

- **Wash your car on the grass** – avoid washing your car on the street or driveway to prevent detergent going into the stormwater drain and straight into a river or sea. Wash your car on the grass or at a service station carwash where they re-use and treat water before it goes into the sea.
- **Say no to plastic bags** – if you don't need a plastic bag, don't take it. You can take your own bags to the shops.
- **Plant native trees** – either in your backyard or join a community planting. Native trees provide homes for birds and help build a green corridor between larger bush areas.

Be the Difference

Help the Wellington region's environment for generations to come



greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL



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Making a difference to the Wellington region

Greater Wellington Regional Council has set up the Be the Difference programme to encourage everyone to take personal responsibility for the environment of the Wellington region.

From the Kapiti Coast, across to the Wairarapa, down through the Hutt Valley into Wellington city, our region has a special range of plants, animals, river and sea life. Looking after our environment means we can all enjoy the outdoors in unspoilt beauty.

Greater Wellington is working towards a more sustainable region. We can't achieve that goal on our own – we need to encourage residents, community organisations and other agencies to help. Research has shown us that more than 78% of the region's residents believe they can personally make a positive difference to the environment. Be the Difference gives you the opportunity, and the information, to do just that.



We can help you make a difference

We can't change the world overnight but we can take small steps in our everyday lives. For example, in the last ten years, New Zealanders have taken to recycling. Sorting out recyclables before they become rubbish is now normal daily behaviour for many of us. There are many other things you can do but sometimes we just need prompting.

Be the Difference has two parts:

- **A household membership programme.**

Residents can join this programme using a sign-up brochure (contact details are on the back page) or the website

www.bethedifference.gw.govt.nz

Members will receive information packs on different environmental issues about three times a year. These will contain information, tips and advice about how to live more sustainably.

- **A community group pilot programme.**

Greater Wellington is working with some community groups, such as service clubs and residents' associations, to help them to make a difference. Groups can get involved in a number of ways, from learning more about environmental issues and ways to be more environmentally friendly to taking part in environmental projects.

How you can make a difference

Be the Difference covers a range of environmental issues including water quality and conservation, improving air quality, getting sorted on rubbish, reducing energy use and bringing back the birds and the bush.

Here are some small changes you can make:

- **Start composting** – forty-five percent of the average rubbish bag can be composted. It's easy to compost and fantastic for your garden.
- **Save water in the garden** – nearly a third of all household water use goes on the garden and much of it is wasted. Water early or late in the day (avoid the heat of the day) and use a hand-held hose rather than a sprinkler.
- **Reduce car trips** – driving short distances (e.g. under 2km) contributes the most to air pollution. Walk, cycle, ride share or combine your trips and breathe easier.

