

Several years ago, I wrote this article but decided to reprint it as it still applies. When April arrives, I always think of **Earth Day**, the first of which was held on April 22, 1970. At that time, an awareness of major environmental problems was created and some changes were made. Unfortunately over the years, we have continued to live in a disposable/wasteful society, perhaps even more than before because of all the new technology and inventions. Air, water, and land pollution are still major problems. Our landfills are full of megatons of things that could have been reused or recycled.

Please consider these facts before purchasing or throwing away items.

To decompose it takes:

Paper -	2 to 5 months
Leather -	25 – 40 years
Plastic -	50 to 80 years
Aluminum -	90 – 100 years
Styrofoam -	NEVER!

Sure, styrofoam is inexpensive and convenient, but what price are you willing to pay??? (There is a corn-based styrofoam that biodegrades quickly, but it doesn't seem to be used much.) Breaking styrofoam emits chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that deplete the ozone layer which protects our earth. This is one contributor to global warming. It affects the levels of the oceans as the ice on the mountains and polar regions melts. Flooding along the coastal areas could be a result. Global warming can also cause changes in weather patterns, which affect earth's water supply. This may force plants and animals to find new places to inhabit or become extinct.

As an elementary teacher for nearly 30 years, I taught environmental education as part of the curriculum and tried to make an impact on my students by putting into practice what I believe is necessary for our earth to continue in existence.

One of my favorite books is **The Lorax** by Dr. Seuss. **The Lorax** has a message for all of us, **“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.”**

Actually, caring just a little would help. There are many things we can do here at Our Savior. Turning out lights when not in use is one. Another is recycling. (There are gray tubs under the mailboxes and a bin in the secretary's office for recycling paper. Empty cardboard or plastic containers can be left on the carts in the kitchen if you don't want to take them home to your recycle bin.) Please don't put them in the trash. The Sheltons and I will recycle them. Lastly, another way is not using styrofoam. I appreciate the help of those who join me in this effort.

According to **Genesis 1, Psalm 8, and Psalm 104, God created man to rule the earth, use it for obtaining food, and to enjoy.** It takes all of us to help take care of our earth so it will be here for future generations. **Let's make every day Earth Day.**

Respectfully submitted, JoAnn Bringolf

