the products you use say "chlorine free/ made with post consumer" or have this label on the packaging? (Circle one)

Yes No



On your next shopping trip can you replace at least one of your normal paper purchase with a chlorine free/recycled product? (Circle one)

Yes No We will from now on