

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 26: Feb. 11-15, 2008.**

### **Topic: How "Green" is Your Candidate?**

**\*\*\* If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, you have been included in the mailing to further educate the public about the City and County of La Crosse's resolutions to become eco-municipalities. The Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability was formed this summer to create a strategic sustainable plan and promote eco-friendly ideals within the community. The members are represented by the County Board, Common Council, and a citizen member. They have expressed the need to educate the governing bodies and the public at large about the importance of sustaining the Earth for future generations. If you wish to be taken off the weekly newsletter list, please let me know. \*\*\***

### **Democratic:**

#### **Hillary Clinton:**

- Cap and Trade Program for Greenhouse Gas Emissions: She supports cutting emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Auto Fuel Economy Standards: She would raise the fuel efficiency to 40 miles per gallon (mpg) by 2020, and 55 mpg by 2030.
- Renewable Energy: Clinton supports moving to 25% renewable energy sources by 2025, and investing \$50 billion in a 10 year fund for renewables and alternative energy.
- Biofuels: She supports the production of 60 billion gallons of homegrown biofuels per year for vehicles by 2030.
- Coal: She is in favor of coal-to-liquid fuels, but only if they emit 20% less carbon than traditional coal.
- Nuclear Energy: She doesn't want to emphasize nuclear as an alternative energy source unless waste storage issues can be resolved.  
(Source: [http://www.grist.org/candidate\\_chart\\_08.html?source=PrezChartAd](http://www.grist.org/candidate_chart_08.html?source=PrezChartAd) ).
- More Facts: Hillary made her campaign carbon neutral in April of 2007. She also aims to create 5 million "green collar" jobs in the next 10 years. (Source: [http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/08/09/clinton\\_factsheet/](http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/08/09/clinton_factsheet/) ).
- The League of Conservation Voters rated Clinton a 90/100 lifetime score for her environmental efforts and policies. (Source: <http://www.lcv.org/voterguide/> ).

#### **Barack Obama:**

- Cap and Trade Program for Greenhouse Gas Emissions: He is in support of cutting emissions to 80% of 1990 levels by 2050.
- Auto Fuel Economy Standards: He supports raising fuel economy to 40 mpg for cars and 32 mpg for light trucks by 2020.

-Renewable Energy: Obama supports having 25% renewable energy sources by 2025, 30% of the federal government's electricity come from renewables by 2020, and has proposed investing \$150 billion over 10 years in research and development for renewables, biofuel, efficiency, and other technology.

-Biofuels: He supports 60 billion gallons of homegrown biofuels per year for vehicles by 2030.

-Coal: He is in support of coal-to-liquid fuels if they emit 20% less carbon than traditional coal.

-Nuclear Energy: Obama has stated that he supports exploring nuclear energy, but that it is not a good option due to safety, storage, and the need for government subsidies. (Source:

[http://www.grist.org/candidate\\_chart\\_08.html?source=PrezChartAd](http://www.grist.org/candidate_chart_08.html?source=PrezChartAd) ).

-More Facts: He wants all buildings in the U.S. to be carbon neutral by 2030. He also wants to restore environmental protections that the Bush Administration rolled back. (Source: [http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/07/30/obama\\_factsheet/](http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/07/30/obama_factsheet/) ).

-The League of Conservation Voters rated Obama a 96/100 lifetime score for his environmental efforts and policies. (Source: <http://www.lcv.org/voterguide/> ).

## **Republican:**

### **Mike Huckabee:**

-Cap and Trade Program for Greenhouse Gas Emissions: He supports a cap and trade, but has not given specific levels or goals.

-Auto Fuel Economy Standards: He supports raising fuel standards to 35 mpg by 2020.

-Renewable Energy: Huckabee wants to achieve 15% of U.S. electricity from renewable sources by 2020, including nuclear and "clean coal" (see definition at end).

-Biofuels: He supports increased use, but has not set certain goals.

-Coal: He supports "clean coal" and coal-to-liquid fuels.

-Nuclear Energy: He is in support of nuclear expansion. (Source:

[http://www.grist.org/candidate\\_chart\\_08.html?source=PrezChartAd](http://www.grist.org/candidate_chart_08.html?source=PrezChartAd) ).

-More Facts: Huckabee isn't totally convinced global warming is human driven, but that we should take steps to lower emissions anyway. He also supports drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. (Source:

[http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/10/02/huckabee\\_factsheet/](http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/10/02/huckabee_factsheet/) ).

-The League of Conservation Voters gave Huckabee no score because he has no state or federal voting record. (Source: <http://www.lcv.org/voterguide/> ).

### **John McCain:**

-Cap and Trade Program for Greenhouse Gas Emissions: He is a supporter. He also co-authored the Climate Stewardship and Innovation Act, which would cap

emissions from utilities, industry, and transport at 2004 levels by 2012 and then gradually decrease emissions to about ~30% of 2004 levels by 2050.

-Auto Fuel Economy Standards: McCain is in support of increased use, but has not set specific goals. He introduced legislation in 2002 that would have raised standards to 36 mpg by 2016.

-Renewable Energy: He supports increased use, but has no specific targets.

-Biofuels: He supports increased use, but does not support subsidies for ethanol.

-Coal: He supports its use as energy, but wants to find cleaner ways to use coal.

-Nuclear Energy: He supports nuclear as a way to curb global warming and increase energy independence. The climate bill he endorsed supports the nuclear energy industry. (Source:

[http://www.grist.org/candidate\\_chart\\_08.html?source=PrezChartAd](http://www.grist.org/candidate_chart_08.html?source=PrezChartAd)).

-More Facts: McCain opposes drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He co-sponsored resolutions that encouraged the International Whaling Commission to oppose commercial whaling. (Source:

[http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/10/01/mccain\\_factsheet/](http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/10/01/mccain_factsheet/)).

-The League of Conservation Voters gave McCain a 26/100 lifetime score for his environmental efforts and policies. (Source: <http://www.lcv.org/voterguide/>).

For more info see: <http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/07/06/candidates/>

\*\*\***Clean Coal:** the name attributed to coal chemically washed of minerals and impurities, sometimes gasified, burned and the resulting flue gases treated with steam, with the purpose of removing sulfur dioxide, and re-burned so as to make the carbon dioxide in the flue gas economically recoverable. With no specific quantitative limits on any emissions, particularly carbon dioxide, the coal industry uses the term "clean coal" to describe technologies designed to enhance both the efficiency and the environmental acceptability of coal extraction, preparation and use." (Source: Wikipedia).

**Have a buena fin de la semana, everyone!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 27: Feb. 18-22, 2008.**

**Topic: Greening Your Home and Home Improvements**

\*\*\***The majority of ideas listed were based on the TV show "The EcoZone Project," which airs on certain Sundays at 1:30pm [www.ecozone.tv](http://www.ecozone.tv) (not sure what local channel! Sorry!).\*\*\***

**Eco-Friendly Furniture:**

-Environment Furniture: The company uses a native Brazilian hardwood, Peroba Rosa, as their primary material. The 70-100 year old wood is reclaimed from

deserted houses, barns, and buildings in Paraná, Brazil. Responsibly harvested Indonesian mahogany is also incorporated into their designs. Environment Furniture is striving to achieve the Forest Stewardship Council certification for these woods. Check out their designs at: <http://www.environment-furniture.com/secure/designf07.pdf> .

-Bean Products: They offer organic hemp chairs, love seats, sofas, and ottomans. The furniture frames are made of urban trees that have been felled from local city parkways. The trees would have ended up as mulch, but Bean Products found a use for them as unique furniture. Their designs also incorporate steel screws and fasteners, as well as non-toxic natural-based glues. The organic line's cushioning is made from 100% natural latex foam rubber, which is the least toxic option. The upholstery is made of heavy hemp fabrics or their "Eco-option" designer fabrics. Check them out at:

[http://www.beanproducts.com/c/Natural\\_Home/Natural+Home.html](http://www.beanproducts.com/c/Natural_Home/Natural+Home.html).

-Some sustainably harvested wood patio furniture can be found at:

[http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=DECK\\_FURNITURE](http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=DECK_FURNITURE).

-Project Import Export: They offer eco-friendly natural furniture for indoors and out. Their products are hand crafted mostly from natural materials and designed to mimic nature. The materials used in their designs include hyacinth, liana, bamboo, and rattan. Check them out at:

<http://www.projectimportexport.com/PAGE18about.html>.

### **Greening the Bathroom:**

-A cool way to decorate the bathroom or kitchen is with 100% recycled glass for counters and/or walls:

[http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=RCYCLD\\_GLASS\\_TILES](http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=RCYCLD_GLASS_TILES).

### **Environmentally Friendly Building and Flooring:**

-If you are in need of an area rug, check out Tufenkian rugs and carpets. The company claims to follow environmentally and ethically sustainable practices. The wool from the rugs is from free-range animals, and the rugs are hand-woven and dyed. The water used in processing is reused over and over, and some transport of materials is by yak instead of automobile. (Source: <http://www.tufenkian.com/company-info/about/our-environment.html>).

-Cork flooring is another good eco-friendly option. The cork is removed from the tree every 9 years or so, and does not harm the tree in the process. (Source: <http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=CORTICA>).

-Environmentally friendly flooring and decking alternatives, including Forest Stewardship Council certified wood, can be found at:

[http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=10210\\_DECKING](http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=10210_DECKING).

-100% recycled fiberboard and denim scrap insulation (non-irritating and no formaldehyde) can be found at:

<http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=HOMASOTE>.

-Linoleum flooring made of linseed oils, pigments, pine resin, and pine flour with natural jute backing are available:

[http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=FORBO\\_DUAL\\_CUTS](http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=FORBO_DUAL_CUTS).

-Bamboo flooring is harder, more moisture resistant, and more stable than oak. It is also a rapidly renewable resource, reaching maturity in 4-6 years. (Source:

[http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=ET\\_BAMBOO](http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/shop.mv?CatCode=PRODUCT&ProdCode=ET_BAMBOO)).

### **Eco-friendly Painting, Coating, and Windows:**

-Sherwin Williams: Harmony Interior Latex Paint—contains less solvents and no volatile organic compounds (VOCs), making it more environmentally friendly.

(Source: [http://www.sherwin-williams.com/do\\_it\\_yourself/sherwin\\_williams\\_products/green/index.jsp](http://www.sherwin-williams.com/do_it_yourself/sherwin_williams_products/green/index.jsp) ).

-Blinds made of bamboo can be found at: <http://thewovencompany.com/index.cfm>.

### **Home Accessories:**

-Java Log: Java Logs are completely natural, and are the first and only firelogs made with used coffee grounds and all-natural vegetable wax. The log produces 70-80 percent less emissions than wood, and diverts about 20 million pounds of coffee waste per year from landfills. (Source: [http://www.java-log.com/product\\_overview\\_en.htm](http://www.java-log.com/product_overview_en.htm) ).

-Natural bedding is available through Vivetique Rejuvenating Sleep Systems, who make organic cotton and hemp mattresses and sheets. Hemp sheets are mold and mildew resistant, so they are good for people with allergies or those in humid climates. (Source: <http://www.vivetique.com/Products.html>).

-Sun Jars store sunshine during the day so you can use it at night. The sun jar is made of glass and equipped with solar-powered cells and rechargeable batteries. The light is an LED, and will turn on when it gets dark, but can also turn off when no one is at home. (Source: [http://www.elsewares.com/commerce/Sun-Jar\\_MPD841.html](http://www.elsewares.com/commerce/Sun-Jar_MPD841.html) ).

### **For Your Garden:**

-A copper solar-powered pathlight with an LED rechargeable battery is run by the sun. (Source: <http://www.smarthome.com/3320.html>).

-Installing a drip-irrigation system in your yard or garden can save 60-70% of the water used traditionally. For more info, see:  
<http://www.environmentalhomecenter.com/home.shtml>.

\*\* For some local green home items, check out [www.simplylivingonline.com](http://www.simplylivingonline.com) and <http://www.habitatlacrosse.org/aboutus.html> . \*\*

**Have a mellow weekend everyone!!!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 28: Feb. 25-29, 2008.**

### **Topic: Safe Seafood**

\*\*\*The following information was taken from the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch Program website: <http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/SeafoodWatch.asp>.

#### **The Five Major Threats to Fish Populations and Human Consumption:**

##### **Bycatch:**

-Means animals that are caught by nets and trawls that are not the intended species. Improvements in trapping methods and electronic beepers to warn animals are better solutions.

##### **Overfishing:**

-Means catching fish faster than they can reproduce. Between 1950 and 1994, ocean fishermen increased their catch by 400 percent through the use of more efficient fishing equipment and doubling the number of boats. The world's catch leveled off in 1989 at about 82 million metric tons of fish per year, meaning that is all the ocean can produce. ([http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/cr\\_seafoodwatch/sfw\\_of.asp](http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/sfw_of.asp)).

##### **Aquaculture:**

-Means raising fish and shellfish in farms for human consumption. Most oysters, clams, and mussels on the U.S. market are farm-raised. These mollusks do not need supplemental feeding, as they filter plankton out of the water, which also improves water quality. Clams are raised in special beds on sandy shores, where their harvest does little to disturb the ecosystem. Oysters and mussels are often raised in bags or cages suspended off the seafloor, which causes minimal damage upon harvesting. Other seafood farming operations, however, can be very detrimental to coastline habitats. Farms on the coasts allow the food fish remains and feces to sink to the bottom, polluting the entire ecosystem. Some farms, such as salmon farms, can contribute to escaped fish, out competing and mating with wild salmon populations.

