



girl scouts

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forever green

Girl Scouts Forever Green Project Guide

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Girl Scouts of the USA

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Overview of Girl Scouts Forever Green

Girl Scouts Forever Green (GSFG), the Girl Scouts' 100th Anniversary Take Action Project, is a national effort of girls leading their families, schools, and communities in improving the environment and protecting natural resources. GSFG invites girls to Take Action on three major projects—Reduce Plastic Waste, Earth Hour, and Rain Gardens. Participants are also encouraged to take an online pledge stating their year-long commitment to GSFG efforts.

GSFG is timed to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouts and designed to continue in perpetuity as an annual event and a legacy for future generations.

The Three Girl Scouts Forever Green Projects

1. **Reduce Plastic Waste**

GOAL: to reduce the number of plastic bottles and bags

WHEN: the month of February

HOW: Participants use reusable water bottles and bags throughout the month.

PARTICIPANTS RECORD:

For reusable bottles

- # of times a reusable water bottle was refilled

For reusable bags

- # of times a reusable bag was used
- # of reusable bags given to others

2. **Earth Hour**

GOAL: to encourage sustainable behavior change, lower CO2 footprints, and save energy and money

WHEN: the month of March

HOW: Participants install ENERGY STAR[®] qualified, or other energy-efficient light bulbs – replacing incandescent bulbs, *and* participate in the symbolic Earth Hour event by turning off lights between 8:30 - 9:30 pm on the last Saturday of March.

PARTICIPANTS RECORD:

- # of ENERGY STAR[®] qualified or other energy-efficient light bulbs installed
- Participation in Earth Hour through registration

3. Rain Gardens

GOAL: to increase green space and wildlife habitat, and improve water quality by reducing water-borne pollutants running into streams, rivers, and other water supplies

WHEN: the month of April

HOW: Plant and maintain rain gardens at schools, homes, and other sites.

PARTICIPANTS RECORD:

- # of rain gardens constructed
- # of sq feet of green space planted
- # of new native plants/trees planted

Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge

All participants in GSFG, whether Girl Scouts or the public at large, are invited to take the online Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge (at www.girlscouts.org/geforevergreen), which asks participants to make a year-long commitment to take daily actions in their lives to protect the environment.

GSFG Participation Patch

All participants are eligible to receive the Girl Scouts Forever Green patch.



Leadership Benefits for Girls

As with all Girl Scout activities, Girl Scouts Forever Green gives girls the opportunity to develop leadership skills they can use now and throughout their lives. The GSFG projects are also well aligned with the *It's Your Planet—Love It!* journey series so girls are also climbing the GSUSA leadership ladder and earning their way to a journey's prestigious leadership awards. Through participation in GSFG, girls will:

- **Discover (themselves and their values)**
- **Connect (with others locally, and globally)**
- **Take Action (to make the world a better place)**

Positive Environmental Impact

Participation in GSFG will be recorded, and the environmental impact will be measured using the data collected for each project. Participants will be asked to enter specific data about their projects on the Girl Scouts Forever Green Web site www.girlscouts.org/gforevergreen. All data will be translated into the appropriate metrics of the natural resources being protected, and the collective nationwide environmental impact will be reported.

Girl Scouts Forever Green: Reducing Plastic Waste

Objective:

During the month of February, Girl Scouts across the country will learn about the effects of plastic waste in landfills and have the opportunity to choose from two primary ways to help reduce plastics:

1. Using and supporting the use of reusable bags (for shopping, school lunches, gym clothes, etc.) by either purchasing or making reusable bags.
2. Reducing the number of disposable plastic water bottles by using a refillable, reusable water bottle (preferably one made of stainless steel or aluminum).

How to do the project

Reusable Bags

- Have girls create a reusable bag from existing plastic grocery bags, or turn a treasured Girl Scout T-shirt into a sturdy bag—a great way to get the Girl Scout name out in the public and honor all the Girl Scout environmental efforts over the years as we celebrate the Movement's 100th anniversary. Invite the girls to be creative and come up with ideas, perhaps do a search on the Internet about how they can create a reusable bag. Girl Scouts Forever Green branded reusable bags will also be available for purchase in Girl Scout Shops for the national rollout, and possibly for pilot year 3 by January 2011.

