

When I think about making my garage more creation friendly, my first thought is to ditch the car! Riding a bike, walking or carpooling are all great ways to cut down on the amount of pollution given off by cars,

Next is to drive a car that is more eco-friendly. If you can afford it, that's a great idea. Electric cars and eco-friendly cars are improving all the time and should be coming down in cost.

Some car care items can help too - starting with not pouring oil down the drain when you change the oil in your car!

Go to a commercial car wash. I know that seems counterintuitive, but car washes use less water (80-140 gallons of water vs. an average of 45 at a car wash), and they are required to treat the water that they use. At home the detergents and toxins from your car go right into the watershed.

Use non-toxic paints, and give the extra to Habitat. How many people really use the extra paint to touch up the rooms?

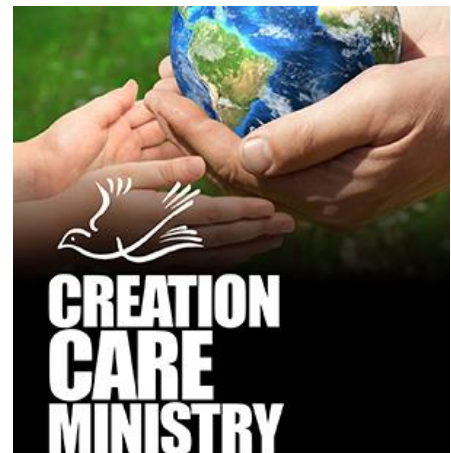
Check your appliances. Is it really worth the electricity to run that old refrigerator?

Make sure you have weatherstripping and insulation. Since we don't live in the garage, we often don't realize how much energy is lost through the cracks in the door or windows.

The garage is easy to overlook when you are finding ways to become more environmentally aware. If your garage is attached to your home it's even more important - you don't need to let that cold air in every time you open the door! Some three-car garages are about the size of a 1950's home!

Garages are great places to work on projects or sort out your recycling as well as parking your car. When you are planning your spring cleaning, here are a few ideas to make your garage "greener".

- Get rid of the toxic wastes - old fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides, and paints can be taken to the Missoula Water Quality District at certain times of the year.
- Repurpose what you have. Old wood can make great planter boxes, and old windows can make cold frames to start your plants early.
- De-clutter carefully. Try using Facebook groups or Craigslist to give away items you no longer use.



**Taking a more active  
role as Creation  
Caretakers**