([http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/cr\\_seafoodwatch/sfw\\_ac.asp](http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/cr_seafoodwatch/sfw_ac.asp) ).

##### **Habitat Damage:**

-Coastal waters have been degraded by pollution and other human activities. Areas near the coast are important habitats and breeding grounds for many aquatic species. Trawling and dragging type fishing do a lot more damage to the ocean floor than long-lining, hook-and-line, and trap fishing.

**Mercury:**

-Fatty fish contain mercury that has built up in their tissues from toxic releases of power plants and other human-induced pollution. Mercury is a known neurotoxin that can affect human brain function and development. Women who are of child bearing age or who are pregnant should be most concerned, as their fetuses can be harmed by mercury. How much do you know about mercury? Take the quiz at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/quiz/mercury/>.

**Some common fish with a rating of “Best,” “Good,” or “Avoid”:**

**Arctic Char:** Best—Farmed inland in the U.S. with little pollution or habitat disruption.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=75](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=75) ).

**Cod:** Avoid Atlantic cod, which has been fished heavily for the past 50 years, resulting in huge population declines. Some scientists have estimated that we are now fishing the last 10% of this species’ population. U.S. cod populations are low, and some Canadian populations are threatened or endangered.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=7](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=7) ).

**Crab:** Blue crab—Good; Dungeness—Best; U.S. King crab—Good; Imported King—Avoid; Snow crab—Good; Stone crab—Best. Most crab species are trap or wild-caught. Some species, such as stone crab are best bets because by law only one claw can be taken, which then grows back and the animal does not have to perish. Other crab species are losing habitat and being harmed by pollution.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=8](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=8))

**Mussels/Oysters:** Best—Are good because their farming methods do not cause much pollution and they do not require other species of fish for food.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=81](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=81)).

**Salmon:** Atlantic (farmed) salmon—Avoid; Wild-caught Alaskan salmon—Best; Pacific Northwest U.S./Canada wild-caught—Good. Farmed salmon have more mercury in their bodies because they are fattier, they easily spread diseases to each other in pens and have to be treated with chemicals, their food and feces pollute coastal waters, and they can escape and interbreed with wild populations. Wild-caught salmon contain less mercury and are managed by standards of the

Marine Stewardship Council.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=17](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=17)).

**Shrimp:** U.S. and Canadian farmed or wild-caught—Good/Best; Imported shrimp—Avoid. Shrimp trawling can accidentally catch and kill more than 1.8 million tons of aquatic life each year. Shrimp farming also destroys coastal mangroves, wetlands, and the ocean floor.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=20](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=20)).

**Trout:** Rainbow trout—Best. It is farmed on the inland and in an ecologically friendly way.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=31](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=31)).

**Tuna:** U.S. Atlantic Yellowfin (ahi), British Columbian, and Hawaiian albacore—Best; Worldwide except Hawaii albacore, all bluefin, worldwide yellowfin tuna—Avoid. Many tunas are associated with mercury, and many species are overfished.

([http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw\\_factsheet.aspx?gid=71](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org/cr/SeafoodWatch/web/sfw_factsheet.aspx?gid=71)).

**Have a fantasma weekend everyone!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 29: Mar. 3-7, 2008.**

**Topic: E-Waste and its Hazards**

**\*\*\*All information was taken from the January 2008 issue of *National Geographic* magazine.\*\*\***

**Fast Fact:**

-The EPA estimates that in the U.S. in 2005 1.5-1.9 million tons of computers, TVs, cell phones, VCRs, monitors, and other equipment were discarded. (p. 71).

**Toxic components of computers:**

**-Cathode-ray tube (CRT) monitor:** Found in TVs and computers, and can hold up to 8 pounds of lead. LCD (liquid crystal display) monitors are less toxic, but contain mercury in lamps that backlight the screens (p. 72).

**-PVC (polyvinyl chloride):** If PVC-coated wires are burned in order to extract the copper, dioxins are released (p. 72).

**-All of the following compounds or elements can leach into the soil or water, or scatter into the air if burned (p. 73):**



**-Lead:** A neurotoxin that can also harm the reproductive system and kidneys. Low-level exposure can disrupt a child's mental development.

**-Cadmium:** A carcinogen that can damage bones and the kidneys.

**-Beryllium:** Dust of this carcinogen can cause lung disease.

**-Brominated Flame Retardants:** These compounds can impair fetal development and can damage the thyroid.

**-Mercury:** This neurotoxin can be harmful to developing fetuses, and can be passed through breast milk. It's also known to cause kidney and brain damage.

**-Barium:** High levels of exposure can cause gastrointestinal problems, difficulty breathing, muscle weakness, and changes in blood pressure.

**-Chromium:** The inhalation of the hexavalent form of chromium can damage the kidneys and the liver, cause asthmatic bronchitis, and increase the risk of lung cancer.

### **U.S. percentages of recycled electronics (p. 73):**

- TVs (CRT): 13.4%
- TVs (projection): 13.4%
- Monitors (CRT): 24.5%
- Monitors (LCD): 24.5%
- Printers, keyboards, computer mice: 26.1%
- Desktops: 26.1%
- Laptops: 26.1%
- Cell phones: 19.2%

### **Disturbing facts:**

-To make ends meet, poor Indian families often extract and smelt lead and other metals from circuit boards. The pots used for such a practice are often also used for cooking and eating (p. 76).

-In places such as Ghana, plastic insulation is burned off computer and TV cords to extract valuable copper wiring. The burning of PVC releases dioxin, affecting the air, the water, the soil, and the young boys who tend the fires (p. 67-69).

### **What can you do???**

-Recycle E-waste at the Household Hazardous Materials Facility: 6502 State Rd. 16, La Crosse. Their hours are Tues. & Thurs. 9am-4pm by appointment; Wed. 10:30am-6pm no appointment; and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays from 9am-noon, no appointment needed. (608)785-9999.

-There is a small fee for recycling these items: \$0.35/lb. for TVs, and \$0.25/lb. for all other electronics. Accepted items include: printers, fax machines, copiers, computer monitors, CPU, laptops, keyboards/mice, disk drives, circuit boards, computer accessories, telephones, cameras, DVD/VCRs, cable or satellite TV equipment, stereos, microwaves, CB and ham radios, computer gaming items, walkmans, iPods, MP3 players, and TV sets.

**\*\*\*We would like to start a round of Spring Natural Step Study Circles for City and County employees. Study circles would meet over the lunch hour probably every other week, and discuss one of the ten chapters per week from *The Natural Step for Communities* book, on which the City and County have based their eco-municipality resolutions. Topics range from transportation to energy use to sustainable agriculture. If anyone is interested, please contact me!\*\*\***

\*\*\*Cathy Van Maren recommended the following site for further interest in last week's topic about fish:

<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/eh/Fish/index.htm> For WI fish consumption information.

These are related to the recent air quality warnings in the surrounding counties:

<http://www.lacrossetribune.com/articles/2008/02/04/wi/00wis0204.txt>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/air/aq/health/status.asp> \*\*\*

**Have a spontaneous weekend everyone!!!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 30: Mar. 10-14, 2008.** Topic: Air Quality

**With the recent Air Quality Watches and Advisories in the area, this topic seemed of importance.**

-The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources uses a system called the Air Quality Watch/Air Quality Advisory to alert residents about unhealthy air quality, including ozone and particle pollution. (Source: <http://dnr.wi.gov/air/aq/health/status.asp>).

### **What is a "Watch?"**

-A watch means air quality is forecasted to decline and become unhealthy, at least for individuals in sensitive groups.

### **What is an "Advisory?"**

-An advisory means air quality has become unhealthy at least for individuals in sensitive groups.

**Some definitions:**

### **Criteria Air Pollutants:**

-These include the 6 most common air pollutants: carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide. They can cause respiratory or other health problems which vary with pollutant. These are regulated mostly for their short term effects, and are the only air pollutants with national air quality standards. (Source: [http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/def/cap\\_gen.html](http://www.scorecard.org/env-releases/def/cap_gen.html) ).

### **Hazardous or Toxic Air Pollutants:**

-These are regulated for both short and long term effects. Long term health effects include damage to the neurological, immune, reproductive, developmental, and respiratory systems, as well as other health problems.

-The recent watch for La Crosse County from March 11-12 was issued because of the forecast for high levels of fine particulates in the air. Fine particles, including microscopic soot, dust, liquid droplets, and smoke particles, come mostly from combustion sources. These sources include power plants, factories, and other industrial sources, motor vehicle exhaust, and fires. The Air Quality Index was forecasted to reach the “orange” level (described later), which is considered unhealthy for people in sensitive groups; those with asthma, heart or lung disease, elder adults, and children. People in these groups are advised to cut back on strenuous activities during the watch period.

### **How is air quality measured?**

-Air quality is measured using a nationwide monitoring system at more than 1,000 locations across the country where concentrations of ozone and several other pollutants are recorded. The pollutant concentrations are taken by the EPA and standardized into the Air Quality Index (AQI), which ranges from 0 to 500. Ascending AQI values indicate ascending health risks. An AQI value of 100 usually corresponds to the national ambient air quality standard for the pollutant, meaning the pollutant concentrations have reached unhealthy levels.

-The EPA has assigned a color to each AQI category. The Air Quality Index for ozone is often reported on your local television news, radio stations, and newspapers, on the EPA’s AIRNOW website, and on the DNR’s AQI hotline. (Source: <http://dnr.wi.gov/air/aq/health/aqibasics.htm>).

-The color scheme is as follows:

Green=Good; Moderate=Yellow; Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups=Orange; Unhealthy=Red; Very Unhealthy=Burgundy.

### **What to do to avoid and how to prevent health risks:**

-Plan strenuous activity when particles are lower.

- Since particles can be high indoors also, one should have a smoke-free environment, and reduce the use of candles, wood-burning stoves, and fireplaces.
- To ease health risks for others, reduce driving when possible and refrain from leaving vehicle engines idling.
- Postpone activities that use small gasoline and diesel engines.
- Minimize outdoor fires.
- Conserve electricity.

\*Recent article about the EPA considering lowering the smog standard:  
<http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/16627981.html> .

**\*\*\*March 29<sup>th</sup> is “Lights Out America,” when individuals and businesses are encouraged to turn off their lights for 1 hour from 8pm-9pm. More information will be provided next week.\*\*\***

**\*\*\*If anyone is interested in City/County Natural Step study circles, please contact me!!!!\*\*\***

**\*\*\*The La Crosse County 2008 Collaboration Conference is on April 24<sup>th</sup>, and focusing on energy conservation and sustainability. Any interested groups should contact Brian Fukuda (Community Development) if you would like to set up a poster at the event.\*\*\***

**Have a Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sona Duit weekend everyone!!! (Happy St. Patrick's Day)**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 31: Mar. 17-21, 2008.**

### **Topic: Study Circles/Lights Out America/Updates**

#### **City and County Study Circles:**

-We really want to get these started this spring!! Please let me know if you are interested. The circles are very informative and don't consume a lot of time.

-What are they?

-The Natural Step study circle came from the Swedish municipalities who used study circles as a tool for community awareness and involvement in broad and local sustainability issues. Study circles are meant to be helpful to both community members and practitioners in understanding what sustainability is and how to apply it in community projects. The topics are in chapter order from *The Natural Step for Communities* book, and there are generally 8 or 9 sessions in total. A facilitator heads the circle and opens with a question on the session's topic. Participants are encouraged to discuss the topic as it applies to local and global issues.

#### **Lights Out America/Earth Hour:**

-What is it?

-Lights Out America and Earth Hour both derived from an action the city of Sydney, Australia took a year ago. On March 31, 2007, more than 2 million businesses and households in the city turned off their lights for one hour. This year the World Wildlife Fund is teaming with Sydney for the second annual Earth Hour on Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Lights Out America is supporting this event. ([www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org), <http://lightsoutamerica.org> ).

-What to do:

-Spread the word. Encourage local businesses and friends to turn off their lights from 8pm-9pm on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Use candles to light your home (perfect ambiance for a romantic dinner), or take a late-evening stroll.

### **Updates for the Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability and the City and County of La Crosse:**

-Projects the Joint Oversight Committee on Sustainability are working on now:

Biodiesel:

-The City, County, MTU, and Gundersen Lutheran have interest in using either B2 or B5 biodiesel in certain vehicles.

-The biodiesel would be stored at the Municipal Service Center on Isle La Plume.

LEED certification or eligibility for new buildings:

-There are a few buildings that will be constructed in the near future within the County, including a new Transit Center, the County Jail expansion, the Black River Beach House, and the Myrick Hixon EcoPark Nature Center.

-LEED buildings embrace the community and pay for themselves over time through energy savings.

Green product purchasing:

-The City, County, School District, and possibly the universities are collaborating on an initiative to purchase more eco-friendly products and materials.

-The City Buying Group currently purchases some environmentally-friendly products, including paper towels, toilet paper, light bulbs, and cleaning spray.

Facility information sharing, energy audits, conservation, and rebates:

-Wettstein's just retro-fitted the ceilings and installed new lighting in the West Wing of City Hall.

-The Fire Department has installed new lighting and received rebates from Focus on Energy.

-The City and County are working to share information about energy conservation in existing buildings, and to upgrade when possible.

-In April 2007, *Country Home Magazine* ranked La Crosse as the "4<sup>th</sup> Best Small Green City in the United States," as well as the "13<sup>th</sup> Greenest City in America." The rankings were based on air and water quality, mass transit use, farmer's markets, and organic groceries. In April 2008, La Crosse was ranked as the "2<sup>nd</sup>

Best Small Green City in the United States,” as well as the “12<sup>th</sup> Best Place to Live in America.”

