



<https://ecolink.com/info/earth-day-2022-in-the-chemical-industry-green-initiatives-more/>

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This year marks the 52nd occurrence of the global event known as Earth Day. April 22nd is a day that unites people and companies regardless of their background to raise awareness and fight climate change and other environmental issues. From pledging to follow greener practices, or supporting environmental changes in their local community, observation of Earth Day becomes a year-round event rather than just an annual event for many.

The chemical industry is filled with companies that are striving to achieve more sustainable practices in their daily operations. However, this worldwide industry hasn't always had positive impacts on the environment. This Earth Day, let's take a look at the importance of sustainability and Earth Day in the chemical industry, how various sectors of the chemical industry are implementing greener practices, and how you can celebrate Earth Day at home and at work.

But first, let's take a closer look at Earth Day itself.

History of Earth Day

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Earth Day Then

Before Earth Day became a globally recognized day, it started as an idea. In 1969, Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin wanted to raise awareness to the negative environmental consequences that were occurring from inefficient cars, industrial pollution, and other non-eco-friendly human practices.

Inspired by the student anti-war movements happening across the United States at the time, Senator Nelson wanted to educate the general public about air and water pollution by holding teach-in events on college campuses to educate students. He announced the teach-ins would take place on April 22nd—a date that fell between Spring Break and final exam periods for many classes. The idea was that students were more likely to attend during this time.

With help from other government leaders and a young activist named Denis Hayes, [the first Earth Day](#) was successfully organized on April 22nd, 1970. Hayes put together a team of over 85 individuals in an attempt to expand Senator Nelson's vision by reaching not only students, but all Americans. The first Earth Day was a huge success, with over 10 percent of everyone in the United States showing up in the streets, parks, and other public places to demonstrate against the harmful impacts of over 150 years of industrial development to the environment. Here are some of the issues that protesters were raising awareness for:

- Oil spills
- Use of pesticides
- Extinction of wildlife
- Deforestation
- Toxic dumping of waste

The first Earth Day in 1970 united the rich and the poor, the urban dwellers and the rural dwellers and all political parties. This unification also led to changes led to the creation of several laws and organization such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), that were put in place to protect the environment.

Earth Day Now

The alignment of all groups regardless of demographics or background through Earth Day has managed to transcend the years and become an event that only continues to garner more support. In 1990, Earth Day has become a global event recognized by millions of people and hundreds of countries. And now, Earth Day 2022 is recognized as the largest secular observance in all of the world with over a billion people observing the day.

Thanks to the digital area that supplies us with access to endless information through the internet, social media, and other digital sources, it's never been easier to spread awareness for the environment. Issues such as climate change are now shared seamlessly with anyone who has access to the internet, and has forever changed how we can take action to help the environment.

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Importance of Earth Day 2022 in the Chemical Industry

When people think of the word “chemicals,” they often think of raw chemicals such as fossil fuels and natural gases, but don’t realize that chemicals exist all around us even if they aren’t in their raw form. Nearly every industry outside of the chemical industry relies on the products and services provided by the chemical industry whether it’s cleaning solutions, pest control sprays, or water treatment, chemicals are essential for a company’s daily business operations.

Within the chemical industry, there are several people hard at work making sure that companies in other industries receive the chemical-based products they need. On a broad scale, there are three main sectors within the chemical industry on the supply chain: engineering, manufacturing, and supplying. While each of these sectors have different responsibilities, they all have opportunities to implement sustainable changes.

Earth Day in the Chemical Industry: Chemical Engineering

Chemical engineers are responsible for helping to develop chemical-based products with the help of their extensive knowledge in chemistry, biology, physics, and other scientific fields.

Chemical Engineers & Green Initiatives

Unlike manufacturers and distributors, chemical engineers work in lab settings to create chemical products and formulas. However, there is still plenty of opportunity for chemists to follow more sustainable practices inside and outside of the lab.

Here are a few ways chemical engineers across the globe are striving to make the chemical industry greener:

- Chemists are choosing to use lab equipment that is more sustainable
- Safely disposing of chemical products
- Creating chemical solutions that contain little to no harsh and toxic chemicals
- Researching greener water-based alternatives to everyday solutions
- Creating biodegradable products from raw materials
- Following all environmental policies and regulations

Since 2003, the American Chemical Society (ACS) has joined in on the Earth Day celebrations, and has deemed the week of April 22nd, [Chemists Celebrate Earth Week \(CCEW\)](#). This annual ACS event has a unique theme each year in which the organization strives to educate the public on the impact of chemicals to the environment. In 2021, the theme focused on “Reducing and Reusing” to reduce our footprint through chemistry, and the theme for Earth Day 2022 is [insect chemistry](#), which will explore all the ways insects can help not only the chemical industry, but medical and other industries.

Earth Day in the Chemical Industry: Chemical Manufacturing

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Chemical manufacturers produce chemical-based products by using specific formulas that they receive from chemical engineers/chemists. The chemical manufacturers obtain raw chemicals from vendors and use industrial machinery to mix, blend, and create chemical products.

Chemical Manufacturers & Green Initiatives

Specialty and fine chemical manufacturers often require industrial machinery and factories to create chemical products. Manufacturers follow specific formulas given to them from chemists in order to create consistent products that can be supplied to consumers.

Often times, chemical manufacturers work with a wide variety of chemicals ranging from toxic to non-toxic. Due to their hands-on interaction with chemicals, there are several opportunities for manufacturers to observe safer and more environmentally-friendly practices:

- Sourcing raw materials from vendors who observe eco-friendly practices
- Observing safety precautions during the manufacturing process
 - o Safely disposing of all chemical wastes in proper facilities
 - o Ensuring employee safety by providing employees with the proper safety gear and updated manufacturing facilities
- Transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy
- Investing in eco-friendly machinery that eliminates harmful fossil fuels and requires greener energy to operate
- Minimizing pollution, emissions, and hazardous leaks

Earth Day in the Chemical Industry: Chemical Suppliers / Distributors

Once a chemical-based product is manufactured, chemical suppliers offer the product to companies who need it. They work with the company to determine the best product for them, the best sizing option, and come up with a distribution plan to deliver the chemical product.