Reduce Plastic Waste Activity: Treasured Girl Scout T-shirt Reusable Bag

3 SIMPLE STEPS:

1. Turn the shirt inside out and cut off each sleeve.
2. Using a medium sized bowl, trace a scoop in the neckline and cut that out.
3. By hand or using a sewing machine, sew across the bottom hem. Turn the shirt right side out.

- Now you have a reusable bag! Go shopping, carry your lunch, fill with papers and books, gym clothes...and record the number of times a reusable bag was used.



- Make more bags or get reusable bags donated and record how many bags you give out during the month.

Reusable Bottles

- Ask for girls to pick out a bottle or container (preferably not made out of plastic) they can fill with water and carry with them at all times to refill with tap water when thirsty. There are a variety of bottles to choose from in stores and online. Those made of stainless steel are recommended since they contain no BPA (Bisphenol A), an organic compound used to make many plastics and cause various health problems. Girls should consider the ease of use, cleaning and weight when selecting bottles. Currently on the market is a unique, light weight bottle that can be rolled up and slipped in a purse or bag. A GSFG branded reusable bottle will be available in Girl Scout Shops for national roll out and possibly for pilot year 3 by the end of January 2011.
- Participants can record the number of times they refilled their water bottle during the month of February. The “I Refilled My Water Bottle” sticker can be stuck on the bottle to help make tracking easier. (See Attachments for printing instructions) Even better, find a pen with a clip on it and clip it to bottle, if possible.

Ties to Girls Scouts’ core national leadership program

The water, waste, and energy use content of the Brownie, Junior, and Ambassador ***It’s Your Planet—Love It!*** leadership journeys and their award-earning projects especially dovetail with the Reduce Plastic Waste project. Girls enjoying these journeys can plan their journey project around this waste-reducing effort and also take advantage of the wealth of related journey content.

- **Girl Scout Brownies**, in particular, can make Reduce Plastic Waste a focus of their *WOW! Wonders of Water* journey, which emphasizes loving and saving water by ending the use of plastic water bottles. See pages 56-59 of the girls’ book and pages 70-74 of the adult guide for specific journey content that matches up with this GSFG project.
- **Girl Scout Juniors**, see the “Paper or Plastic” timeline starting on page 26 of the girls’ book, and the “Waste, Energy, and Wasted Energy” section starting on page 27. Girls can also “crochet” a reusable bag from plastic grocery bags after being inspired by the profile of “Recycle Cindy” on page 41 of the *GET MOVING* girls’ book.
- **Girl Scout Ambassadors**, girls can choose to “Do the Math” (Step 2 toward the Sage award) on water bottles or bags for one of their personal commitments to environmental justice. The “Do the Math” section of the journey begins on page 44 of the *JUSTICE* girls’ book. Also see

page 38 of the girls' book for information on the paper versus plastic grocery bag debate and the resources used to make these products; and page 46 for content on reducing waste, page 50 for details on resources used to make plastic containers; and pages 58-62 for specifics on plastic water bottles and their waste and wasted energy, and what girls can do about it. A specific "Do the Math" example involving bottled water is given on page 52 of the *JUSTICE* adult guide.

How to measure the impact

At the end of the month, participants 13 and older should be directed to the [GSFG Web Site](#) to the REGISTER AND SHARE tab to enter the data being collected for this project. Parents or volunteers will enter data for younger girls on the [GSFG Web Site](#). They will be asked their first name and zip code in order to identify the council (This enables Girl Scouts of the USA the means to let councils view their participation data – to see the results of the entire council's commitment to Girl Scouts Forever Green). Participants will be amazed to see the accumulated totals of everyone in the nation once they enter their personal figures.

On the site, the data collection for these two actions should be recorded as follows:

- For reusable bottles
 - The number of times a reusable water bottle was refilled
- For reusable bags
 - The number of times a reusable bag was used
 - The number of reusable bags given to others

Tools

- "I Refilled My Water Bottler" sticker (see Attachments of this guide for printing instructions) – Participants can put this sticker on their water bottle to record the number of times they refilled their bottle during the month of February.