**Have an outstanding and long Easter weekend everyone!!!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 32: Mar. 24-28, 2008.**

**Topic: Green Roofs**

**What is a green roof?**

-Also called eco-roofs or living roofs, green roofs are roofs with an insulating layer of soil and plants. They can save energy, take carbon out of the air, prevent flooding and water damage, and provide habitat for birds, small mammals, and insects. (Source: Most excerpts are from Audubon Magazine March/April 2008, pgs. 40-45).

**The two types of green roofs:**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Intensive Green Roof</b>	<b>Extensive Green Roof</b>
Soil	Requires minimum of one foot of soil depth	Requires only 1 to 5 inches of soil depth
Vegetation	Accommodates large trees, shrubs, and well-maintained gardens	Capable of including many kinds of vegetative ground cover and grasses
Load	Adds 80-150 pounds per square foot of load to building structure	Adds only 12-50 pounds per square foot depending on soil characteristics and the type of substrate
Access	Regular access accommodated and encouraged	Usually not designed for public accessibility
Maintenance	Significant maintenance required	Annual maintenance walks should be performed until plants fill in
Drainage	Includes complex irrigation and drainage systems	Irrigation and drainage systems are simple

Source: EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/hiri/strategies/greenroofs.html>

**Types of plants:**

-Native and horticultural species, or mixed. The plants must be able to withstand the temperature fluctuations and extreme environments. Sedum varieties are popular because they are adapted for hot, dry, and windy conditions.

**What is the “heat island effect,” and how can it be prevented?**

-The urban heat island is, “the overheating of urban and suburban areas, relative to the surrounding countryside, due to increased paved, built-over, and hard surface areas.” The tar and gravel roofs absorb tons of solar energy and re-radiate it, making the surrounding area even hotter. The extra heat increases the demand for air conditioning and can lead to more heat-related illnesses and deaths. Green roofs make buildings cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter by reducing absorption, creating shade, and adding insulation. It is estimated that they can reduce electricity consumption by 6-25%, depending on

the building size. (Source: [http://www.greenroof.com/greenroofbene\\_urban\\_heat\\_island.shtml](http://www.greenroof.com/greenroofbene_urban_heat_island.shtml)).

-If enough green roofs are in close proximity, they can create a microclimate that can cool part of a city. (Source: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/living-green/definitions/green-roof>).

-Europe has been tuned into the green roof idea for quite some time. It is estimated that 10-12% of flat roofs in Germany are green roofs. (Source: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/living-green/definitions/green-roof>).

### **Examples:**

-Chicago's City Hall—the solid depths are from 3-18 inches, with about 20,000 plants. Temperatures on the roof stay around the same as ambient air, while other buildings nearby without green roofs can be up to 80 degrees higher! Also, during migrations, about 57 species of birds have been observed using the vegetated roof. In an, "ASHRAE simulation conducted by the City of Chicago of their City Hall Green Roof showed that every one degree Fahrenheit decrease in ambient temperature results in a 1.2% drop in cooling energy use." If all the buildings in Chicago were retro-fitted with green roofs over a period of 10 years, it would yield savings of \$100,000,000 per year from reduced cooling requirements in all the buildings in Chicago. (Source: [http://www.greenroof.com/greenroofbene\\_urban\\_heat\\_island.shtml](http://www.greenroof.com/greenroofbene_urban_heat_island.shtml)).

-The Friends Committee on National Legislation remodeled two buildings with 1,227 square feet of green roof in Washington, D.C.

-Portland, OR uses green roofs more for storm and rainwater management, since they receive about 150 days of rain per year.

-Ford Motor Company's assembly plant in Dearborn, MI has a 10 acre green roof.

### **Did you know???**

-The new Transit Center for the City of La Crosse is slated to have a green roof. This would also provide a place of recreation and relaxation for residents in the center's apartments.

**\*\*\* Also a reminder: Saturday is Lights Out America...turn your lights and electrical appliances off from 8-9pm tomorrow night, and the La Crosse Fire Department also urges everyone to be safe with candles and other fire-related items.** (Source: <http://www.nfpa.org/search.asp?query=candle+safety>).

**Have a foolhardy weekend everyone!!!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 33: Mar. 31-Apr. 4, 2008.**

## Topic: Take-out and To-go Containers

According to the EPA, over 380 billion plastic bags, wraps, and sacks are consumed in the United States every year! (Source: EPA).

\*\*Most information was derived from the site:

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/community-news/reuseable-containers-47011022>.\*\*

### **Worst Take-out Containers:**

-Styrofoam: Found in meat Styrofoam food trays, cups, bowls, egg cartons, carry-out containers, and opaque plastic cutlery. It does not biodegrade, and is broken into minute pieces that are eaten by shellfish and other small animals, to make its way up the food chain. Polystyrene (major component) has been shown to be toxic to the nervous system and many organs. (Source: [http://www.realchangenews.org/2007/2007\\_04\\_25/styrofoamtrash.html](http://www.realchangenews.org/2007/2007_04_25/styrofoamtrash.html)).

-Plastic containers: Including soup and salad deli containers, ice cream dishes, soda cups, etc. These are all derived from petroleum, and only some get recycled. Check the grid on this page for problems associated with certain plastics: <http://www.ecologycenter.org/factsheets/plastichealtheffects.html>.

### **So-So Take-out Containers:**

-Paper or plastic bags: Includes lunch bags, Ziploc bags, grocery bags, etc. Paper bags use trees, but can be recycled in many cities. Plastic bags are associated with urban blight, health effects, and the overwhelming use of petroleum products. Plastic bags can be reused as garbage or lunch bags, and some places collect them for recycling. Instead of Ziplocs, try something like cellulose, made from plants: [http://www.greenhome.com/products/kitchen/food\\_storage/fod000001/](http://www.greenhome.com/products/kitchen/food_storage/fod000001/).

-Cardboard boxes: Found in Chinese take-out, cake containers, pizza boxes, etc. Most cities do not have composting systems that can recycle containers such as these with food on them. Many of these containers also have bleach or chlorine added to them, which can be toxic.

-Bio-products: Includes bioplastics made from corn, bamboo, potatoes, plant fibers, etc. Unfortunately, many of these need special conditions in which to biodegrade, and require energy to produce. Also, mixing bioplastics with regular plastics in recycling can cause problems with sorting.

-Aluminum foil: A lot of energy is used to extract and produce the metal. Luckily, aluminum can be reused over and over again. If it is put in a landfill, over time it will oxidize without emitting pollutants.

-Recycled paper products: Includes some cardboard boxes, napkins, paper towels, etc. 100% recycled materials means the item was not made with any



virgin resources, but any percentage less means it was. Making recycled paper uses fewer chemicals in the process than virgin paper, saves energy, saves trees, and reduces water and air pollution.

### **Best Containers:**

-Edible containers: Including bread soup bowls, ice cream cones, taco shell salad tortillas, etc. If the item comes on a paper or plastic plate, it basically negates the sustainability factor. Otherwise, it is totally compostable if one doesn't want to finish it.

-Inedible food containers made from food: This includes corn husks, banana leaves, etc. Again, if the item is served on a paper or plastic plate, the sustainable factor is out the window. Otherwise, these containers are compostable and can be used to cook or transport food.

-Bring your own: Means the canvas bags at grocery stores, bringing Tupperware to restaurants, coffee mugs brought to cafes, etc. This is the most positive method all the way around. Many stores now offer incentives for not using a bag or bringing your own. For some cool reusable bags, see: [www.reusablebags.com](http://www.reusablebags.com). (How easy is this? Personally, I will go to Panera this weekend, bring one large Tupperware, order my lunch for "there" and pack it into the Tupperware and leave. For "there" only wastes one wax paper sheet and a plate and bowl to be washed and reused, as opposed to a large paper bag, and Styrofoam containers for the "to-go" option. If I can think of this before I go, it isn't hard to be more sustainable!).

**\*\*\*Earth Day Week is upon us (April 21 to 27)!! Check out the Film Festival, Local Foods Fair, and Earth Day Celebration events in the People's Food Co-op April Newsletter:**

**<http://www.peoplesfoodcoop.com/ShopperNewsletters.html> !!!!\*\*\***

**Also, Chris Schneider, Honda Guru, of Honda Motorwerks in La Crosse will be speaking at Viterbo on April 10, 9:45 to 11:30am on Viterbo Drive by the Harmony and Peace Statue. Come learn about alternative fuel technologies!!!**

**\*\*Nationally renowned speaker Terry Gips will be presenting about the Natural Step and Sustainability at UW-L's Cartwright Center Ward Room on April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 7 to 9 pm. He will also be presenting at the County Collaboration Conference on April 24<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am to 12pm at the La Crosse Center Ballroom (Contact Brian Fukuda at the County for that information).\*\***

**Also, check out this new initiative in the La Crosse area for sustainable practices:**

-Start an Environmental Action Team in Your Neighborhood or Workplace!  
Clean Wisconsin is starting a new program in La Crosse that takes concrete

steps to improve our impact on the environment. The EnAct program works by creating Environmental Action Teams in neighborhoods, community organizations, and workplaces.

EnAct promotes sustainable living and strong communities. Through groups of five to ten households that work together through a Participant Guide, EnAct builds awareness of environmental issues and provides resources specific to La Crosse.

The EnAct Program:

- o Educates for sustainable living on five topics: Reducing Waste, Re-thinking Transportation, Conserving Energy, Protecting Water, and Choosing Healthy Food.
- o Delivers concrete results: lower energy bills, reduced water use, and more!
- o Strengthens communities by bringing people with similar concerns and questions together in an informal setting to share in their experience and create visible change

For more information, Clean Wisconsin is offering an Informational Meeting to cover details about the program and any questions:

**EnAct Informational Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 9, 6pm**

**University of Wisconsin – La Crosse**

**Cartwright Center – Ward Room (near cyber café)**

**(Compliments of Adam Conlin, EnAct coordinator).**

**Have a divinely spring weekend everyone!!! (And you know it's really spring when the Chorus Frogs are out croaking...listen for a barber's comb thumbing-like sound).**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 34: Apr. 7-11, 2008.**

**Topic: Healthy Schools**

**What is a “healthy school?”:**

-A school that uses resources it already has to produce a healthier, safer learning environment, reduced consumption and operating costs, increased protection of natural resources, and the school site and facilities as a teaching tool.

**Some shocking facts:**

-Each weekday, some 53 million students and 5 million staff enter our country's schools, which represent about 20% of America's population. About half of this population may be exposed to polluted indoor air, chemical fumes, asbestos, lead, molds, pesticides, and other toxins, as well as overcrowding and poor sanitary practices. Pollution in buildings most often associated with respiratory

illnesses is the presence of moisture, microbiological pollutants, water damage, biological allergens, and products of combustion. Some other risk factors include low ventilation rates, formaldehyde, moisture or dirt in HVAC systems, vehicle exhaust, chemicals in cleaning products, and outdoor pollutants. (EPA).

-Many studies have proven that diesel fuel exhaust can lead to lung cancer, lung damage, and other respiratory problems. Also, children breathe about 50% more per pound of body weight than adults, which makes them more susceptible to greater health effects from idling school buses. (EPA).

### **Wisconsin Green and Healthy Schools Program**

(<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/greenschools/>):

-Joint partnership between the Wisconsin DNR and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

-A web-based, voluntary, and self-paced program that is available to all Wisconsin public and private elementary, middle, and high schools.

-Designed to encourage and support schools in their mission for an environmentally-friendly, safe, and healthy learning experience.

-Helps educate students about Wisconsin's natural resources and the environmental impacts to our health, schools, and communities.

-The program consists of three steps:

1) Pledge: Get support from administrators and staff and form a Green and Healthy Team, as well as fill out a Pledge form.

2) Discovery and Inventory: Use the assessment chart to see if the school meets the requirements of a green and healthy school (i.e. waste, energy use, water use, etc.).

3) Action and Implementation: Use the assessment to make changes and implement programs. The WDNR site provides resources for lessons and projects.

### **EPA's HealthySEAT (<http://www.epa.gov/schools/healthyseat/index.html>):**

-Means the Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool.

-It is an easy to use, customizable software program created to help school districts measure and manage all of their environmental, health, and safety issues. These issues include:

- Chemical management
- Energy efficiency
- Indoor air quality
- Hazardous materials
- Non-hazardous waste
- Mold/moisture control
- Pest control/Integrated Pest Management
- Outdoor air pollution
- Water (drinking, waste, storm, etc.)
- Ultra-violet radiation
- Construction and renovation

-Portable classrooms

**What are the benefits of “Green/Healthy Schools?”:**

- There was a large decrease in absenteeism, an increase in comfort, fewer bronchitis cases reported by staff, and a 25% reduction of visits to the school nurse with complaints of headaches and stomachaches within the first five months of using the EPA HealthySEAT kit (Little Harbour School, NH; EPA).
- There was found to be a considerable relationship between facility condition and student achievement based on test scores in 139 of Milwaukee’s public schools in the areas of math, science, language, and social studies (EPA).
- The day-lighting of schools can reduce lifetime utility costs between 30% and 70% and improve student performance (Energy Center of Wisconsin).
- Students in classrooms with the most day-lighting advanced 20% faster on math tests and 26% faster on reading tests in a year than those with the least amount of day-lighting. (WDNR).

