

## **Making Ripples**

### **Make Ripples by Recycling Odds & Ends**

by Amanda Bancroft

Wouldn't it be amazing if you could feed hungry people with unwanted household junk? No, not by feeding them junk, of course! By recycling your odds & ends, you can do a great many more things than just de-cluttering the house. Not only can recycling prevent waste from going to a landfill, it can also help kids worldwide to learn, support special needs adults, or it can fight hunger. But the biggest wonder of recycling is that there really is no limit to what it can do – all you need is imagination and a desire to make ripples in the world.

As we prepare to go off-grid and build a small earthbag home, it's become necessary to reduce the amount of stuff we own, and increase our recycling. But can I recycle things like old house keys, USB drives, and electric razors? I found out that yes, they could be recycled. But I discovered that not only can they be recycled, they can do lots more!

Recycle your old Norelco electric razors, and \$1.00 will be donated to independent living support programs of special needs adults. Write RECYCLE on the outside of your package and send it to: Mar-beck Appliance, 9522 Nall, Overland Park, Kansas 66207.

There seems to be no end to what people can do to upcycle their USB drives, from Christmas tree ornaments to jewelry. USB drives can also be recycled in a way that helps “nearly one-million children worldwide speaking 25 languages in over 40 countries,” states Sugar Labs, the makers of Sugar on a Stick, a free standalone computing environment. If you recycle your USB drive through Sugar Labs, Sugar on a Stick can be uploaded to your old drive and given to a child to help them learn how to use a computer. Another good place to donate USB drives is Inveneo, a non-profit that has a myriad of services including providing solar panels and technology to small business owners in developing countries.

Using just an old key, you can raise money for food pantries and organizations that fight hunger. Key for Hope is a non-profit “unlocking hunger one key at a time” by recycling the metal from keys and donating the money to charities that fight hunger. By visiting [www.keyforhope.org](http://www.keyforhope.org) you can receive a kit to start a local key drive to benefit a local pantry of your choice!

We are constantly asking, “How can I make bigger ripples with this idea, or that object, or this space, or that organization?” Every ripple is a benefit to yourself, the community, and the world. The challenge is to see how many ripples you can make! For more information, visit today's Ripples blog post.

*Ripples* is a blog connecting people to resources on sustainable living while chronicling their off-grid journey and supporting the work of non-profit organizations. Read more on this topic and others at [www.RipplesBlog.org](http://www.RipplesBlog.org)