

PFC Statement Celebrating Earth Day

April 22, 2021, is the 51st anniversary of Earth Day. The event was established in 1970 to celebrate our beautiful planet, the life it sustains, and to alert the public to the anthropogenic global environmental crisis. Despite 51 years of increased awareness and activism, our atmospheric temperature is rising faster than scientists ever expected. Climate status reports are more dire each year¹. Air and water pollution are still serious problems. Massive islands of plastic trash contaminate our oceans.²

Pittsburgh Freethought Community encourages everyone to celebrate Earth Day by rededicating ourselves to creating a healthy and sustainable planet for all life that will benefit generations to come. Privately and publicly, we must employ science, reason, and our humanist values to save our only home.

Individual actions:

1. Share your space with wildlife. More than 83% of land in the United States is privately owned³. When landscaping any piece of property you own or control, plant trees, shrubs, and flowers that are native to your region. They will in turn attract native insects and birds. Avoid large areas of sterile lawn and synthetic herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers, which are hazardous to wildlife. Remove invasive, non-native species when possible.
2. **Refuse** all single-use plastics. **Reduce** your use of all plastics, paper, glass, and metals as much as possible. **Reuse** as many materials as possible. **Recycle** everything you can.
3. **Stop buying bottled water.** Install water filtration in your home and use only reusable beverage containers. Not only will these reduce plastics pollution, but they are also less expensive over time.
4. Monitor your local air and water quality. Understand the sources of pollution in your neighborhood and hold polluters accountable.
5. Spay and neuter your pets. Protect wildlife by keeping your pets indoors or on a leash.
6. Reduce or eliminate your consumption of meat and dairy products. Factory farming and animal agriculture significantly contribute to the climate crisis and other environmental devastation.⁴
7. Buy organic foods as much as possible and grow your own vegetables.
8. Reduce your reliance on motor vehicles. Use public transport instead of driving. Ride a bike or walk instead of taking the bus.
9. Reduce your reliance on fossil fuels. Research and install greener appliances and energy sources in your home.
10. **Vote** for candidates who support environmentalism.

Civic actions:

1. Participate in neighborhood clean-ups, beautification, and public gardening projects.
2. Organize car or van pools with your neighbors and coworkers.
3. Lobby your elected officials to make recycling easier, not harder, and to expand public transit and design public spaces to favor walking and biking over motor vehicles.
4. Lobby your elected officials to operate as sustainably as you do.
5. Volunteer for candidates for public office who understand the severity of the climate crisis and are willing to protect public lands and encourage sustainable industry.
6. Promote Meatless Mondays and sustainable diets in your schools, organizations, businesses, places of employment, and restaurants.

Mother Earth is fighting for her life. There is no Planet B.

Every day is Earth Day.

¹ [World Meteorological Organization Report](#) December 2, 2020

² NOAA [National Ocean Service Report](#)

³ Douglas W. Tallamy, *Nature's Best Hope* (Princeton: Timber Press Inc., 2019), p. 25.

⁴ [11 Facts About Factory Farming](#)