**La Crosse School District:**

- The District hired Kerm King to help assess and improve energy use within the School District’s facilities. Since 2002, the District has saved over \$2 million in energy savings alone. Practices include turning off lights when not in use, closing doors when heating or air conditioning is on, changing lights to more efficient types, shutting off computers, etc.

**National Environmental Education Week (<http://www.eeweek.org/about/index.htm>):**

- April 13-19, 2008.
- Sponsored by Canon, Environmental Education Week (EE week) is coordinated by the National Environmental Education Foundation, in conjunction with many other schools, environmental education organizations, and state and federal agencies.
- The site offers lesson plans, quizzes, and ideas for environmental education.
- You can register your school or organization for EE week and practice some of the lessons and activities listed on the site.

**Envision 2050 (<http://www.urbanrevision.com/envision2050/index.php>):**

- A creative contest for kids in grades 6-12.
- Create a poster of what they think the Earth will be like in 2050—where our resources will come from, what cities look like, what transportation is like, etc. The prizes are awarded to both the winner and his or her school.

***Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv:**

- A novel describing how exposure to the natural environment is essential for children to lead healthier lives, as opposed to the more common sedentary, wired lives they live now. Research has linked children’s lack of nature to the modern increases in childhood obesity, depression, and attention disorders.  
(<http://www.algonquin.com/products/9781565125223/>).

### **Hixon Forest Nature Programs:**

-Check them out at [www.hixonforest.org](http://www.hixonforest.org).

### **\*\*\*Spring Natural Step Study Circles\*\*\***

-Beginning at the end of April.

-Two circles are planned for this spring:

-Poehling Circle: Meets 6:30-8pm Mondays at First Supply, 106 Cameron Ave. May 5-June 16. The facilitator is Jim Poehling, an engineer for first supply.

-Tyser Circle: Meets 6:30-8pm Wednesdays in the Community Room at the People's Food Co-op from May 7-28. The facilitator is Rob Tyser, a teacher in the UW-L Department of Biology.

-A joint introductory meeting is at First Supply on Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8pm for anyone interested.

-To register, contact Vicki Miller at [vicki@vsm5.com](mailto:vicki@vsm5.com) and indicate which circle you would like to participate in.

**\*\*\*Don't forget about all the Earth Day events. They are listed on the Co-op's newsletter: [www.peoplesfoodcoop.com](http://www.peoplesfoodcoop.com) .\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Terry Gips and Dave Wanberg will be presenting about The Natural Step and Sustainability in the Ward Room at Cartwright Hall on the UW-L campus Wed. April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 7-9pm\*\*\***

**\*\*\*I received an idea from last week's newsletter on containers: Jim Eberle and his wife in La Crescent make reusable, organic cotton canvas bags. They are available at [www.greenbeeonline.com](http://www.greenbeeonline.com).\*\*\***

**Have a sumptuous weekend everyone!!!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 35: Apr. 14-18, 2008. Topic: Earth Day Events!!!**

### **What Is Earth Day???**

-April 22 each year—The 1<sup>st</sup> Earth Day was the birth of the modern environmental movement—1970—WI senator Gaylord Nelson proposed the first nationwide environmental protest "to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda." On April 22, 20 million Americans took to the streets to demonstrate for a healthy and sustainable environment. Denis Hayes, the national coordinator, and his staff organized massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, the loss of wilderness, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common interests. (Source: Earth Day Network: <http://ww2.earthday.net/node/80>).

**UW-L and Film Festival Earth Week Event Schedule (taken from the published version):**

**Sunday, April 20:**

-Film: "Suzuki Speaks: It's Not Empty Space" (46 min), Main Library: In a time when people are thirsty for honesty, inspiration, meaning and global change, comes renowned scientist and visionary Dr. David Suzuki, delivering the most important message of his career: what it means to be fully human in our interconnected universe. The film's stunning motion graphics weave a tapestry that transforms Dr. Suzuki's wisdom into a complete sensory experience, literally creating new worlds and new ways of seeing. "Suzuki Speaks" will leave you feeling renewed, challenged and alive.

**Monday, April 21:**

-Dumpster dive, 10am-3pm at the clock tower on the UW-L campus. Check out the mystery in the deep, dark dumpsters on campus! We will discover how much of the trash could really be recycled! (Just don't take food out of there...like some people I know...yuck!)

-Sami Rasuli, Main Hall Auditorium, UW-L campus, 7pm—Speaking about the environmental and humanitarian results of the war in Iraq.

**Tuesday, April 22:**

-Talloires Declaration Signing Ceremony, clocktower, UW-L campus, 12:30-2pm. Chancellor Joe Gow will be signing the Talloires Declaration so that UW-L will become a more environmentally literate and sustainable university.

-Hixon trails marsh clean up: meet at clocktower at 3:30pm or the Myrick Gun Shelter at 4pm. Wear appropriate attire.

-Sustainability Panel Discussion: Ward Room, Cartwright Center, 6:30pm. Speakers include: Roald Gundersen-on whole tree architecture and sustainable building; Kelly Cain- the UW River Falls environmental director; Mike Pieper- from WTC, an expert on wind energy.

**Wednesday, April 23:**

-Bike maintenance, clocktower, 10am-3pm.

-Film: "The Story of Stuff" (20 min), and "The True Cost of Food" (15 min), Main Library, Noon. From its extraction through sale, use and disposal, all the stuff in our lives affects communities at home and abroad, yet most of it is hidden from view. "The Story of Stuff" is a fast-paced, fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns. Stuff exposes the connections between environmental and social issues, and calls us together to create a more sustainable and just world. It'll teach you something, it'll make you laugh, and it just may change the way you look at all the stuff in your life forever. "The True Cost of Food" entertains and educates about the production and delivery of our food and how we, the consumers, can stop the practices that harm our health, our planet and our quality of life.

-Terry Gips and Dave Wanberg, Ward Room, Cartwright Center, 7-9pm. A widely published ecologist and Natural Step Framework instructor will share some of his knowledge with us.

### **Thursday, April 24:**

- Terra Cotta pot painting and selling, clocktower, 10am-2pm.
- Neighborhood clean-up: meet at clocktower at 3:30pm.
- Film: "Affluenza" (55 min), 7pm, Main Library. Explore the high social and environmental costs of materialism and over consumption.
- Movie/Drum circle: movie T.B.A.—UW-L Center for the Arts field, 7-10pm, rain site: Cowley Room 140.

### **Friday, April 25:**

- Film: "Design E<sup>2</sup>", Main Library, Noon. Learn about efforts to design and build eco-friendly structures through sustainable architecture.
- Franciscan Sisters "Cosmic Walk": Port O' Call, Cartwright Center, UW-L campus, 1-5pm. Sister Lucy will lead us through a timeline of the unfolding universe. She will help to provide a perspective of where humans fit into the bigger picture and how our personal choices can impact all things. If you cannot attend to whole event, come at 4pm to walk through the timeline on your own!
- Open Mic at Bluffland Bloom and Brew (near Pearl and 4<sup>th</sup>), 7-10pm.

### **Saturday, April 26:**

- 5K run/walk-start at Myrick Park and end at Cameron Park; 8:30am – Number pick up at Myrick Park; 9:30am – Race begins;10:30am – Awards at Cameron Park;11am – Earth Day Celebration Begins!

#### -Cameron Park:

- 11am: Welcome ceremony
- 11:15-12pm: The Browsers
- 12:10-12:55pm: Derek Pritzel
- 1:05-2:30pm: Figureheads
- 2:40-3:40pm: Moonshine Conspiracy
- 3:50-5:30pm: Down Lo

- Also at the park: The Local Foods Fair (local vendors and CSAs), Jugglers, Slack Lines, Captain Planet, Drumming, Pet Therapy Dogs, Activities for kids – Face Painting.

### **Sunday, April 27:**

- Film: "This Ancient Love" (17 min) and "Renewal" (90 min), 3pm, Main Library. "This Ancient Love" brings together glorious visuals from Cape Cod with two songs by women whose voices join the images in breathtaking conversations between land and music. "Renewal" traces the rise in environmental activism among religious communities throughout America. All are striving to preserve what they see as God's creation, and all are increasingly working together as conscious stewards of the earth.

**\*\*\*First Supply is holding a "Green Training Session" here in La Crosse, Wed. May 7, 4-7pm at the Best Western Midway Hotel. It is a green building training intended to give an overview of green building practices such as**

energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and resource conservation. RSVP to Sandi Kegebein at [green@1supply.com](mailto:green@1supply.com) or 608-223-6601.\*\*\*

Have a delectable weekend everyone!!!

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 36: Apr. 21-25, 2008.**

Topic: Cosmetics (sorry to the gents!)

**Disclaimer: Sorry to all the men...I'll try to think of a topic more appealing next time!**

-Cosmetics are some of the most unregulated items on the shelf these days...some ingredients include mercury, lead acetate, thimerosal, formaldehyde, toluene, petroleum, ethylacrylate, potassium, coal tar, and dibutyl phthalate. These substances are harmful to human health and the environment (Source: <http://www.epigee.org/eco.html>).

-Petroleum products such as paraffin, mineral oil, and propylene glycol are often used in lip balms and gloss.

-Steer clear of: shampoos and conditioners with SLS (sodium lauryl sulfate) in them; hair dyes with carcinogenic coal tar; and hairsprays and gels containing petroleum derivatives, formaldehyde, phthalates, and synthetic fragrance.

-The U.S. Federal Drug Administration's (FDA) stance on cosmetics is as follows: "...legal authority over cosmetics is different from other products regulated by the agency, such as drugs, biologics, and medical devices. Cosmetic products and ingredients are not subject to FDA pre-market approval authority, with the exception of color additives...manufacturers are not required to register their cosmetic establishments, file data on ingredients, or report cosmetic-related injuries to FDA." (Source: <http://ecocoach.wordpress.com/2008/01/11/take-care-of-your-skin-but-don%e2%80%99t-skim-the-environment/> ).

-Some European countries have certifications for cosmetics and personal care products— some examples include Germany's BDIH certification and France's Ecocert Cosmebio label. When choosing a product, make sure that it does not include petrochemical products, GMOs (genetically modified organisms) or animal raw materials.

### **Good News!**

-In August 2005, the USDA allowed cosmetics and personal care products to bear the "**USDA Certified Organic**" seal. Products with 100% organic ingredients, excluding water and salt, can be labeled "100% Organic." Those made with 95 percent or more organic ingredients can be labeled "Organic." Products with 70 percent or more may be labeled "Made With Organic Ingredients." Sadly, organic cosmetics are not as strictly regulated as organic food products. Eco Labels, the Consumers Union Guide to Environmental Labels, notes that the USDA Organic label is not as meaningful for cosmetics



and personal care products as it is for food. Also, the certification does not exclude the use of the term "organic" on the label or a product's claims that it is "made with organic ingredients," both of which can lead to confusion (Source: <http://www.thegreenguide.com/products/Cosmetics/Eye%20Makeup> ).

-Companies can sign onto the Compact for Safe Cosmetics:  
[http://www.safecosmetics.org/companies/compact\\_with\\_america.cfm](http://www.safecosmetics.org/companies/compact_with_america.cfm).

-Companies that have signed the compact and can be found in the La Crosse area are: Avalon Natural Products, Burt's Bees, Clearly Natural, Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap, Giovanni Cosmetics, Kiss My Face, Jasön Natural Products, Nature's Gate, and Weleda (Source: [http://www.safecosmetics.org/companies/compact\\_with\\_america.cfm](http://www.safecosmetics.org/companies/compact_with_america.cfm)).

-For the men out there: Eco-friendly shaving cream can be found at: <http://www.remediesdirect.com/mens-shaving-cream.html>. After-shave balm and/or cologne can be found at: <http://www.remediesdirect.com/after-shave-balm.html>.

### **Bad News:**

-The average adult uses 9 personal products a day, all adding to about 120 different chemicals among them, many of which have not been completely tested for toxicity (Source: <http://www.thegreenguide.com/doc/122/dirtydozen> ).

-Currently, only 11% of the ingredients used in cosmetics have ever been tested for safety (Source: <http://www.safecosmetics.org/companies/compactguide.cfm>).

### **Make your own toothpaste!**

2 tablespoons baking soda  
1/8 teaspoon white stevia powder  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon powder. Blend the ingredients in a small glass jar. Scoop on a dampened toothbrush and brush as usual.

(<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=427>).

Here is a copy of the Earth Day events this weekend:

### ***Saturday, April 26:***

5K Run/Walk – Start at Myrick Park end at Cameron Park  
(any questions contact Jen Phelps @(920) 257 9340)

8:30 – Number pick up at Myrick Park

9:30 – Race begins

10:30 – Awards at Cameron Park

11 – Earth Day Celebration Begins!

### Celebration to follow at Cameron Park

11 – Welcoming Ceremony

11:15-12 – The Browsers

12:10-12:55 – Derek Pritzel  
1:05-2:30 – Figureheads  
2:40-3:40 – Moonshine Conspiracy  
3:50-5:30 – Down Lo

Also at the park: The Local Foods Fair, Jugglers, Slack Lines, Captain Planet, Drumming, Pet Therapy Dogs, Activities for kids – Face Painting

**Sunday, April 27, 3 p.m.**

This Ancient Love (17 min.) and Renewal (90 min.)

**Facilitator: Lucy Slinger**

-This Ancient Love brings together glorious visuals from Cape Cod with two songs by women whose voices join the images in breathtaking conversations between land and music.

-Renewal traces the rise in environmental activism among religious communities throughout America and how they are striving to preserve what they see as God's creation. They are increasingly working together as conscious stewards of the earth.

