HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Ten Tips For A Healthy Home

(NAPSA)—A few simple changes at home can go a long way to reducing high energy bills as well as helping to fight global warming. And because healthy people start with a healthy environment, taking small steps to "go green" can also have a long-term impact on your well-being.

"There's a direct link between environmental health and human health," says Kathy Gerwig, Vice President and Environmental Stewardship Officer for Kaiser Permanente. "We're constantly looking at ways to decrease our impact on the environment while working to create healthier communities, and starting in the home is essential."

To help address growing environmental concerns at the local level, Kaiser Permanente environmental experts have developed the following tips for those who want to create healthy, greener homes:

1. **Buy smart.** Buy only the quantity that will be used and purchase durable and reusable goods whenever possible. Choose products made with recycled materials and with minimal or recyclable packaging.

2. **Avoid harmful chemicals.** Use unscented products, avoid polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and investigate the contents of the cosmetics and personal care products you use (cosmeticsdatabase.com). Avoid children's jewelry that contains lead and toys that contain phthalates. Use detergents that don't contain phosphates and avoid bleach.

3. **Make your own cleaning supplies.** Using simple ingredients such as baking soda, soap

Making a few smart choices—such as buying recyclable products—can help make your home greener.

and vinegar, you can make cheap, easy and nontoxic cleaning products that work. Additionally, you save money and improve indoor air quality.

4. **Reduce paper and plastic shopping bags.** While shopping, if you buy only a few products, don't take a bag. For larger quantities, bring your own reusable bags.

5. **Buy local.** For example, in 2007, Kaiser Permanente bought 60 tons of locally grown, sustainably farmed produce for its hospital meals. Buying locally produced fruits and vegetables saves energy by reducing the amount of fossil fuels needed to transport the items around the globe. Additionally, the food is fresher and tastier. The not-for-profit organization also sponsors 30 farmers' markets at its facilities around the country.

6. **Change your thermostat.** Set your thermostat a few degrees lower in the winter and a few degrees higher in the summer.

7. **Install energy-saving devices.** Install low-flow showerheads and take shorter showers to save water and energy used to heat it. Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible and use a drying rack or clothesline. Last year, the not-for-profit organization switched to washable, reusable linens and patient gowns as opposed to disposable paper linens, reducing the amount of waste produced by 25 percent.

8. **Replace incandescent lightbulbs.** When incandescent lights burn out, replace them with longer-lasting, low-energy compact fluorescent bulbs.

9. **Avoid bottled water.** Rather than using single-use bottled water, filter tap water for drinking. Not only is bottled water expensive, but it produces large amounts of container waste.

10. **Eat meatless at least one day a week.** The livestock sector accounts for nearly 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. "Americans eat about eight ounces of meat per day per person, approximately twice the global average," says Dr. Preston Maring, a physician who started Kaiser Permanente's first farmers' market in 2003. "It has been estimated that a 20 percent reduction in meat consumption (eating only 145.5 pounds per year instead of 182.5 pounds) would save as much energy as if everyone drove a hybrid vehicle instead of a standard sedan."

A national leader in environmentally responsible health care, the organization works to minimize waste, conserve energy and promote sustainable food choices in its own institutions and communities. For more information: www.kp.org/green.