

Push Mowers and Nuclear Power

English A214

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I chose to use ethos and lots of sources, because I didn't know anything about the environment or anything about how to be sustainable, at first. After doing some research, I found sources in order to establish credit toward my argument.

Everyone should embrace sustainability concepts. But first people need to understand the steps toward a healthier planet. Planetpals, an informational website about the Earth, defines sustainability as, "To keep in existence; maintain. To supply with necessities or nourishment; provide for earth" (Gorgone, 2007). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention offers "meeting the needs of the present without depleting resources or harming natural cycles for future generations" (Healthy Places Terminology, 2007). All the definitions feature a common thread: maintain Earth's resources.

We are not doing a great job maintaining our planet. One solution to this problem involves stemming the use of chemicals. Whether people drive their car, ride in a plane, mow their lawns, or clean their houses, chemicals grease the process. Meanwhile, by products such as chlorine and bromine pollute natural elements to deplete the ozone layer. As earth loses its protective shield, higher levels of UVB rays come to the surface. Humans are developing diseases like skin cancer and cataracts. Weather patterns are creating oceans to warm, harming marine wildlife as crops dry up (The Process of Ozone Depletion, 2007). Further damage to the ozone layer will be irreparable.

A simple alternative involves push mowers, which means fewer pollutants entering the air and gas consumption. Walking or carpooling or riding the bus would also help. Simple solutions that cost nothing can help decrease pollutants in the ozone.

The ozone is only part of the problem. Resources are running out. Fossil fuels, for instance, permeate mass production and consumption in gas, plastics, cars, houses, toys, and computers. Fossil fuels are even used in clothing (Why Do We Need Petroleum?, 1997).

Luckily, there are some sustainable approaches in order to not only help the atmosphere, but also continue to be able to produce all these products. Stewart Brand, a “co-founder and managing director of [Global Business Network](#), and the president of The Long Now Foundation” (The Long Now Foundation Board Members, 2007) proposes nuclear power:

Nuclear power has advantages besides the overwhelming one of being atmospherically clean. The industry is mature, with a half-century of experience and ever improved engineering behind it. Problematic early reactors like the ones at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl can be supplanted by new, smaller-scale, meltdown-proof reactors like the ones that use the pebble-bed design. Nuclear power plants are very high yield, with low-cost fuel. Finally, they offer the best avenue to a "hydrogen economy," combining high energy and high heat in one place for optimal hydrogen generation. (Stewart Brand: Environmental Heresies, 2007)

Not only is nuclear power low-cost, but it can create more amount of energy. [Osman Kemal Kadiroglu](#), a nuclear engineer from Istanbul, explains how nuclear power can be cheaper and cleaner:

Nuclear power is one of the cheapest ways of producing electric power. The overall generation cost (\$/kWh) is less than all other electricity generation technologies... The exhaust gases from fossil fired plants contain CO<sub>2</sub> and there is no way to get rid of them. This gas is contributing to the temperature

increase of the atmosphere. Coal has some degree of sulphur and when burned SO<sub>2</sub> is created. This gas causes acid rains. Some of the sulphur can be scrubbed from the coal while or after the combustion but it increases the cost of electricity. If the burners operate at high temperatures, like in gas turbines and diesel engines, nitrogen oxides are generated. This gas is one of the contributors of the ozone depletion in the atmosphere... Nuclear power generates very little amount of highly radioactive waste. The toxicity of this waste diminishes with time. (Experts: Nuclear Power, 2007)

It is important to at least make an effort to try to better the world. Small changes, such as using push-mowers or carpooling, can help the environment over time. Even larger changes, such as using nuclear energy, can drastically help the environment and provide cheaper fuel. Only positive things can come from making the world a cleaner, better place. All people have to do is make the attempt to be sustainable.

## Resources

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