**\*\*\*Thought of the Day: If Seattle, WA**

**(<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17823751/>) and the entire country of China (<http://www.enn.com/pollution/article/29330>) can ban plastic bags...why can't everyone else (like the whole U.S.)??? We can blame countries like China for increasing carbon emissions, but they actually are "getting down to business" in other ways!\*\*\***

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 37: Apr. 28-May 2, 2008.**

**Topic: Bike To Work Week!**

**This year is the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual "Bike to Work Week!!"**

-May 3-9, 2008. The City Planning Dept. has some awesome stickers and schedules...come pick them up!

-Local events can be found at [www.couleebikes.org](http://www.couleebikes.org), or <http://www.lacrossetribune.com/articles/2008/04/29/news/02pedal.txt>.

-Kickoff is this Saturday, May 3 at Myrick Park. The Bike Safety Rodeo is from 9am-12pm and features bike skills stations, bike maintenance, bike safety information, bike decorating, and snacks.

-Other events include:

-Weekday coffee break: Bring your bike helmet into these stores all week to receive a free cup of java: Peaberry's, Grounded, Black River Coffee, Java Detour, Bean Juice, and Starbucks.

- Historic evening neighborhood rides sponsored by Livable Neighborhoods. They start at 6 p.m. each evening. Minors must wear helmets and be accompanied by an adult.

· Sunday – Grandview Emerson Neighborhood Ride - meet at Emerson.

· Monday – Lower NS Neighborhood Ride - meet at Depot Police Station

· Tuesday – Powell Hood Hamilton Ride - meet at South Side Neighborhood Center

- Wednesday – Washburn Neighborhood Ride - meet at Viterbo Clock Tower
- Wednesday – Bike To Bowl—Ride your bike (with helmet) to Pla-Mor Lanes for a hotdog, soda, and 2 games of bowling for \$5.00.
- Thursday – Onalaska Ride - meet at Blue Heron Bikes
  - Wednesday breakfast at the YMCA. The YMCA on Main St. will host a breakfast from 6:30am-9am for bikers.
  - Thursday Transportation Liberation: Learn how to save money and the planet by not driving a car. 7:30pm in the Ward Room of UW-L's Cartwright Center.
  - Friday: Bike to Work Week hits the Cameron Park Farmer's Market! 5-6:30pm, music by Grand Picnic, free root beer floats, door prizes, etc.

-Also, your business could win one of two coveted Golden Helmet Awards for participation in Bike to Work Week. The first award will be offered to the employer that has the greatest number of employees who bike to work/school at least one day during Bike to Work Week. The second and third awards will be offered to business that have the greatest percentage of employees who bike to work at least one day during Bike to Work Week. One of the percentage awards will go to the employer with up to 20 employees and the other to an employer with more than 20 employees. In order to qualify for these awards, all bikers must register at [www.couleebikes.org](http://www.couleebikes.org) by noon on Friday, May 9th. Additionally, if your business wants to apply for a percentage award, you need to email Ed West at [ed.west@centurytel.net](mailto:ed.west@centurytel.net) by noon on Friday, May 9th to let them know the total number of employees at your place of business.

-Also of note: good websites include the League of American Bicyclists, [www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org), and The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin, [www.bfw.org](http://www.bfw.org). La Crosse was named a "Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community" by the League of American Bicyclists in 2007.

### **Bikes in the News:**

-Madison has seen an influx of bikes for repair lately:  
<http://wkow.madison.com/News/index.php?ID=21006>

-Scottsdale, Arizona: about 1.7% of residents bike to work, yet they have 86 miles of bike lanes, 61 miles of paved paths, and 50 miles of bike routes (*Scottsdale Republic*, 4/17/08). La Crosse County only had 0.06% of workers biking to work in 2000 (U.S. Census).

### **Bike Commuting Tips:**

-Plan your route: Look for wide roads with less traffic or streets with bike lanes; ride your route on a weekend or day off to check for hazards and to time the route.

-Choose a comfy bike: Have a bike shop make sure the bike is in good working order; consider fenders to keep dirt and mud off of your clothes.

-Dress to commute: Wear light colored clothing to be visible; use ankle straps to keep pant legs out of the gears; avoid flip-flops and high heeled shoes (woops!! I wear both all the time...).

-Carry your cargo: Pack clothes, lunch, or other items in a backpack, basket, saddlebags, etc.

- Be safe and predictable: wear a helmet, signal your turns, and obey the rules of the road; be alert for cars pulling out of driveways or making turns.
  - Pack a lock, tools, lights: Lock your bike to an immovable object in a visible area; keep a tire, pump, patch kit, and small tool kit with you and know how to fix a flat tire; have a light for nighttime riding (it is a WI law...trust me...).
- (Tips courtesy of the *Scottsdale Republic*, 4/17/08).

**Extra: Cameron Park Farmer's Market:**

- The first market of the season is today, May 2 in Cameron Park, across from the People's Food Co-op. 4-8pm, rain or shine!
- The market will also feature an arts and crafts fair!
- Seasonal produce includes spinach, mushrooms, asparagus, Swiss chard, rhubarb, etc. Natural raised beef, flowers, and other products are also available.

**Have a glorious weekend everyone!!!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 38: May 5-9, 2008.**

**Topic: Save Money at the Pump**

**With La Crosse Area gas prices at \$3.69/gallon, how can you easily save a little extra?**

- Gas mileage generally decreases quickly at speeds above 60 miles per hour, but each vehicle reaches optimal fuel economy at different speeds.
- In general each 5 miles per hour you drive above 60 miles per hour, you can expect to pay about \$0.20 more per gallon of gas. (Schneider National trucking company is cutting its top speed to 60 mph:  
<http://www.lacrossetribune.com/articles/2008/05/09/newsupdate/14schneider.txt>).
- An extra 100 pounds of weight in your car can decrease fuel efficiency by up to 2%. Try to minimize carrying extra goods.
- Using cruise control will help you maintain a constant speed on highways, and usually saves gas.
- Replacing an old air filter can improve a car's fuel efficiency by about 10%, and it will protect your engine.
- Keep tires inflated to the proper pressure. This small step can improve gas mileage by up to 3.3%. Under-inflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.4 percent per one psi drop in pressure of all four tires.
- Take advantage of carpooling and ride-sharing programs. There are also a lot of cities that offer express lanes for cars with more than one person in them (i.e. Minneapolis...which has been around forever...when I was 2, my mom was pulled over for 'cheating the system' because my large stuffed animal that was covering me looked like a fake person!).
- Consider using public transportation if convenient and available. (Amtrak is a great way to get to Minneapolis or Chicago).
- Remember for you non-represented City employees that you can ride the MTU for free! Contact Sonna Kopp at the MTU to get your free monthly MTU Pass.
- Have your tires aligned correctly. Poor alignment causes engines to work harder, which can reduce fuel mileage by up to 10%.

-Tune your engine regularly to save up to 4% on fuel efficiency.

(Source: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/driveHabits.shtml> and <http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/save-gas-47031702> ).

\*Personally, I just think everyone should walk or bike as much as they can!\*

### **Some links to related articles:**

-An article from Madison's local news station about saving gas and driving slower: <http://wkow.madison.com/News/index.php?ID=21037>

-Sierra Club's info on gas prices and savings tips:  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/gasprices/index.asp>

-The last issue of *Sierra Magazine* featured the most fuel efficient cars, trucks, SUVs and minivans. Here is a link to the online version:  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/200803/green.asp>

-Here is a good article on gas mileage in general:  
[http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/boosting-gas-mileage-460428?click=main\\_sr](http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/boosting-gas-mileage-460428?click=main_sr)

### **Community news:**

#### **Bike to Work Week Culmination:**

-This evening at the Cameron Park Farmer's Market, 5-6:30pm. FREE root beer floats, music by Grand Picnic, and door prizes. Also, the announcement of the winner of the Golden Helmet.

#### **Clean Energy Coalition/Sierra Club:**

**Thursday, May 29, 2008:** The public is invited to all events. Afternoon workshops and catered dinner at the Three Rivers Waldorf School (901 Caledonia). The Public Forum at 7:00 p.m. is in the Ho-Chunk Building, downtown La Crosse.

2:00-3:30 p.m. Workshop: COAL TECHNOLOGIES. Over 70% of our electricity in Wisconsin is produced by burning coal, and that will not change in the near future. So let's find out how to live with it, how to improve it. Is coal "cleaner" or "dirtier" in other places, for example, Germany or China?

4:00-5:30 p.m. Workshop: COAL IN THE MIDWEST. Who are the major coal burning electricity producers in the Midwest, where they are located, how much energy they consume and produce, what are their levels of air contamination, what type of coal they consume and how it arrives? Many questions. Let's get

some answers from our distinguished visiting experts.

5:45-6:45 p.m. CATERED MEXICAN DINNER (\$6--email your reservation). Join us for food and fellowship.

7:00-9:00 p.m. A CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE FOR WISCONSIN (Public Forum in the Ho-Chunk Basement, next to Main St. Library). If coal and dangerous nuclear account for 85% of Wisconsin's electricity today, what is in store for tomorrow?

Presenters: Ryan Schryver, of Clean Wisconsin and Eric Uram, of the Sierra Club (←I worked with him in 2005! Good guy!)

Events sponsored by the La Crosse Clean Energy Coalition. Just show up. Contact [billkatra@hotmail.com](mailto:billkatra@hotmail.com) for dinner reservations or for more information.

**Have a tiptop weekend everyone!!!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 39: May 12-16, 2008.** Topic: "Green" Gardening

**It's time to get out the hoes and plant the garden, or just tend to the lawn. Here are some tips to go "green" in the process.**

### **Water:**

- Water only when soil is dry.
- Take rainfall into account...don't just use automatic timed sprinklers.
- Water early in the morning or later in the evening to avoid higher rates of evaporation.
- Putting mulch or other organic material on gardens or lawns helps hold in moisture.
- Consider native and drought-resistant plants for your yard.
- Buy or construct a rain barrel to capture run-off from your roof. The water can be used to water the lawn, plants, your garden, trees, etc.
- Build a rain garden to capture run-off, thus decreasing the storm water flow, reducing pollutants, and replenishing aquifers.

### **Lawn:**

- Plant native species to attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Pollinators affect 35% of the world's crop production and increase the output of 87 of the world's leading food crops (Treehugger.com).
- Keep grass longer, at 2.5" to 3.5" to encourage deep roots, which helps plants survive drier times.
- Grass clippings left on the lawn can add nutrients to the soil if left there.
- Attempt to fertilize with natural fertilizers that contain soybean meal, blood meal, feather meal, or corn gluten meal.

- Core aerate the lawn every other few years in the spring.
- Instead of fertilizer, top-dress the lawn with compost or composted manure.
- Try to reduce or eliminate pesticide use and remove weeds by hand.
- Over-seed thin lawns by hand in the spring or late summer to discourage weed growth and allow thicker growth of the needed plants.
- Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation, which both only use about 50% of the water used by sprinklers (Source: <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/06/how-to-green-your-gardening.php>).
- Try vermicomposting (adding red worms to your organic matter refuse). Vermicomposting uses red worms to help break down the organic wastes we consume into a more nutrient-rich compost product. See <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/08/green-basics-vermicompost.php> for more information.
- Try to use an electric or push mower if possible. Big, diesel spewing ones are not so flattering, and are bad for the environment.

### **Attitude:**

- Plant something, anything! Plants produce oxygen and take pollutants out of the air.
- Start a compost pile. They save on trash accumulation and associated fees, and can be directly used on your lawn or garden.
- Make sure to determine if you really have pests or just a disease. A lot of pest and disease-related problems can be solved without the use of chemicals.

### **Home Plants:**

- Use old yogurt containers as vases or pots for plants, or check out the natural and/or recycled products now available at garden stores.

(Source: Most information from the Star Tribune's "Living Green" 4/27/08 edition).

### **Some Related Sites:**

- WKBT article about green cleaning, and what La Crosse Floral has to offer: <http://www.wkbt.com/Global/story.asp?s=8285638>
- Treehugger's list of the top 10 green gardening tips: <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/06/how-to-green-your-gardening.php>
- A site offering eco-friendly potters and gardenware: <http://www.thegreengardenstore.com/servlet/StoreFront>
- How global warming is affecting gardening: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/green-homes/blogs/organic-gardening/Global-warming-gardening-transitions>

### **Events:**

**Cameron Park Farmer's Market:**

-Today, 4-8pm; from 5-7pm the UW-L Environmental Studies Program will present a cooking demonstration on wild edible foods. There will be a musical performance by Mike Caucutt of Mr. Blink , see <http://www.cameronparkmarket.org/page000.aspx> for more information.

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 40: May 19-23, 2008.**

### **Topic: Eco- and Sustainable Tourism**

**With Memorial Day this weekend, most might have traveling on their horizons. Here are some tourism tips to help you be more “green.”**

#### **Definitions:**

**EcoTourism:** Refers to natural travel to natural areas that conserve the environment and improves the wellbeing of locals (Source: International Ecotourism Society, [http://www.ecotourism.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/eco\\_template.aspx?articleid=95&zoned=2](http://www.ecotourism.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/eco_template.aspx?articleid=95&zoned=2) ).

-What principles does Ecotourism encompass?

- Minimize impact
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and employment for local people
- Raises sensitivity to local host communities' social, political, and

environmental climate.

**Responsible Travel:** This refers to travel with a purpose. If you are choosing a location or hotel, please consider those which are working to protect the environment and benefit local cultures and communities.