Facts, Tips and Resources

Bring your own reusable bag

- Carry reusable bags *whenever and wherever* you shop; every reusable bag used prevents about 400 plastic bags from being used.
- Once used, plastic bags accumulate and persist for up to 1,000 years; every single piece of plastic ever manufactured is still on the planet—either in use, in landfills, as wind-blown litter on land or as toxic contaminants in water, including global river systems and oceans.
- More than 3,300 plastic-bag-related child deaths occur each year in the United States.
- In the United States, more than \$4 billion is spent each year by retailers giving away plastic bags.
- In the United States, 100 BILLION bags are used annually; it takes 12 million barrels of oil to make that many bags. Worldwide, we use more than one trillion plastic shopping bags a year.
- Every 13 plastic bags saved equals enough petroleum to drive a car one mile
- Single-use plastics and disposable plastics are some of the greatest sources of plastic pollution. Follow the “4 Rs” of sustainable living: [Refuse](#), Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. REFUSE single-use plastics today!
- Resources:
 - <http://42explore.com/recycle.htm> an internet recycling guide complete with site listings and activities for youth (highly rated)
 - <http://www.projectgreenbag.com/blog/2010/02/how-you-can-reduce-your-plastic-waste>
 - [The Plastic Pollution Coalition](#) advocates for the environment and the reduction of plastic pollution
 - <http://earth911.com/recycling/plastic/plastic-bottle-recycling-facts/> Plastic recycling facts
 - http://www.americanchemistry.com/plastics/sec_learning.asp?CID=1102&DID=4256
The American Chemistry Council – Plastics Learning Center
 - <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/recycle.htm> The National Institute Of Environmental Health Sciences Kids’ Page
 - <http://fakeplasticfish.com/2010/06/first-graders-learning-to-say-no-to-plastic-trash/> Young people learn to live life with less plastic

Break the Bottled Water Habit

- Making bottles to meet Americans' demand for bottled water requires more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel 100,000 cars for a year. Picture your average plastic water bottle. Now picture it filled $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way up with oil. That's about how much oil was needed to produce the bottle.
- Worldwide, 2.7 million tons of plastic are used to manufacture single-use water bottles each year. Americans consume 25 billion single-serve bottles and 8 out of 10 of those will end up in a land fill, or worse, find their way into our marine environment.
- Eighty-six percent of plastic water bottles used in the United States aren't recycled.
- If you don't feel comfortable drinking tap water, consider installing a filter on your faucet or getting a filtered pitcher you can keep in your refrigerator.
- 37,800 18-wheelers deliver bottled water around the country every week.
- If half a million Girl Scouts each recycled five plastic containers, they could save enough energy to power a CFL light bulb for 6,849 years.
- Resources:
 - See also Resources for Bring Your Own Reusable Bag above
 - <http://www.recycleworks.org/schools/greenschools.html>
 - <http://www.plasticsareforever.org/youthsummit/>
 - <http://www.mnn.com/food/healthy-eating-recipes/stories/5-reasons-not-to-drink-bottled-water>
 - <http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/exesum.asp>
 - <http://www.suite101.com/content/increased-use-of-bottled-water-a-waste-of-energy-a60416>
 - <http://www.bottledwaterblues.com/>

Girl Scouts Forever Green: Earth Hour

Objective:

During the month of March, Girl Scouts, their families, friends, and community affiliates will:

1. Change incandescent light bulbs to ENERGY STAR[®] qualified or other energy-efficient light bulbs.
2. On the last Saturday of March 2011 (March 26, 2011), Girl Scouts will unite with hundreds of millions of people around the world in turning off lights for one hour—Earth Hour—from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

How to do the project

Installing ENERGY STAR[®] or other energy efficient light bulbs

- Learn why you should [choose an energy-efficient light bulb](#). Know what ENERGY STAR[®] qualified means as you prepare to change out incandescent light bulbs to those that are more energy-efficient. Earning the ENERGY STAR[®] qualified label means products meet strict energy-efficiency guidelines set by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Lighting products that have earned the ENERGY STAR[®] deliver exceptional features, while using less energy.
- Decide which bulb is the correct one for your needs: Choosing between the various types of CFLs and deciding where to use them can be daunting. Here you'll find guidance on choosing the right bulbs for your fixtures. For an interactive learning experience, click on the [Choose a Light Guide](#). Find out [how to choose CFLs and where to use them](#)



Participating in Earth Hour

Since its inception, *Earth Hour Limited* has encouraged individuals, businesses and governments to turn off non-essential lights and other electrical appliances for one designated hour each year as a symbolic gesture to raise awareness of the need to take action on climate change. In 2010 Earth Hour was celebrated in 128 countries/regions, across 4,616 cities and towns

and saw world famous icons such as New York's Empire State Building, Mount Rushmore, The Eiffel Tower in Paris, The Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, The Sydney Opera House and London's Big Ben go dark.