Chemical Suppliers & Green Initiatives

Sustainability should occur in every part of the supply chain, and chemical suppliers and distributors are no exception. This group in the chemical industry directly provides companies with the chemical products they need to keep their businesses running smoothly. Chemical suppliers package, transport, and deal with other logistics that help put products on shelves or in the proper warehouses.

Here are some of the changes that chemical suppliers are making to their daily operations to help protect the environment:

- Offering bulk sizing options for less packaging and trips

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- Complying with all EPA and government regulations of chemicals
- Properly transporting all chemical products by taking the proper safety precautions (i.e., packaging, storage, etc.)
- Opting to supply only eco-friendly formulated chemical products
- Sharing annual sustainability reports with the [UN Global Impact](#) and other organizations

In observance of Earth Day 2022 in the chemical industry, many chemical suppliers like Ecolink strive to educate the community on the importance of eco-friendly chemical usage through blog posts and other community outreach programs and resources.

How to Celebrate Earth Day 2022

There are several easy ways that you can celebrate Earth Day at home or at work. Keep in mind that large impacts start with small changes. Here are a few that you can make in your personal and professional life:

Green Ideas to Celebrate Earth Day at Home

1) Clean Greener

If you've never stopped to think about what kind of chemicals are in your cleaning solution, then it's time you did. Many multi-surface and home cleaning solutions contain harsh and toxic chemicals that cause harm to not only the environment, but to you and your loved ones..

This Earth Day, consider switching to greener and cleaner solutions that consists of fewer harsh chemicals, and clean just as well.

2) The 3 Rs

We've all heard the saying—*Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle*—and with good reason. One of the best ways to observe Earth Day is by recycling, reusing resources rather than throwing them away, and reducing the amount of single-use resources you use.

Make sure to toss that plastic water in the recycling bin, or better yet—reduce your plastic waste by switching to a reusable water bottle. Small changes like these have larger impacts on the environment overtime.

3) Donate

If you're able, then donate to organizations that are helping raise environmental awareness and strive for change. If you don't have the means to donate, then try donating your time! This Earth Day, reach out to any local non-profit organizations in your community to see how you can make a difference locally.

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Volunteer an hour or the whole day—anything helps! Or try something even simpler by taking time to walk around your community and picking up any trash or other items that don't belong.

4) *Save Water*

If you're known for long showers, or leaving the faucet running when you're not using it, then try to be more mindful of your water usage. One of the easiest ways to decrease wasted water is by simply taking quicker showers and turning off the sink when you're not using it.

5) *Educate Yourself*

Reading this blog post is a step in the right direction. Is there an environmental topic you'd like to learn more about? Watch a documentary or read a quick article about the topic. Even if you already feel you know enough about the topic, it's impossible to know everything!

In the spirit of Earth Day, make sure to share what you learn with friends and family to spread the word and raise environmental awareness.

Green Ideas to Celebrate Earth Day at Work

Whether you're a business owner or work for one, there are several changes you can implement in your day-to-day work life.

1) *Reduce Product Packaging*

Individually packaged items all have one thing in common: they create a lot of unnecessary waste. Reducing product packaging can be as simple as buying items in bulk. If you're in the purchasing department of your company, then opt for bulk sizing options that come with less packaging and more product.

If you're not in purchasing, then there are other measures you can take to minimize your product packaging at work by starting with something as simple as your lunch. Instead of buying individually wrapped items such as snack size chips and grab-and-go meals, try to be mindful of the amount of plastic you're using on a daily basis, and opt for meal options with less wrapping that'll lead to less waste.

2) *Go Digital*

While printing paper copies of reports and other documents can be helpful, the more sustainable option may be to switch to digital documents. Next time you consider printing something that you know you'll either lose in a day or throw

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away soon, opt for a digital version that will not only last longer, but decrease paper waste.

3) *Recycle*

Recycling is one of the easiest ways to observe Earth Day at work. Have a plastic wrapper? Recycle it. Are there empty cardboard boxes laying around? Recycle them. By recycling, you help prevent items ending up in landfills and instead in facilities where they can be remade and used again.

4) *Vehicles*

Whether you're a truck driver or just drive your car to work, there are few ways you can make your daily commute more sustainable:

- 1) Don't leave your vehicle running while you're parked.
- 2) If you're a commuter, ask to carpool with a coworker who lives near you.
- 3) If you're in the truck driving business, try to carry full loads to for a more sustainable shipping approach.

Following any one of these practices will help reduce harmful emissions into the air and help save you money on gas.

5) *Choose Environmentally-Conscious Suppliers*

Each industry has its own supply chain filled with unique vendors and other aspects that keep daily operations moving smoothly. If you're a leader or business owner, take time this Earth Day to get to know your suppliers. What are they actively doing to protect the environment? Do they have any green certifications? What are their sustainability goals?

Getting to know your suppliers and their commitment to eco-friendly practices is one way to help your company reach it's sustainability goals and encourage other companies to do the same.

Celebrate Earth Day 2022 by trying out anyone of these green ideas, and who knows—you might just develop a new eco-friendly habit.

Looking for Eco-Friendly Chemicals?

Ecolink is a proud supporter of Earth Day 2022 and strives to supply companies with smarter, safer chemicals that not only benefit our customers, but the environment as well.

To learn more about our commitment to the environment and how our bulk chemicals can benefit your company, [contact our expert team today!](#)

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