



CLIMATE ACTION NEWSLETTER



SHOMREI HA'ADAMAH



Guardians of the Earth

FROM THE DESK OF THE CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Welcome to the second edition of the Shomrei Ha'Adamah newsletter. The name of our newsletter means guardians of the earth. This is both our directive as humans and our mission in working on the environment from a social action perspective.

In this edition, we celebrate Earth Day as well as the Jewish festivals at this time of year including Passover, Lag B'Omer, and Shavuot.

"Our Power, Our Planet" is Earth Day 2026's theme reflecting a fundamental truth: environmental progress doesn't depend on any single administration or election.

The EPA was formed because of Earth Day. Democrats, Republicans and people from all walks of life came together to support Earth Day. By the end of 1970, it resulted in the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, as well as the passing of significant environmental laws like the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act, among others. Each year, it's estimated that about a billion people participate in Earth Day in their own ways, big and small. That makes up about 15% of the world's population. What's more, this makes **Earth Day the largest secular celebration in the world**. Learn more about Earth Day [here](#).

The Earth Day Anthem, the song "Earth Anthem," was written by Indian poet Abhay Kumar in 2013 and has since been recorded in all official UN languages.

CHEVREI TZEDEK'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

➤➤➤ FACILITIES AND CLEAN ENERGY

Energy prices are soaring, and it's a good time to check if there are actions that you can take in your own home- and share them with your neighbors!

- Reduce “phantom power” - energy that is drained from appliances and devices even if they are turned off. Learn more at <https://saveonenergy.ca/en/For-Your-Home/Advice-and-Tips/Phantom-power>
- Get an energy audit to identify areas in your home where you can make changes to reduce your energy use. Learn more at: <https://bgesmartenergy.com/residential/help-me-save/home-performance/audit>
- Go solar! Even if you rent or live in an apartment or condo, you can have your energy provided by a solar company. Chevrei Tzedek partners with Neighborhood Sun to connect BGE customers with a local solar farm. There are farms currently producing electricity, and give a 10-20% discount off the electrical portion of your BGE bill. Learn more by clicking [here](#).

➤➤➤ FOOD AND FOOD WASTE

The Baltimore County website has extensive information on waste reduction [here](#), as well as links to free in-depth resources to assist with meal planning, food storage, and tips to make certain that all the food in your refrigerator is eaten before it spoils.

Here are a few tips that were listed:

- Learn about meal planning, smart shopping and strategically storing food by reading the EPA's at-home tips.
- Designate a spot at the front of the fridge as the “Eat First” zone. Only snack from the “Eat First” zone.
- Use a dry erase marker or washable food label to date all perishable items in the fridge. Both are easily removed with an alcohol-based cleaner, such as common “all purpose” cleaners.
- Move older items to the front shelf. Use them for meal planning, snacks, or a quick meal after a hectic day.

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➤➤➤ FOOD AND FOOD WASTE

Composting: For those who live in Baltimore City you can go to <https://www.baltimorecity.gov/publicworks/baltimore-zero-waste-coalition/food-scrap-drop-pilot-program> to find information about the city's Food Scrap Drop-Off Program.

There you will find a map of the five residential "food scrap recycling centers" (= compost collection centers) in addition to a list of the items that are accepted for drop off and how they should be brought to the centers (no plastic bags). The locations listed are ONLY for Baltimore City residents.

Sadly, there is no compost collection in Baltimore County. However, there is some information about how to start home composting organic material at baltimorecountymd.gov/composting

DID YOU KNOW?

- Americans produce 292.4 million tons of solid waste yearly—or about 5 pounds per person daily.
- The average American uses 80-100 gallons of water daily, largely thanks to flushing toilets, doing laundry, and taking daily showers.
- 30-40% of the American food supply is wasted annually, roughly equal to 218.9 pounds per person per year.

➤➤➤ ADVOCACY

Maryland Bottle Bill Update: Beverage container deposit programs, also known as "bottle bills," are a proven, highly effective policy for recovering used beverage containers and reducing litter. The Maryland General Assembly again considered a bottle bill this session, The *Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program* ([HB0331](#), [SB342](#)) but, **unfortunately these bills did not advance this year.**

About 5.5 billion beverage containers are sold in Maryland annually. Despite widespread availability of curbside collection of recyclables and public recycling receptacles, only a quarter of the containers (25%) are captured for recycling. It is estimated that a Maryland bottle bill would increase the recycling rate to more than 90%. A small deposit would be added to the purchase price of beverage containers that is refunded to customers when the containers are returned for recycling.

According to the Maryland Sierra Club, this year's bottle bill made great progress with additional supporters in the legislature and with new coalition partners, and had good committee hearings. They believe it has a good chance for passage next legislative session, which is not an election year, and it will be a priority for 2027.

CHEVREI TZEDEK'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

>>> EDUCATION

Earth Day started in 1970 and is celebrated on April 22nd each year (though some consider Tu B'Shvat to have been the original Earth Day). Now, it serves as a day for celebration of our environment and is a time for us to focus on protecting it. If you are excited about Earth Day, please consider joining Chevrei Tzedek's Climate Team by contacting Sally Grobani.

Want to work on the environment from your home? Consider action related to some of the principles of Earth Day: try writing to or calling your representative about the bottle bill, try no meat Mondays, or plant a tree. Every action counts, and when we work together, we can have a significant impact to protect the world!

**EARTH DAY
APRIL 22, 2026**

>>> FINANCE

Passover and Lag B'Omer both teach that freedom is not only a gift, but a responsibility. Passover tells the story of a people moving from bondage toward liberation, and Lag B'Omer reminds us that fire can symbolize light, endurance, and hidden strength. Together, they ask not only how we are saved, but what kind of world we will build once we are free. That question speaks powerfully to the climate crisis. Chevrei Tzedek's Climate Action Plan reminds us that climate change is not a distant problem; it is already visible in flooding, extreme heat, and unequal burdens on families and neighborhoods. Our work toward resilience, equity, and carbon neutrality reflects a moral truth present in both holidays: we are obligated to protect life, repair harm, and leave something better for the next generation. Passover calls us to remember the cost of oppression and move forward with purpose. In climate terms, that means examining the habits, systems, and purchases that tie us to waste and harm—and choosing differently. Lag B'Omer teaches that holy fire is not what consumes, but what illuminates. It calls us to carry light, and Chevrei's climate plan asks us to turn that light into action: less pollution, greater resilience, and more justice for those bearing the greatest burden. So let these holidays call us to act in our own lives:

- Passover: This year, I will make one financial change that supports climate freedom—reducing waste, choosing lower-impact purchases, or directing money toward cleaner, more just solutions.
- Lag B'Omer: This year, I will use one financial decision—a donation, banking choice, investment review, or purchase—to support resilience, reduce harm, and help build a safer future.

If Passover is the journey out of Egypt, and Lag B'Omer the fire that lights the way, then our task is to carry that light into the world through how we live, spend, save, and give.