



Treasuring Home Pledge Drive



Take a closer look at the nature of the place you live. The environment around us not only provides the water, air, and resources we need to sustain us, it offers us a unique *sense of place*.

Valuing and caring for your community's natural resources and unique landscapes is critical to creating a healthier and more sustainable environment for the future...and it all starts with you.

Audubon International's Treasuring Home Pledge is a simple way to raise awareness and help homeowners in your community take action. The pledge includes simple indoor and outdoor conservation activities for homeowners, as well as steps for extending environmental stewardship from households to neighborhoods and communities.

Getting Started

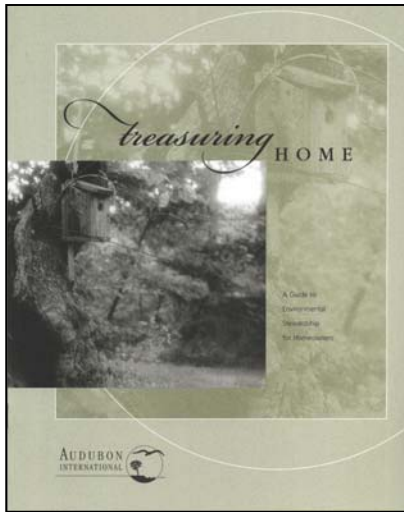
One of the most effective ways to promote the Treasuring Home Pledge is through a pledge drive. The more homeowners that take the pledge, the greater the benefit to your community.

1. Set a goal.

Decide what percentage of homeowners you want to target to take the pledge. A goal of ten percent is reasonable, though you may want to strive for more eventually. A target goal will help you focus your promotional efforts and give you cause for celebration when you reach it. Also determine a deadline by which you want people to take the pledge. This discourages procrastination and gives you a concrete timeline for the project.

2. Paper or Electronic?

Decide upon the easiest way for you to distribute and track the pledge. Some communities provide hard copies of the pledge to homeowners and direct people to a central drop off location for completed pledges. Others have included the pledge with newsletters, water bills, or other mailings. The neighborhood/community coordinator then tallies the results and sends them to Audubon International staff. Another option is to direct homeowners to the online Treasuring Home Pledge offered at Audubon International's Web site. This electronic version is easy to use and our staff can track results sent in by your community.



Treasuring Home: A Guide to Environmental Stewardship for Homeowners is a 12-page guide that offers background information and tips to help homeowners turn their Treasuring Home Pledge into action. The Guide is available from Audubon International for a donation of \$35 or more. It can also be purchased in bulk for larger distribution to your community. To find out more, contact:

audubon@auduboninternational.org

3. Focus on promotion.

To be successful, you must get the word out and create some excitement about the Treasuring Home Pledge. Choose one or more promotional methods, such as mailings or flyers, use of an e-mail listserve, or announcements at educational workshops or recreational events. Here are several ideas:

- Distribute the pledge directly to homeowners, along with information about your involvement with Audubon International. Ask people to respond by a given date.
- Publish an article in your community newsletter and Web site to create interest and provide information about the unique nature of your community.
- Host a homeowner event or informative workshop to share tips for indoor and outdoor stewardship activities. Distribute the pledge to attendees to reinforce concepts taught.
- Post a bulletin board display in a central location. Include a pledge drive “thermometer” or other gauge to help keep the pledge in front of residents, remind them to participate, and show how well you are meeting your goal.
- Don’t forget to promote the pledge to new homeowners, too. The pledge sends a message of good stewardship to new residents and serves as a welcome to a caring community. Consider giving new residents a gift of the *Treasuring Home Guide*, a companion to the pledge that provides greater detail on ways homeowners can take action.

4. Track your results and celebrate your success.

Work with Audubon International to track how many pledges have been returned. Responses to the pledge (and survey) may help to inform future community outreach programs or projects. For example, you may notice that homeowners express a strong interest in protecting water quality, planting native trees and shrubs, or gardening for butterflies. You can use this information to plan appropriate follow-up activities.

Also decide how you want to celebrate the results. You’ll want to inform homeowners of the outcome through newsletter articles, community events, or Web-based information. Be sure to thank participants and encourage follow through on stewardship actions outlined in the pledge.

The Treasuring Home Pledge

Practicing good environmental stewardship in and around your home is a vital way to make a positive contribution to the environment where you live. Please take the pledge to support community efforts to enhance and protect the environment for present and future generations.