-What can you ask your hotel?

- At the hotel: Ask about environmental policies and practices. Talk with staff about working conditions. Does the hotel support community projects?
- Behavior: Be respectful of local citizens' privacy. Ask permission before entering sacred places, homes, or private land.
- Photos: Be sensitive to when and where you take photos/video of people. Always ask first.
- Environment: Respect the natural environment. Never touch or harass animals. Always follow designated trails. Support conservation by paying entrance fees to parks and protected sites.
- Animal products: Never buy crafts or products made from protected or endangered animals.



- Pay the fair price: Don't engage in overly aggressive bargaining for souvenirs. Don't short-change on tips for services.
- Buy local: Choose locally-owned lodges, hotels, and B&Bs. Use local buses, car rental agencies, and airlines. Eat in local restaurants, shop in local markets, and attend local festivals/events.
- Hire local guides: Enrich your experience and support the local economy. Ask guides if they are licensed and live locally. (Source: [http://www.ecotourism.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/eco\\_template.aspx?articleid=95&zoneid=2](http://www.ecotourism.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/eco_template.aspx?articleid=95&zoneid=2) ).

**Sustainable Travel:** Applies social, environmental, and economic considerations to all areas of tourism; i.e. reducing water usage at a hotel. An approach to tourism, not a one-size fits all solution. (*Worldchanging-A Users Guide to the 21st Century*, Alex Steffen, Pg. 365).

-Select locally owned and operated hotel, buy locally produced food, buy locally made goods, hire resident guides, buy souvenirs from local businesses and craftspeople instead of hotel gift shops. (*Worldchanging-A Users Guide to the 21st Century*, Alex Steffen, p.364)

-When possible, use more eco-friendly transportation, such as trains, buses, passenger boats, bicycling, or walking.

-Green Hotels has listings for eco-friendly hotels and inns around the country: <http://www.greenhotels.com/members.htm>

- Travel Green Wisconsin:

<http://www.travelgreenwisconsin.com/consumer/index.htm> offers listings of businesses and places in WI that are eco-friendly. Also, <http://www.travelgreenwisconsin.com/consumer/business-list.aspx> Check them out for your Memorial Day/summer trips!

### **Camping and Recreation Nearby:**

-Goose Island Campground:

<http://explorelacrosse.com/index.asp?CompID=25&btnSubmit=showContact&cboContactID=50&cboContactCategoryID=89&cboCategoryIDMain=133>

-Hixon Forest Nature Center: [www.hixonforest.org](http://www.hixonforest.org)

-Neshonoc Lake Campground: <http://www.neshonoclakeside.com/>

-Veterans Memorial Campground:

<http://explorelacrosse.com/index.asp?CompID=25&btnSubmit=showContact&cboContactID=4403&cboContactCategoryID=89&cboCategoryIDMain=133>

-Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge:  
<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/profiles/index.cfm?id=32578>

-Perrot state park: [http://www.travelwisconsin.com/item\\_detail/Perrot\\_State\\_Park.aspx](http://www.travelwisconsin.com/item_detail/Perrot_State_Park.aspx)

-WI state forests and parks: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/parks/specific/findapark.html>

### **Weekly events:**

-Clean Air Coalition: Thursday, May 29, 2008. Public is invited to all events. Afternoon workshops and catered dinner at the Three Rivers Waldorf School (901 Caledonia--just two blocks from the locomotive on Rose St.). The Public Forum at 7:00 p.m. is in the Ho-Chunk Building, downtown La Crosse.

-Cameron Park Farmer's Market, 4-8pm.

**Have a magnificent weekend everyone!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 41: May 26-30, 2008.** **Topic: Green Labeling**

**As companies gain more environmental standards, they can be subject to "green-washing," meaning they can tout that their product is environmentally friendly, but it really is not. Here are some labels to look for in stores to be certain the products you are purchasing are actually "green."**

**All of the "green" or "eco" labels come from Consumer Reports' Greener Choices** (<http://www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/eco-home.cfm> ).

**Quality Assurance International:** They have been certifying products since 1989, and are an organic certifier through the USDA. The USDA has developed standards that must be met by anyone claiming they are "organic" in the U.S.

**USDA Organic:** Has developed a standard that must be met by anyone using the "organic" label in the U.S. The standards were issued in late 2000. Compliance with the standards is issued by the USDA, which accredits certifying organizations.

**Fair Trade Certified:** They have standards that aim to make sure farmers and farm workers in developing nations receive a fair price for their products, have direct trade relations with their buyers and access to credit, and encourage sustainable farming methods without the use of pesticides or child labor.

Products under this label must be grown by small-scale farms. In order to use the Fair Trade Certified label, the buyer must also be willing to pay up to 60% of the purchase in advance for some products, including coffee, tea and cocoa, with added premiums for social development projects, including healthcare, educational, and projects that can improve quality of life for farming communities. TransFair USA is the only certifier of Fair Trade goods in the U.S., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and a member of Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO), the umbrella organization that sets certification standards.

**Forest Stewardship Council:** Is an international accrediting organization that has developed standards to certify wood harvested, well-managed forests and wood products made from FSC certified wood. In addition to the Forest Management Program, FSC also offers a Chain of Custody Program that accounts for how the certified wood is managed once it leaves the forest. Labels on these products may also include a statement regarding the percentage of FSC wood in the product. FSC accredits certifying organizations to certify wood against the 10 principles (with criteria) developed by FSC. These principles include environmental, social and economic impacts of the forest industry. Genetic engineering is not allowed. However clear-cutting and use of chemicals including, herbicides and preservation of old growth forests are only addressed in a general way without specific requirements.

**Marine Stewardship Council:** Began in 1997 as a joint initiative between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Unilever, a multinational company and historically one of the world's largest buyers of fish (supplying about 25% of the frozen fish in Europe and the United States). In 1999, Unilever and WWF withdrew from all management and MSC became an independently run non-profit organization.

The Marine Stewardship Council labeling program aims to promote sustainable fisheries.

The group takes into account the following:

- Relevant laws
- Ecological sustainability and ecosystem integrity
- Responsible and effective management systems
- Sustainability of the fish stock
- Social considerations

**Biodegradable:** There are no specific standards for the biodegradable claim. However, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has issued general guidelines on how the term should be used. Their guidance claims that biodegradable should mean that a product is degradable when exposed to air, moisture, bacteria or other organisms and that the materials will break down and return to nature within a reasonably small period of time after customary disposal.

**Contains no CFCs or other ozone depleting substances:** Unlike the “no CFC” label, the "Contains no CFCs or other ozone depleting substances. Federal regulations prohibit CFC propellants in aerosols" claim covers all ozone depleting substances of concern. Moreover, it clearly states that CFC propellants in aerosols are prohibited, and thus does not imply that the product provides a benefit over other products by not containing CFC propellants.

**Free range:** USDA considers five minutes of open-air access each day to be adequate for it to approve use of the free range claim on a poultry product.

**Natural:** There is no government or official definition for this term except on meat and poultry products as defined by the USDA. Meat and poultry carrying the “natural” claim must not contain any artificial flavoring, color ingredients, chemical preservatives, or artificial or synthetic ingredients, and are only “minimally processed” defined by USDA as a process that does not fundamentally alter the raw product.

### **Events!**

-The 19th annual energy fair-largest and longest running energy education event in the world-Custer WI, June 20-22, MREA ReNew the Earth Institute will give out/have workshops, entertainment, exhibits, kids activities, educational opportunities for clean energy and sustainable living.

**Hope everyone has a grandiose weekend!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 42: June 2-6, 2008.** **Topic: Invasive Aquatic Species and Fishing**

**In the spirit of Free Fishing Weekend (June 7-8), I decided to let everyone know about those events, and also what fishers can do all season long to prevent the spread of harmful invasive aquatic plants and animals.**

**The Wisconsin DNR has lots of information about Free Fishing Weekend at : [http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/news/DNRNews\\_Lookup.asp?id=118#art1](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/news/DNRNews_Lookup.asp?id=118#art1) . This free fishing includes all waters in the state—inland lakes and streams, the Great Lakes, and rivers bordering Wisconsin. All regular fishing regulations still apply (such as length and bag limits).**

**Some more information can be found on the La Crosse Tribune website: <http://www.rivervalleynewspapers.com/articles/2008/06/04/outdoors/00lamb.txt>**

**Some local Free Fishing Weekend events:** Artic Springs Fish Pond, Galesville: June 7, 2008, 11 a.m. – 2:30 pm; Artic Springs Fish Pond, Galesville. Prizes, bait, food, and drinks provided. Target age: 1-12. Contact: Joe Baardseth at (608) 582-4014.

### **What are invasive and exotic species?**

-Organisms that have been introduced into habitats where they are non-native are considered to be among the worst agents of habitat alteration and degradation. Exotics are a major cause of the loss of biological diversity throughout the world. A species introduced into new habitats will often overtake their new home and displace native species. Once established, it is hard to eliminate invasive species. Ocean freighter traffic has greatly increased the risk of new exotics in the Great Lakes. Ships take on ballast water in Europe for stability during the ocean crossing and this water is pumped out in the Great Lake ports when the ships pick up their loads. Before the beginning of the 20th Century, over-fishing of the Great Lakes was evident and it greatly reduced native fish populations. The invasion of exotics such as carp, alewife, sea lamprey, white perch and rainbow smelt also reduced some native fish numbers.

### **The following plant species' pictures can be found at:**

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/photos/index.asp?SF=Common>.

**-Eurasian Water Milfoil:** Eurasian water milfoil is a submersed aquatic plant native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. It is the only non-native milfoil in Wisconsin. It has the ability to spread rapidly by fragmentation and effectively block out sunlight which native plants need for growth. Eurasian water milfoil often results in monotypic stands, providing only a single habitat, and threaten the integrity of aquatic communities in a number of ways. For example, dense stands disrupt predator-prey relationships by fencing out larger fish, and reducing the number of nutrient-rich native plants available for waterfowl. Dense stands of Eurasian water milfoil also hinder recreational uses like swimming, boating, and fishing.

**-Curly-leaf Pondweed:** An invasive aquatic perennial that is native to Eurasia, Africa, and Australia. It becomes invasive because of its tolerance for low light and low water temperatures. These tolerances allow it to out-compete native plants when they bloom. Plant die-offs may result in a critical loss of dissolved oxygen. Decaying plants can increase nutrients which contribute to algal blooms, as well as create unpleasant and foul-smelling messes on beaches. Curly-leaf pondweed forms surface mats that interfere with aquatic recreation and plant fragments can be carried on boats, trailers, motors and fishing gear from one water body to another.

**-Narrow-leaved Cattail:** The velvety, brown flower head and long, graceful, leaves of the cattail are common throughout Wisconsin wetlands. Cattails can

quickly dominate a wetland plant community and produce monotypic (of one species) stands that reduce the overall habitat value.

**Invasive aquatic animal species' information can be found at:**

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/animals.asp>.

**-Common Carp:** The common carp is a fish species native to Asia. Carp prefer warm streams, lakes, and shallows containing a large quantity of aquatic vegetation. Carp not only destroy aquatic vegetation stands, they also re-suspend sediments, which increases water temperature, lowers dissolved oxygen levels, and reduces light penetration. These abrupt changes in the aquatic ecosystem can reduce new plant growth and deteriorate proper habitat for other fish and aquatic organisms. Young largemouth bass and carp of all ages are in competition for the availability of food and often spawning.

**Rainbow Smelt:** The spread of rainbow smelt to inland lakes may be due in part to anglers who put live smelt in bait buckets where eggs and milt mixed, fertilized, and then were unintentionally introduced when the angler dumped the contents into the water. Such dumpings are illegal and they cannot be transported live within the state without a permit from the Department of Natural Resources. Smelt compete directly with juvenile walleye for food. Smelt will even eat other fish in their early or larval life stages of development. These larval fish or fry can include lake trout, whitefish, walleye, and cisco.

**Zebra Mussel:** The zebra mussel is a tiny (1/8-inch to 2-inch) bottom-dwelling clam native to Europe and Asia. As of 2003, their distribution included the entire Wisconsin portion of the Mississippi. They are generally found in shallow algae-rich water. Zebra mussels feed by drawing water into their bodies and filtering out most of the suspended microscopic plants, animals, and debris for food. This process can lead to increased water clarity and a depleted food supply for other aquatic organisms, including fish. The higher light penetration encourages the growth of rooted aquatic plants which may inhibit the larger, predatory fish from finding their food. This thicker plant growth can also interfere with boaters, anglers and swimmers. Financial impacts have been significant to Wisconsin's water utilities and to power plants, where these animals congregate on and clog intake and distribution pipes. <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/fact/zebra.htm>

**What can you do???**

Boaters, sailors, anglers, paddlers; every time you leave a launch:

- Inspect your boat, trailer, and equipment and do remove visible aquatic plants, animals, and mud.
- Drain water from your boat, motor, bait containers, bilge, and live wells.

- Dispose of leftover bait in the trash ONLY. Never move live fish, including minnows, from one water body to another.
- Buy your minnows from licensed Wisconsin bait dealers or catch your own and use them to fish the water you caught them from.
- Wash your boat and equipment with high pressure or hot water, OR let it dry for 5 days or more.

#### Campers:

- Leave firewood at home. Buy it within a 50-mile radius of your campsite to ensure you are not bringing in an invasive species.
- Burn all wood during your trip.
- Inspect clothing and equipment for seeds, insects, etc. before leaving your camping area.