[Earth Hour](#) encourages participants to go beyond the hour by making a pledge of ongoing sustainable action for the year ahead.

Girl Scouts will join Earth Hour in this symbolic global effort by turning off the lights from 8:30-9:30 pm on the last Saturday of March (March 26, 2011) and by combining the act of installing ENERGY STAR[®] or other energy-efficient light bulbs, to ultimately reduce carbon emissions throughout the year and beyond, while also increasing the visibility of Girl Scouts in every community. Join this effort and be sure to take photos to post on GSUSA's [Flickr](#) and Earth Hour's [Flickr](#) tool. Utilize social media (see *How to Engage Others in GSFG* in APPENDIX A of this guide).

As you plan your event for this one special hour, think of all the fun things you can do in the dark!

- Plan a candlelight dinner for your troop/group.
- Hold a treasure hunt by flashlight in your home or backyard,
- Play board games with your family, tell stories or sing songs.
- Ask participants to use wind-up flashlights and conduct a rededication ceremony with your Girl Scout community.
- Line a darkened bridge with [Earth Hour lanterns](#) – how many miles would that be?

Think of the impact 20,000, or even 40,000, girls in your council might have when everyone is doing the same thing at the same time – Girl Scout Council of California Central Coast can envision 11,000 girls lining the coast of California with lanterns. What do you see?

Earth Hour is more than just a symbolic switching off lights for one hour, once a year. It's about giving people a voice for saving our earth – for environmental sustainability. It's a way to help others see the importance of saving energy and money, of lowering our carbon footprint, and encouraging good habits towards a sustainable behavior change. It's about coming together with other Girl Scouts and people all over the world and celebrating our commitment to the one thing that unites us all – the planet!

Go to www.earthhour.org to get all the facts about this Earth Hour and how you can be a part of the world's largest movement to celebrate and protect the planet.

Ties to Girls Scouts' core national leadership program

The Junior, Cadette, and Ambassador ***It's Your Planet—Love It!*** journeys especially dovetail with the Earth Hour project. Girls enjoying these journeys can easily weave this GSFG energy-saving effort into their journey experience.

- **Girl Scout Juniors**, in particular, can use this effort for the “Now, What Can You Do?” challenge (see pages 18-19 of the *GET MOVING!* girls’ book), which offers plenty of great ideas for what to do in the dark. Girls can go even further by turning off the lights for an hour each week (or each day!), throughout the month of March. To get the girls familiar with energy and energy use, make the most of pages 10-13 in the girls’ book, and the pledge on the inside back cover of the girls’ book, especially the first three parts that directly relate to reducing energy use; the Team Energy Pledge, page 40 in the adult guide; Sample Session 4, which is all about Energy in Buildings; and the Energy Audit in Sample Sessions 5 & 6.
- **Girl Scout Cadettes** can prepare for their Earth Hour effort by getting familiar with the information on electricity and air pollution on page 35 of the *BREATHE* girls’ book; as well as the journey content on making electricity sustainable, in the “Feeling the Wind at Your Back” section that begins on page 91.
- **Girl Scout Ambassadors** will be able to find plenty to “Do the Math” about for Earth Hour, and can even use this effort in their commitment to a personal action that can have a positive impact on environmental justice. (See “The 6 Steps to Earning Sage,” page 8 in the *JUSTICE* adult guide; Sample Session 3, starting on page 46, including the details of “Do the Math,” beginning on page 49; and pages 45-63 of the *JUSTICE* girls’ book.

How to measure the impact

At the end of the month, participants 13 and older should be directed to the [GSFG Web Site](#) to the REGISTER AND SHARE tab to enter the data being collected for this project. Parents or volunteers will enter data for younger girls on the [GSFS Web Site](#). They will be asked their first name and zip code in order to identify the council (This enables Girl Scouts of the USA the means to let councils view their participation data – to see the results of the entire council’s commitment to Girl Scouts Forever Green). Participants will be amazed to see the accumulated totals of everyone in the nation once they enter their personal figures.