I pledge to do the following things to protect the natural resources and unique landscapes at my home (please check):

INDOORS

- Practice good habits. Get all family members into the habit conserving water and energy.
- Save water by shutting it off during teeth brushing and shaving; take shorter showers; and run appliances on full loads.
- Make inexpensive upgrades, such as installing low-flow aerators.
- Replace older, large tank toilets with low-flush models.
- Conduct a home energy audit and keeping your furnace tuned up.
- Switch to compact florescent light bulbs.
- Invest in home improvements, such as better insulation and energy efficient appliances.
- Reduce waste. Consider what you need, buy products that last, and avoid overly packaged items.
- Choose reusable products.
- Recycle paper, glass, plastic, and metal; purchase products with recycled content.

OUTDOORS

- Landscape primarily with native species of trees, shrubs, and flowers.
- Leave some natural areas for wildlife in your yard, such as hedgerows and shrubby areas.
- Maintain water for wildlife, such as a bird bath, small pool, or pond.
- Get to know your region by becoming more familiar with local natural areas, plants, and wildlife.
- Plant various heights and types of plants, from ground cover to shrubs and trees.
- Use water wisely outdoors to maximize efficiency and minimize waste.
- Protect water quality through proper lawn care, auto repair, and septic maintenance.
- Maintain healthy soils for a healthy lawn.
- Mow the lawn at the proper height and with sharp blades to keep it healthy and looking good.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of harmful chemicals.

BEYOND YOUR BACKYARD

- Share your success. Encourage family and friends to participate in environmental stewardship activities and take the Treasuring Home Pledge.
- Take good stewardship to work. Businesses can save resources and money by improving environmental performance.
- Get involved with a local homeowners or neighborhood association to implement neighborhood environmental stewardship projects.
- Purchase locally-grown and produced products and recycled goods when possible.
- Drive smart! Combine trips, carpool or use public transportation when possible, and purchase an energy efficient vehicle.
- Offer to help a local school get involved in environmental education and stewardship.
- Organize or participate in community-wide environmental improvement projects.
- Support the protection of local natural assets, such as wetlands, agricultural lands, or wildlife habitats.
- Participate in community planning efforts in support of local conservation and environmentally-sensitive growth.
- Participate in Audubon International's Sustainable Communities Program.

Signed _____ Date _____ [OVER]



Treasuring Home Survey

We'd like to find out more about your thoughts regarding the environment and your community. Please take a moment to return this survey with your Pledge. Please print clearly!

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Province _____ Zip _____
E-mail _____
Neighborhood/Community Name _____

What actions would you like to see your neighborhood/community take to address environmental concerns?

LAND

- Conduct a community-wide assessment of natural areas and resources
- Protect wildlife and habitats
- Preserve open space/natural areas
- Protect scenic vistas
- Promote agriculture, conserve farm/ranch lands
- Improve comprehensive planning/zoning

WATER

- Conserve water
- Ensure sustainable water supplies
- Protect drinking water quality
- Minimize stormwater runoff
- Improve water quality in lakes, streams, rivers, etc.
- Improve access to water resources for recreation

ENERGY

- Conserve energy
- Promote renewable or alternative energy sources
- Improve energy supply options for consumers
- Work toward energy independence

WASTE

- Reduce waste generated
- Expand recycling services
- Increase recycling participation rates
- Address waste disposal issues (e.g., pick-up, waste transfer, landfill, incinerator)

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- Expand opportunities for youth to learn about the environment
- Educate and involve homeowners in environmental initiatives or programs
- Expand nature trails
- Use signage to highlight environmentally-significant community assets

COMMUNITY/SUSTAINABILITY

- Improve recreational opportunities
- Promote community service
- Improve compliance with community standards
- Expand mass transit options
- Expand pedestrian and bicycle trails
- Promote natural heritage tourism
- Focus on community sustainability issues (e.g., quality of life, economy, environment, social needs, without depleting resources for future generations)

OTHER :

Please list skills or expertise that you would be willing to share to improve your neighborhood/community?

Please send your completed pledge and survey to:

Treasuring Home, c/o Audubon International, 46 Rarick Road, Selkirk, NY 12158

Or pledge online at:

www.auduboninternational.org

Optional:

Include a tax-deductible donation of \$35 or more to Audubon International to receive a *Treasuring Home Guide* and a one-year subscription to *Stewardship News*.