

# *Do we really need to buy that?*

*“The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants;” (Isaiah 24.5a)*

These words are from a prophesy regarding the devastation God will bring about in the world because of the sin of humankind.

Perhaps, however, we can read them out of that context and consider that the earth now lies polluted in large part due to its inhabitants’ production of waste from overconsumption of resources and products.

I know I am part of the problem. My husband and I are having a new house built. We believe there are good reasons for us to do this at this time, but we are dismayed over how much material is wasted even despite the surprisingly good use of end cuts by some of our contractors.

Of particular concern, primarily in the developed world, are our levels of single, or short, use consumption, often for



reasons of convenience, instant gratification or just our need for the newest version of something.

We regularly hear of the problem of single-use plastics, a list which is much longer than straws, grocery bags and food packaging, but the low or short-term use issue also applies to clothing, electronics and other gadgets, and cleaning and health products, to mention just some.

It is difficult to swim against this societal tide, but we must each take steps to recognize when an item will have a short lifespan, consider whether we need it, and be prepared with multi-use alternatives and ways.

---

---

***“As Katharine Hayhoe has said, “accounting for climate change isn’t a luxury or an evil: it’s an essential part of every decision we make.”***

---

---

As Katharine Hayhoe has said, “accounting for climate change isn’t a luxury or an evil: it’s an essential part of every decision we make.” (from her essay *Where Will We Be in 10 Years?*).

**INDIVIDUAL ACTION:** Consider your everyday purchases and how you can reduce waste, maybe deciding you don’t need an item, or choosing something with less packaging; here’s a list of 21 Ideas for Zero Waste Living to get you started (from [one-treeplanted.org](http://one-treeplanted.org)).

**PARISH ACTION:** Organize

a garbage clean-up event in a parish neighbourhood, beside a highway or on a beach. Host a brainstorming session on reducing the church’s waste.

**RESOURCES:** (links and more resources at [nb.anglican.ca/GreeningUp](http://nb.anglican.ca/GreeningUp)):

- Towards a Pollution Free Planet (United Nations Environment Assembly 2017)
- Zero Waste Canada ([zerowastecanada.ca/](http://zerowastecanada.ca/))

***Cheryl Jacobs worships at Christ Church Cathedral and is trying to live greener...***