On the site, the data collection for these two actions should be recorded as follows:

- # of ENERGY STAR[®] qualified or other energy-efficient light bulbs installed
- # of people participating (through registration on website)

Tools

- Flip the Switch! Sticker (see Attachments for printing instructions) - Participants can put this sticker on light switch faceplates or beside light switches to remind people to turn off the lights.

Facts, Tips, and Resources

- If 3 million Girl Scouts turned off the light every time they left a room, more than 100,000 tons of carbon dioxide would be saved each year! JUST THINK WHAT WE, AS A MOVEMENT, CAN DO!
- An ENERGY STAR[®] qualified Compact Fluorescent Light bulb (CFL) can save more than \$40 in electricity costs over its lifetime and uses about 75% less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and lasts up to 10 times longer.
- An ENERGY STAR[®] qualified LED light bulb can last 25,000 hours; that means one installed in a newborn's nursery won't have to be changed until he or she graduates from college!
- Unplug electronics! [The U.S. Department of Energy](#) estimates that 5% of the average households energy consumption comes from appliances left on stand-by mode.
- If you turn off a power strip; you can reduce your home's electricity use by 40%.
- If you ride your bike to school then you can save 790 pounds of CO2 emissions per year.
- If you plan on using candles during Earth Hour, keep safety in mind and only use them with adult supervision. Consider the use of 100% beeswax or soy candles made of natural products instead of petroleum-based materials. These are gentler to our planet, smoke-free, non-toxic and non-allergenic.
- Resources:
 - http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup%26pgw_code=ILB All about ENERGY STAR[®] ratings
 - Your local electric and gas companies
 - Disney Friends for Change <http://disney.go.com/projectgreen/index.html>; Kids in action
 - Environmental quizzes, handouts, activities, and lessons http://www.earthcarecanada.com/earthcare_program/EarthCARE_lessons.asp
 - The EPA's site for an environmental club for kids <http://www.epa.gov/kids/>
 - <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/index.html>
 - Local science and children's museums
 - The U.S. Department of Energy, <http://www.energy.gov/forstudentsandkids.htm> a page for students and kids
 - Earth Hour home site: <http://www.earthhour.org/>

- Watch the Earth Hour Video for 2011 on You Tube:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Mxjbip6y04>
- Watch the Earth Hour Video for 2011 on Green Zone TV:
<http://www.greenzonetv.info/video/wwf-per-la-difesa-della-natura/earth-hour-2011-official-video>

Girl Scouts Forever Green: Rain Gardens

Objective:

In April, Girl Scouts, their families and friends will learn about, construct, and maintain rain gardens in their communities at schools, homes and other sites.

How to do the project

- Locate a good place
 - ◆ at least 10 feet from a house or building
 - ◆ away from the top of a septic system
 - ◆ on a gentle slope that catches downspout water
 - ◆ in the sun (is best)
- Test the soil. Soils vary greatly in fertility, drainage, and “pH” rating. It is best if you understand what kind of soils you are working with, and put in a garden suitable to the conditions you already have.
- Test your drainage by digging a hole 8 inches wide and 8 inches deep. Pour a bucket of water into it and see how long it takes to sink in. The water needs to go down an inch per hour. If it takes longer than that, you will need to do additional site preparation to improve infiltration.
- Prepare the site by adding peat moss/compost or sand based on the type of plants and existing soil; adjust the depth to create a dip in the middle where the water will collect.
- Contact your local authority to mark utility lines prior to digging!
- The lowest area (wettest zone – usually a depth of 6 inches) will contain plants that tolerate a lot of water.
- Choose plants based on the soil type (sand, clay, etc.) Plants with deep fibrous roots have an advantage and provide the most cleaning and filtration benefits. Success is greater when you start with small, rather than larger, healthy plants. They adapt to the conditions as they grow.
- Visually inspect and repair for erosion as needed.
- Water as needed.

- Weed regularly.
- Remove and replace dead and diseased vegetation.
- Replace mulch as needed.
- Make a sign for your Girl Scouts Forever Green rain garden “Maintained by _____.”

Ties to Girls Scouts’ core national leadership program

Each grade-level ***It’s Your Planet—Love It!*** journey and its award-earning project dovetails with the Rain Gardens project. Girls enjoying these journeys can easily fit their journey Take Action Project into this GSFG effort.

