

## **Reducing Your Carbon Footprint at Home**

With the introduction of the Sustainability Merit Badge at the upcoming 2013 National Jamboree, the Western Los Angeles County Council camps have been taking measures to reduce their carbon footprints. Here are some ways Scouts and their families can do the same in their daily lives.

### **Use Less Hot Water**

Just like boiling a pot of water on the gas stove, heating water requires some sort of energy. Reducing shower times will not only save water, but will also reduce energy costs as it runs through the water heater. If you have a pool, you can even replace your gas heater with solar power.

### **Use the Top Shelf of the Oven**

This useful idea can help reduce cooking time for many foods at the cost of crispiness. Heat rises. Therefore, the top of the oven will be hotter than the bottom and will cook your food faster.

### **Buy Local Products**

Shipping items not only costs the consumer more, but also uses fuel. By purchasing locally manufactured or grown goods, your family can cut down on fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### **Use Your Curtains**

Curtains can be used to trap heat in your house or keep it outside. During the winter, keep your curtains open during the day to let heat in and close them at night to keep it there. Doing the opposite during the summer can serve as its own kind of air conditioning.

### **Microwave Your Food**

Generally speaking, ovens and stoves take much longer to heat food than the microwave. Using the microwave instead will save you on energy costs and emit less CO<sub>2</sub>.