#### Landowners and gardeners:

- Use native plant species whenever possible.
- Dispose of seeds in the trash.
- Be on the lookout for invasive species (i.e. purple loosestrife looks pretty, but it can take over entire habitats).
- Respond aggressively to rid your land of new invasive species.
- Leave native trees and plants alone--natural landscapes offer the best defense.

#### Hikers, bikers, ATV riders, and other recreational users:

- Clean your clothes, bicycles, ATV's, etc. before leaving a site that is infested or possibly infested with invasive plants.

Don't forget about the MREA's Renewable Energy Fair. It is June 20-22, in Custer, WI. The People's Food Co-op is offering a shuttle coach bus to and from the event on Sat. June 21. The schedule is as follows, and it is \$20/person, **not** including the entrance fee:

- 8:30 a.m. - Depart PFC parking lot
- 11:00 a.m. - Arrive
- 5:00 p.m. - Depart
- 7:30 p.m. - Arrive PFC parking lot

See [www.the-mrea.org](http://www.the-mrea.org) OR [www.peoplesfoodcoop.org](http://www.peoplesfoodcoop.org) for more information.

**Have a shining weekend everyone!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 43: June 9-13, 2008.**

**Topic: Greening Your Father's Day**

**\*\*\*The City just passed two “green” resolutions—one for Small Wind Systems and one supporting the Governor’s 25% renewable fuels by 2025 initiative.\*\*\***

**What can you get Dad this Father’s Day that is both eco-friendly and not too expensive?**

-Is Dad a coffee fiend? Check out companies with organic, fair-trade coffees like <http://www.larrysbeans.com/> or [http://www.rocksolidcoffee.com/about\\_us.html](http://www.rocksolidcoffee.com/about_us.html), which is based in Minnesota and some of their proceeds go to local community projects. Starbucks and Caribou coffee offer organic and/or fair trade coffees as well. Also check out the People’s Food Co-op for natural, organic, and fair-trade coffees at [www.peoplesfoodcoop.org](http://www.peoplesfoodcoop.org) .

-Does Dad need some more shaving cream or skin care products? Check out [http://www.aubrey-organics.com/product1.cfm?product\\_id=4008H&cat=11](http://www.aubrey-organics.com/product1.cfm?product_id=4008H&cat=11) for some cool eco-friendly products.

-Dads can almost always use a new shirt, tie, items for work, or slacks. Check out Simply Living on Main St., La Crosse for many clothes, accessories, and gadgets for men, [www.simplylivingonline.com](http://www.simplylivingonline.com). For a new briefcase or carry-all, see <http://hempbasics.com/store.php?crn=210> for some hemp or organic cotton products. More men’s clothing (hemp and organic cotton products, including ties, etc.) can be found at <http://www.rawganique.com/Ties.htm>. Target has even jumped on the green bandwagon, and has introduced some organic cotton men’s clothing: [http://www.target.com/b/ref=sc\\_iw\\_r\\_2\\_1/601-6753686-0492961?node=617639011](http://www.target.com/b/ref=sc_iw_r_2_1/601-6753686-0492961?node=617639011).

-Reusable steel water bottles make a great gift and avoid the risk of possible plastic contaminants. Get Dad a bottle from [http://www.greenfeet.com/items.asp?Cc=STEEL\\_WTR\\_BOTTL](http://www.greenfeet.com/items.asp?Cc=STEEL_WTR_BOTTL) and fill it up with some of La Crosse’s tap water—rated the best tasting in Wisconsin in 2007.

-Timberland has some green products, and even has a Green Index which ranks a product’s environmental impact on a scale of zero (best) to ten (worst) based on greenhouse gas emissions, chemicals used and resources consumed during production. Also, Timberland shoe boxes now carry nutrition-looking labels that quantify the energy and labor involved in making a pair of shoes. [http://www.timberland.com/corp/index.jsp?page=csr\\_strategy](http://www.timberland.com/corp/index.jsp?page=csr_strategy).

-If Dad is into gadgets and gizmos, check out: <http://www.greenandmore.com/green-fathers-day-gifts.html>.

-A really cool website for Dads who like to fish is <http://www.antiquemystique.com/fishing.htm>. There you can find antique rods, lures, bags, etc., for catching fish at reasonable prices.



-If Dad is an avid home-improver, get him something from The Habitat for Humanity ReStore on the corner of Cass and 3rd. They usually have extra lighting, paints, screws, nails, etc. for more home improvement needs.

-How about the Dad who likes to settle down with a nice book? Instead of driving up to Barnes and Noble, try Pearl Street Books and purchase a used book for Dad.

-Buy Dad a gift certificate to one of the Coulee Region's locally owned restaurants and put money back into the local economy (I sound like a radio commercial...), which can be found at <http://www.lacrosserradiogroup.net/couleecuisinescene.html>.

-Want to get Dad a cheap yet satisfying gift? Purchase organic or eco-friendly beers such as New Belgium, Sierra Nevada, New Glarus, Great Lakes Brewing Co., Orlio, and Brooklyn Brewery---all either make organic beers or incorporate eco-friendly practices into their brewing methods and technologies. Also, check out Bluffland Bloom and Brew on 4<sup>th</sup> St. for beer or wine making kits. <http://sierraclub.typepad.com/greenlife/2008/03/green-beer-for.html>

#### **Events for Father's Day this weekend:**

-Father's Day Dance with Orange Blossom Special, 1 to 5pm at the Concordia Ballroom, 1129 La Crosse St. (608) 782-7049.

-Jazz in the park, 7pm, Riverside Park, featuring the Great River Big Band and the rain site is the City Brewery Hospitality Center.

-Take Dad out fishing, boating, hiking, camping, etc., and enjoy the beauty of the Coulee Region or beyond this weekend!

#### **Upcoming Events:**

-Next weekend is the Midwest Renewable Energy Association's Annual Energy Fair. The Co-op is offering a shuttle. Contact them as to if seating is still available.

The cost is \$20 per person (does not include the admission fee to the energy fair)

- it is a coach bus with bathroom facilities. Here is the schedule:

- 8:30 a.m. - Depart PFC parking lot

- 11:00 a.m. - Arrive

- 5:00 p.m. - Depart

- 7:30 p.m. - Arrive PFC parking lot

[www.the-mrea.org](http://www.the-mrea.org)

**Have a pulchritudinous weekend everyone!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 44: June 16-20, 2008.**

**Topic: Summer Grillin'**

**How can you make your next grill-out more eco-friendly and healthy?**

-Burning wood or charcoal produces clouds of sooty particles that can become lodged in lungs and irritate asthma and other respiratory problems. Carcinogenic volatile organic compounds (VOCs) like benzene are also released. Both particulates and VOCs can contribute to smog.

-Have you ever over-charred your meat on the grill? Excessive charring can actually produce toxic chemicals in the food itself. Be sure to keep an eye on cooking food.

-Gas, electric, and propane grills burn cleaner and more efficiently than charcoal or wood, but are not perfect. Using gas, electric, and propane grills can lead to better air quality, both around your cook station and in the surrounding community.

-How do these types of grills stack up? Electric grills are the “cleanest” because they release 91% less carbon dioxide and 99% less carbon monoxide than charcoal. Next best would be propane, followed by natural gas-fired, which burn cleaner.

-If you are going to get a fossil-fuel powered grill, opt for one that is of high quality and high efficiency to ensure a long life of the grill.

-There are now hybrid grills! They allow you to take advantage of the efficiency and convenience of electric or gas for your main source of heat, and then just burn a small amount of charcoal or wood to give the food a certain aroma or flavor. For example, with a Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet hybrid grill, you can cook with gas, wood or charcoal, in varying combinations. Removable drawers make switching fuels easy. The gas burners can be used to easily light charcoal or wood, and can then be turned off, or they can be used as the primary heat source. Then all it takes is a handful of wood or charcoal to get the desired flavor.

-If you have an old-fashioned solid-fuel barbeque, try using all-natural, sustainably produced charcoal or wood briquettes.

-Charcoal made with conventional additives such as coal dust, starch, sodium nitrate, sawdust, limestone or petroleum products should be avoided. When conventional charcoal is burned, it can release toxic by-products, which you don't want seeping into your steaks. Easy-to-light briquettes, which have been soaked in petro-based lighter fluid, are the worst offenders.

-Cowboy Charcoals (which boast a quicker, hotter, and cleaner fire) are made without fossil fuels or fillers, and the charcoal is composed of untreated oak and maple scraps from furniture and flooring factories. Another option is Noram de Mexico's Sierra Madre oak charcoal, which is certified by the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program as being sustainably harvested.

(<http://www.cowboycharcoal.com/>; <http://www.new-ventures.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=enterpriseDetails&IDenterprise=74> ).

(Source: The Daily Green: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/three-day-weekend-47052304>).

## **Want some eco-friendly wines and beers to go with that grilled chicken or tilapia?**

-Check out <http://www.thedailygreen.com/healthy-eating/5-Eco-Wines> for some different varieties of wines, most grown with organic grapes. All are under \$25. Explore the People's Food Co-op for their selection of locally produced, natural, and/or organic wines.

-For a list of some eco-friendly beers, check out this site: [http://www.thegreenguide.com/products/Food\\_&Drink/Beer/3](http://www.thegreenguide.com/products/Food_&Drink/Beer/3). Also, for the vegans out there, this site offers a list of beers brewed without using any animal byproducts or ingredients: <http://tastebetter.com/features/booze/type=beer>.

## **Upcoming events:**

-Clean Energy Coalition:

\*\*Thursday, June 26: no event planned.

\*\*Monday, July 7, 6:30 p.m. Guided tour of Southern Bluffs Elementary School (just before the ski area at the southernmost point of La Crosse--just show up, you'll find us). The issue is the possibility of a new, energy efficient, green school (probably at the Franklin site in North La Crosse), if and when the voters approve a referendum to that effect. At Southern Bluffs the CEC will join with the Natural Step Study Group led by Jim Poehling. The tour will be guided by Joe Ledvina, head of buildings & Grounds, and by Kerm King, the energy specialist for the School District. Our interest is to see what type of school was built 12 or so years ago with regard to "sustainability" features, and to dialogue with those most responsible for the possible design of a new school.

-The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Energy Fair at the Midwest Renewable Energy Association grounds, Custer, WI. Friday and Saturday, June 20-21 from 9am-7pm, and Sunday, June 22 from 9am-5pm. Check out [www.the-mrea.org](http://www.the-mrea.org) for more details.

**Have a chipper weekend everyone!!!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 45: June 23-27, 2008.**

**Topic: Summer Eco-Campin'**

**How can you be more eco-friendly when camping? Here are some basic camping rules:**

-Leave no trace: Always respect the environment around you and don't leave anything behind. Stay on established trails when hiking instead of creating new trails.

-Reduce, reuse, recycle: Try to minimize packaging pre-trip, i.e. minimize use of plastic water bottles and individual servings. Buy in bulk. If you bring your own pre-made meals, put them in reusable containers instead of throw-away baggies. Bring home any materials that can be recycled, such as plastics, metals, and paper products. Buy recycled items as much as possible.

-When cleaning up a site or meal, use an ecologically friendly soap like [Dr. Bronner's Pure-Castile](#) to lessen your impact when disposing of your gray water.

-Reduce the amount of travel involved in your trip by choosing campsites closer to home. See the last part of the newsletter for local getaways.

-As a general rule, when camping do dispose of waste water at least 200 feet from water resources.

(Source: <http://www.camptrv.com/RTVCAMPER/campgreen/GreenCampingTips.aspx> ).

### **Insects getting you down? Try some all-natural bug repellants:**

-N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or DEET, the active ingredient in most bug sprays, has been shown to be effective, but it has also been targeted lately by health researchers. DEET has been found to impede cognition in some animal studies. Also, some people have reported that DEET-based repellents have a harsh, chemical smell and feel. (FYI—only female mosquitoes are the biters. Males are about 2-3 times as large).

-New, all-natural repellants can be made from plant oils like citronella, lemongrass, peppermint, and cedarwood. It is important to note that most natural bug repellents must be refreshed more often than DEET-based products, because they aren't quite as long lasting. The co-op has: Quantum's Buzz Away products, which come in a variety of applications such as spray, cream with SPF-15, towelettes, and squeeze bottles. Buzz Away Extreme repels mosquitoes, ticks, gnats, flies, and fleas. Quantum also makes a Sting Soothe. Burt's Bees Herbal Insect Repellent uses lemongrass, citronella, and soybean oils, and it is safe for children and pets. California Baby also makes non-toxic bug repellent products for use on babies, kids, and sensitive adults.

(Source: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/natural-insect-repellents-460608>).

### **How eco-friendly are sunscreens?**

-Not very. Only 16% of all sunscreens on the market are both safe and effective, according to the Environmental Working Group, an advocacy and research organization. Of the 783 products analyzed, only 125 blocked both UVA and UVB radiation, remained stable in sunlight, and contained few to zero ingredients that are known or suspected of being health hazards. (Source:

[http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/2851?click=main\\_sr](http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/2851?click=main_sr) ).

### **Eco-friendly tents, gadgets, and other products!**

-This site even offers solar powered tents!

[http://www.bestgreengear.com/index.php?pr=Eco\\_Tents](http://www.bestgreengear.com/index.php?pr=Eco_Tents)

- REI has some good eco-friendly products, including food, travel supplies, clothing, etc.