- **Girl Scout Daisies**, in particular, can match a Rain Garden to all they learn along the journey about native plants and natural habitats, and the need for fresh, clean water. Use the “Science Time: How Plants Drink” activity on page 58 of the *Between Earth and Sky* adult guide to show girls how plants drink water.
- **Girl Scout Brownies** can enjoy creating a rain garden in order to save water and improve water quality.
- **Girl Scout Juniors** can also view rain gardens as an energy saver.
- **Girl Scout Cadettes** can use a rain garden as a way to clear the air with green space. Make use of green space content on page 63, “Greening with Greenery” on pages 82-83, and the pledge (especially the line about planting native, air clearing greenery) on the inside back cover of the girls’ book.
- **Girl Scout Seniors** can use a rain garden to grow edible plants, thereby saving water, creating greenery *and* lowering their “food print.”
- **Girl Scout Ambassadors** can “Do the Math” on the water saved and green space created by a rain garden.

How to measure the impact

At the end of the month, participants 13 and older should be directed to the [GSFG Web Site](#) to the REGISTER AND SHARE tab to enter the data being collected for this project. Parents or volunteers will enter data for younger girls on the [GSFG Web Site](#). They will be asked their first name and zip code in order to identify the council. (This enables Girl Scouts of the USA the means to let councils view their participation data – to see the results of the entire council’s commitment to Girl Scouts Forever Green.) Participants will be amazed to see the accumulated totals of everyone in the nation once they enter their personal figures.

On the site, the data collections for rain gardens should be recorded as follows:

- # of square feet of rain gardens planted
- # of native plants/trees planted
- # of rain gardens constructed

Facts, Tips and Resources

- Rain gardens are planted depressions filled with native plants that capture and absorb storm water and serve as functional gardens.
- Rain gardens don't need to be fertilized or sprayed, only weeded and mulched.
- Rain gardens do not breed mosquitoes because they are shallow and are only built on soils with sufficient drainage; they'll dry out before mosquitoes can reproduce.
- They reduce the amount of lawn you have to maintain. This makes your yard a healthier place for children and pets.
- Rain gardens are lovely landscaping features.
- Rain garden plants create wildlife habitat and attract butterflies, birds, and other wildlife.
- A rain garden on your property, in community or other public spaces makes you part of a solution to storm water pollution. Rain gardens can potentially absorb hundreds of gallons of rain that would otherwise wash pollution down the street and into the nearest river, stream, or lake. Even small rain gardens can absorb a lot of rain.
- Resources:
 - Local botanical garden staff or volunteers
 - Local Horticultural Society
 - A state by state guide to regional plants, nurseries, community service organizations, etc. www.plantnative.org/index.htm
 - Master Gardener groups www.ahs.org/master_gardeners/index.htm
 - Local Agencies' Rain Garden Manuals www.raingardens.org
 - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping: Chesapeake Bay Watershed:
<http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake/>
 - www.wildflower.org/ The Lady Bird Johnson National Wildlife Center
 - Sustainable rain garden school projects
www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/school/teacher1.html

Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge

- As part of Girl Scouts Forever Green 100th Anniversary Take Action Project, girls will take and encourage their friends, families, school mates and communities to take the GSFG Pledge. By taking the GSFG Pledge, participants can check off actions that they commit to making in their daily lives and throughout the year to help protect the environment and conserve natural resources. Each pledge action has an environmental impact measurement associated with it. On the GSFG Web Site, the environmental impact from all pledge actions will be tallied and the overall impact on resource protection will be visually displayed. The pledge contributes to making Girl Scouts Forever Green sustainable beyond the action projects happening in February, March and April.
- GSUSA has worked in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop the pledge and determine the environmental impact each action will have in terms of energy and natural resources saved. The EPA has offered in-kind support in the development of the online GSFG Pledge page on the GSFG Web Site.

How to Take the Pledge

- Participants ages 13 and older can take the GSFG Pledge online at the [GSFG Web Site](#). Participants under the age of 13 must have a parent or guardian or responsible adult help them complete and submit the pledge online. Everyone who registers their participation in a Girl Scouts Forever Green project on the GSFG Web Site will automatically be invited to take the pledge while online. However, the general public who visits the GSFG Web Site and others who do not participate in GSFG projects at the councils are encouraged to participate by taking the online GSFG Pledge part of the Girl Scouts Forever Green effort.

Tools

- GSFG Pledge Card (see Attachments): girls can use this to record and take away in their own words or drawings what they commit to do, based on the pledge actions they took.

Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge

I pledge to:

Save Energy:

- Turn off lights and unplug electronics when not in use.
- Walk, bike, or take public transportation instead of using a car to go to school or work (enter mileage below) I travel __ miles to school or work.
- Turn off or put my computer and monitor on sleep mode while I'm away.
- Replace at least one light bulb in my home with an ENERGY STAR[®] qualified, or energy-efficient light bulb. I plan to replace __ lights (max. 50)

Choose ENERGY STAR[®] qualified products when replacements or new products are needed for my home. Check all that might apply in the next 12 months:

- Clothes Washer
- Dishwasher
- Refrigerator
- TV
- DVD/Blue-Ray Player
- Home Theatre in a Box (sound system)
- Computer
- Monitor
- Multi-Function Device
- Printer
- Light strings for holidays and special occasion.



Make my home heating and cooling system more efficient. I will:

- Set or program my thermostat to save energy while I'm asleep or away from home.
- Have my heating and cooling equipment tuned-up by a professional and change my air filter
- Seal obvious leaks in my home's outer walls, ceiling, windows, doors, and floors with caulk, spray foam, or weather stripping, and add insulation to the attic.

Enhance Green Space:

- Plant a tree to save energy by shading my home, and help take carbon (and greenhouse gas) out of the air.
- Plant a rain garden at my home, school, or another location.

Save Water:

- Turn off the water when brushing my teeth or shaving.
- Fix water leaks in my home. The most common leaks are dripping faucets or showerheads, running toilets, and outdoor leaks, such as garden hoses.

Choose water-efficient products, preferably with the WaterSense label when replacements or new products are needed for my home. Check all that might apply in the next 12 months:

- Showerhead
- Faucet/Faucet Aerator
- Toilet



Reduce Plastics:

- Use a refillable water bottle.
- Use reusable bags in place of plastic.
- Recycle or reuse plastics.

Spread the word:

- Encourage others to get involved in Girl Scouts Forever Green and take this pledge.
- Inform my elected local, state, and federal officials about my views on environmental policies and urge them to support legislation that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and promotes energy efficiency and renewable technologies.

The Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge, developed in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



APPENDIX A: How to Engage Others in Girl Scouts Forever Green

Foremost to remember in engaging others is to use the GSUSA brand guidelines for the service mark and correctly identify the project by name. Guidelines on the use of the Girl Scouts Forever Green service mark can be found in the [Girl Scout Brand Identity Center available on Pearl](#). (See the 100th anniversary assets towards the back of the resource to download the GSFG service mark which is to be used on all official documents regarding this project. You'll find versions in .tiff, .jpeg, and .ai).

Girl Scouts Forever Green (GSFG) is the full name of this project. Always refer to the project using consistent language in materials and communications and on web sites. The project uses the following name and subtitle:

Girl Scouts Forever Green
100th Anniversary Take Action Project

The title "Forever Green" or "Community Action Project" should not be used. Councils should not refer to other unrelated 100th anniversary projects they are planning as **Girl Scouts Forever Green** programs. Girl Scouts Forever Green is the name of this 100th anniversary endeavor only; it is not a theme for other programming.

- Be sure to include outside organizations with a similar interest (e.g. rain gardens: call your local botanical garden or find a master gardener in your community).
- Hand out GSFG Wallet Cards (see Attachments in this guide) that focus on your council's project, and invite others to join you! Use them as you network with others at meetings you or volunteers attend.
- Consider your entire community in your project and customize a GSFG Poster that showcases your council's GSFG project; it can be found in the Attachments of this guide. Put them in businesses, churches, and agencies that support your project in order to encourage community engagement.
- Use the "Flip the Switch!" stickers (see Attachments in this guide). Give each girl ten or more to pass out to her neighbors or businesses offering them an opportunity to join your efforts to "flip the switch" for Earth Hour.
- Your area schools may become involved as a willing partner by planting a rain garden as a class project or by encouraging students to bring their lunch in a reusable tote (see the Reduce Plastic Waste Activity: Treasured Girl Scout T-Shirt Reusable Bag)
- Create a GSFG web page on your council's web site to share more information about your council's project and plans. Be sure to include a prominent link to the [GSFG Web Site](#) using the GSFG Web Banners (see Attachments).