[http://www.rei.com/gear/feature/camping/Eco+Friendly+Camping+Gear/4500001?cm\\_re=toc\\*toc\\*eco\\_friendly](http://www.rei.com/gear/feature/camping/Eco+Friendly+Camping+Gear/4500001?cm_re=toc*toc*eco_friendly)

-Consider hand-crank items such as lanterns, flashlights, radios, and even cell phone chargers: [http://www.bestgreengear.com/index.php?pr=Eco\\_Friendly\\_Camping](http://www.bestgreengear.com/index.php?pr=Eco_Friendly_Camping)

### **Camping sites, areas, and retail near La Crosse:**

-Goose Island Campground, <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/Departments/Facilities/Documents/CampgrndRates.htm#GOOSE>

-Neshonoc Lakeside Camping Resort, <http://www.neshonoclakeside.com/>

-Pettibone Resort, <http://www.pettiboneresort.com/>

-Veteran's Memorial Campground, <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/Departments/Facilities/Documents/CampgrndRates.htm#VETERANS>

-For campsites in state parks, check out the DNR website for reservations and other info, <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/parks/reservation/>

-Camping Equipment--3 Rivers Outdoors, <http://www.threeriversoutdoors.com/>

**\*\*Don't miss the Cameron Park Farmer's Market today. There will be a member and shopper appreciation this evening from 5-8pm in Cameron Park. \*\***

**←Watch out!**

**Have a lavish, but not too lavish weekend everyone!**

## **Sustainability Newsletter Week 46: June 30-July 4, 2008.** **Topic: Greening Your 4<sup>th</sup> of July!**

**This 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we should all declare our independence from oil, waste, toxics, and the like! Here are some ideas to at least aid in that goal this holiday.**

-Check out The Daily Green's ideas on declaring independence:  
<http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/declare-independence-47062306>

**-Use the following ideas to help green your 4<sup>th</sup> of July party or celebration:**

### **1. Choose food wisely:**

-Look for locally grown and organic produce and meats, and foods that were not raised on factory farms. Fill the grill with sustainable, humanely produced beef. Beef with the American Grassfed Association's

([www.americangrassfed.org](http://www.americangrassfed.org)) certification is free of antibiotics and cows spend most of their lives in the pasture instead of confined pens. The Animal Welfare Approved ([www.animalwelfareapproved.org](http://www.animalwelfareapproved.org)) label is limited to family farms where cows receive adequate pasture time and antibiotic use is restricted to sick animals. Also look for foods with no preservatives or chemical additives. Going vegetarian, such as eating soy or tofu in place of meat, is often cheaper and just as tasty! (Source: <http://sierraclub.typepad.com/greenlife/>).

**2. Use more eco-friendly picnic and tableware:**

-There are many products on the market now that are compostable, recyclable, reusable, and/or made of recycled materials. Bamboo is big this year. Some plates and utensils are reusable, and some are recyclable after one use. You can find some 100% recycled plastic plates and utensils at: [http://www.greenzer.com/preserve-cutlery\\_G\\_6k6](http://www.greenzer.com/preserve-cutlery_G_6k6). When shopping for paper goods like invitations, tablecloths, napkins, etc., look for items that contain a percentage of recycled "post-consumer waste." Some more green products can be found at: [http://www.greenzer.com/buyers-guide\\_7#tip3](http://www.greenzer.com/buyers-guide_7#tip3).

**3. Spark some alternative fireworks:**

-Fireworks are probably one of the most non-eco-friendly things at any party. They produce smoke and gunpowder fallout containing heavy metals, noxious chemicals, and sulfur-coal compounds. Instead of buying your own (ahem, Mom!), opt for attending local fireworks displays, and urging officials to use the new Sekon biodegradable, gunpowder-free fireworks (that Disney apparently now uses).

**4. Green the grill:**

-Note Sustainability Newsletter Week 44. Again, electric grills are the "cleanest" because they release 91% less carbon dioxide and 99% less carbon monoxide than charcoal. Next best would be propane, followed by natural gas-fired, which burn cleaner.

**5. Recycle and separate trash:**

-Make sure to have large, clearly labeled bins for recycling cans, bottles, papers, and plastics. If composting is available in your municipality, or you compost yourself, provide a bin for that also. Just make sure to inform guests what can and cannot be put in it (i.e. no bones, meats, etc.). Make the regular trash the smallest bin available to encourage recycling.

**6. Bring your own:**

-To cut down on disposable items, and on spending, ask guests to bring their own item, such as a cup. This will save resources, money, and make beverage-identifying easier. Plus, who doesn't like to have their own "house cup" at a party?

## **7. Consider packaging:**

-Reduce packaging (and often cost) by buying in bulk. Get large items such as 2-liter sodas, bulk snack items, etc. Stay away from individual cans, chip bags, bottled waters, etc. Opt for renting a large water jug (such as Culligan) instead of individual bottles. Also consider what can be recycled in your community. In La Crosse for example, plastics are not recycled. Go for glass or metal containers if the choice exists.

## **8. It's all about timing:**

-If the 4<sup>th</sup> is going to be a hot day, plan your party for a cooler time of day, such as in the evening. You will save a lot on air conditioning costs if you don't have to keep the house cool for a lot of guests. Having an open-air party in the evening adds to the casual feel of summer.

## **9. Encourage carpooling:**

-With soaring gas prices, carpooling just makes sense. Carpooling reduces carbon emissions, saves gas, saves money, and reduces parking congestion around your home/event area. Encourage guests to carpool if they live near each other or on the way to your party. If they live within a few blocks, suggest they walk or bike (why not work off some of those calories they are about to eat or drink?).

(Sources: <http://www.inhabitat.com/2007/07/04/red-white-and-green-for-the-4th/> ; [http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/273954/how\\_to\\_have\\_a\\_green\\_4th\\_of\\_july\\_party.html?cat=7](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/273954/how_to_have_a_green_4th_of_july_party.html?cat=7) ).

## **Local Events:**

-Clean Energy Coalition joins Jim Poehling's Natural Step Circle group at La Crosse's Southern Bluffs School at 6:30 pm. on Mon., July 7, for a tour of building and a discussion about what a new green school for La Crosse might consist of. School personnel ask that we be fewer rather than more in number so, just in case, please leave tourist friends behind.

## **Some interesting articles:**

-If you want some good laughs, check out the green issue of *The Onion*: <http://www.theonion.com/content/>

-An article about mattress recycling in Minnesota, thanks to Joe Kay of Simply Living: [http://www1.umn.edu/umnnews/Feature\\_Stories2/The\\_afterlife\\_of\\_a\\_mattress.html](http://www1.umn.edu/umnnews/Feature_Stories2/The_afterlife_of_a_mattress.html)

**Unwind this 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, everyone!**

**Sustainability Newsletter Week 47: July 7-11, 2008**

**Topic: What You Can Do With Your Old Stuff**

**\*\*\*Most ideas taken from *Women's Health Magazine*, July/August 2008\*\*\***

**Bicycles:**

- Find participating community donation programs at [www.ibike.org](http://www.ibike.org)
- UW-L has a Green Bikes program, [www.uwlax.edu/recsports](http://www.uwlax.edu/recsports)

**Books:**

- Check out [www.intlbookproject.org](http://www.intlbookproject.org) to help stock schools and libraries all over the world.
- Locally, donate old books to Pearl Street Books, The Book Exchange, The Book Trader II, The Salvation Army, or Goodwill.

**Business Attire:**

- You can find drop-off locations or mailing addresses for women's shelters and the like at [www.dressforsuccess.org](http://www.dressforsuccess.org)
- Donate gently used clothing to Goodwill, The Salvation Army, New Horizons Shelter, or resale shops.

**Carpets:**

- Unfortunately, about 3.5 billion pounds of carpeting is put in landfills each year. Carpets can usually be remade and reused as roofing shingles or railroad ties. Find a local reclamation center at [www.carpetrecovery.org](http://www.carpetrecovery.org) (nearest are in the Twin Cities and Madison)

**CDs/DVDs:**

- Discs will not decompose, so finding another use for them is ideal. [www.cdrecyclingcenter.com](http://www.cdrecyclingcenter.com) accepts discs and their packaging; including DVD cases, sleeves, jewel cases and paper (you pay shipping and handling).

**Cell Phones, PDAs, Accessories:**

- To receive cash for them, check out [www.greenphone.com](http://www.greenphone.com)
- To donate old phones and accessories to domestic violence victims, go to [www.gooddeedfoundation.org](http://www.gooddeedfoundation.org)
- Locally, you can find some places doing cell phone recycling drives, Dynamic Recycling [http://www.dynamicrecycling.com/dynamic\\_003.htm](http://www.dynamicrecycling.com/dynamic_003.htm), Habitat for Humanity, or you can sell them on a site like eBay or Craigslist.

**Computers:**

- About 133,000 computers are thrown out daily. [www.myboneyard.com](http://www.myboneyard.com) allows you to safely recycle most electronics.
- The Household Hazardous Materials Facility, near the La Crosse County Landfill, accepts certain electronics for a small per-pound fee: <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/SolidWaste/HHM/ewaste.htm>
- Dynamic Recycling also offers electronics recycling [http://www.dynamicrecycling.com/dynamic\\_003.htm](http://www.dynamicrecycling.com/dynamic_003.htm)

**Formalwear/accessories:**

- The Glass Slipper Project accepts dresses, shoes, jewelry, purses, and unused makeup: [www.glassslipperproject.org](http://www.glassslipperproject.org)



-Locally, donate to The Salvation Army, Goodwill, resale shops, or New Horizon's Shelter.

### **General Electronics:**

-Nearly 2 million tons of electronics are tossed in America each year. Costco members can recycle many items and receive rewards: [www.costco.com](http://www.costco.com), click on "electronics." Office Depot also takes back electronics for a small fee: [www.officedepot.com/techrecycling](http://www.officedepot.com/techrecycling) . Sony has many drop-off locations for its products: [www.sony.com/recycle](http://www.sony.com/recycle)

-Also try the Household Hazardous Materials Facility and/or Dynamic Recycling.

### **Home Office Supplies:**

-Supplies and furniture can be given to needy schools and nonprofits at [www.excessaccess.com](http://www.excessaccess.com)

-Habitat for Humanity, resale shops, Goodwill, and The Salvation Army all accept many of these items.

### **iPods:**

-Returning iPods to an Apple store can get you 10% off an upgrade. You can also ship it to them free of charge:

[www.apple.com/environment/recycling/ipodrecycling](http://www.apple.com/environment/recycling/ipodrecycling)

-Locally, bring iPods into the Household Hazardous Materials Facility, or sell them online if they are still functional.

### **Light Bulbs:**

-You can order a recycling kit at [www.lightbulbrecovery.com/cf\\_bulb.html](http://www.lightbulbrecovery.com/cf_bulb.html)

-Ikea offers free CFL drop-offs.

-The Household Hazardous Materials Facility and Dynamic Recycling offer light bulb recycling.

### **Mattresses:**

-Locally, Neighbors in Need, La Crosse County's Community Liaison Program (in Health and Human Services Building), and New Horizons Shelter accept mattresses and box springs.

### **Outdoor Equipment:**

- [www.gear4good.com](http://www.gear4good.com) allows you to donate old camping gear to youth programs and parks in other countries.

-Play It Again Sports, Goodwill, The Salvation Army, and resale shops also take many outdoor equipment items.

### **Printer Cartridges:**

- You can get cash for returning cartridges at [www.tonerbuyer.com](http://www.tonerbuyer.com) , or check out [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com) to return HP inkjet or laser-jet cartridges with no cash-back (free shipping though!).

-Habitat for Humanity accepts ink cartridges.

**Printers, etc:**

- You can find an organization that needs donations through [www.cristina.org](http://www.cristina.org), and they will often pick up your items.
- The Household Hazardous Materials Facility and Dynamic Recycling accept printers.

**Rechargeable Batteries:**

- Toxins in these batteries can often leach into the waste stream or local water bodies. Target, Best Buy, and other retailers (found at [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org) ) have bins for lithium ion battery recycling.
- The Household Hazardous Materials Facility accepts batteries.

**Regular Batteries:**

- [www.batteryrecycling.com](http://www.batteryrecycling.com) will take them for a small fee plus shipping and handling.
- The Household Hazardous Materials Facility accepts batteries.

**Sneakers:**

- Sneakers can be made into athletic and playground surfaces. Find a drop off station or mail-in address at [www.letmeplay.com/reuseashoe](http://www.letmeplay.com/reuseashoe)
- Take sneakers to The Salvation Army, Goodwill, resale shops, New Horizons Shelter, or Neighbors in Need.

**Toxics:**

- If it has a CAUTION label, don't dump it! Find places to take it at [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org)

**Workout Equipment:**

- Play It Again Sports takes equipment and pays you for it. [www.playitagainsports.com](http://www.playitagainsports.com)
- Goodwill and The Salvation Army also sometime accept certain items.

**You (as in after death):**

- Traditional burials use a lot of wood, and allow formaldehyde (a carcinogen) to seep into the earth. You can have your ashes put into a Reef Ball and placed in the ocean, which eventually creates an artificial reef for fish and other sea creatures: [www.eternalreefs.com](http://www.eternalreefs.com)
- Natural burials are also gaining popularity. Check them out at <http://naturalburial.coop/USA/>

**\*\*\*Check out EnAct's local resources guide for more La Crosse area services: <http://www.enactwi.org> \*\*\***

**Upcoming Events:**

-The People's Food Co-op is having a bus trip to the Kickapoo Country Fair (at Organic Valley's headquarters) on Sunday, July 27. For more info, check out the Co-op's July Newsletter: <http://www.pfc.coop/Shoppers/July 2008 web.pdf>