- Utilize social media and link to sites on your GSFG web page or section of your council’s web site. When participants share information about what they did using the social media links to GSUSA pages on [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#) and the [GSBlog](#), invite others to join them; more will learn about girls taking action in their community. Remember to have participants tag submissions with “gsforevergreen” and use the #gsforevergreen for Twitter.
- What businesses might want to be a partner with you? How might girls invite companies to join Girl Scouts Earth Hour project in turning lights out for one hour on the last Saturday in March? Does an agency have a place to plant a rain garden? Might stores encourage shoppers to bring their own reusable shopping bags?
- Is there a way to recruit new Girl Scout members that will tie to your project?
- Do the alumnae in your council have a role? Have you considered how you might engage them? GSFG provides a unique opportunity to attract, identify, and engage Girl Scout Alumnae. The tie to the 100th anniversary provides a “hook” that will pique their interest in reconnecting with the organization. The fact that they can participate in GSFG without leaving home or work, at no cost in terms of time or money, will appeal to them and make the decision to reengage and participate an easy one.
- Approach the following potential partners to work locally with your council to provide volunteers that could become GS volunteers to work with girls:
 - U.S. Green Building Council – Chapters in all 50 states with volunteers who can serve as experts in green technology and making buildings more environmentally friendly. Initially, one of the key ways to work together is to pair a USGBC volunteer with troops/groups, as subject matter experts. Another way is to invite USGBC volunteers to speak at and to participate in events. Directions for contacting a USGBC chapter in your locale are as follows:
 - Enter <http://www.usgbc.org/findachapter/chaplist.aspx> into your URL.
 - Find the Google Map and zoom to find your locale.
 - Click on the chapter pin located closest to your area.
 - The information you need will display after you click the pin

You are encouraged to reach out to the contact by phone or email to initiate a conversation about the best way to work together locally.
 - The National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National School Board Association have all agreed to encourage their membership to partner and support endeavors of GSUSA in promoting GSFG in schools.

ATTACHMENTS: (Posted on Basecamp)

Tools

- Girl Scouts Forever Green Pledge Card
The card template can be printed on Avery compatible label products with the following numbers: 3256, 3263, 33380, 3377, 3380, 3381, 5689, 8383, 8387, 8577. The cards measure 4 ¼" x 5 ½" and the template includes 4 cards per page.
- "I Refilled My Water Bottle" Sticker
The sticker template can be printed on Avery compatible label products with the following numbers: 15163, 18163, 5163, 5263, 5963, 8163, 8253, 8463, 8663, 18663, 48163, 55163, 58163, 48263, 48863, 48363, 8923, 18863, 55463. The stickers measure 2"x4" and include 10 labels per page.
- "Flip the Switch" Sticker
The sticker template can be printed on Avery compatible label products with the following numbers: 15160, 15510, 18160, 5160, 5260, 5520, 5810, 5960, 6970, 8160, 8250, 8460, 8810, 48160, 48460, 48960, 55160, 58160, 8920, 8860, 48860, 6241, 88560, 85560, 18260. The stickers measure 1" x 2 5/8 and include 30 labels per page.
- GSFG Patch Order Form

Promotional Resources

- GSFG Overview
- GSFG Wallet Cards
 - Girl Scouts Forever Green - Reduce Plastic Waste
 - Girl Scouts Forever Green - Earth Hour
 - Girl Scouts Forever Green - Rain Gardens

The card templates can be printed on Avery compatible business card products with the following numbers: 15871, 18871, 27871, 27881, 27882, 27883, 28371, 28865, 28873, 28876, 28877, 28878, 38871, 38873, 38876, 5371, 5376, 5377, 55876, 5870, 5871, 5872, 5873, 5874, 5876, 5877, 5878, 5882, 5911, 8271, 8371, 8376, 8377, 8471, 8476, 8571, 8865, 8870, 8871, 8872, 8873, 8874, 8875, 8876, 8877, 8878, 8879,

- GSFG Customizable Posters: Available in two sizes: 8"x10" and 16"x20"
 - Girl Scouts Forever Green - Reduce Plastic Waste

- Girl Scouts Forever Green – Earth Hour
- Girl Scouts Forever Green – Rain Gardens
- Web Banners: 250x250, 468x60, 600x90

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