

 **Environmental News From Around The Planet** 

Reducing Plastic Bag Usage

Many companies and now even cities are taking steps to reduce plastic bag usage. Earlier this year, San Francisco became the first city in the country to place a ban on plastic shopping bags. San Francisco's Board of Supervisors approved the legislation in order to eliminate their city's contribution to the astounding number of plastic bags distributed in California alone: over 150 million last year. Only petroleum-based plastic bags are included in the ban; biodegradable plastic as well as paper bags are still allowed. This new law applies to supermarkets and drugstore chains, which will have six months to a year to comply with the regulations.

In March 2007, Swedish furniture store IKEA began charging customers for plastic bags at all U.S. store locations, as they had already begun to do in the UK. Now IKEA has taken their commitment to plastic bag reduction even further by removing all bags from their 15 UK stores. Customers responded positively to IKEA's pledge to cut plastic bag usage from 32 million to 12 million last year, with less than 2 million bags being distributed in the UK. There is no word yet on whether plastic bags will disappear from U.S. stores as well.

Another European company, Marks and Spencer, has implemented a trial plastic bag charge in Northern Ireland. In the month preceding the trial, M&S customers will be given a free "bag for life," encouraging shoppers to reuse their bag upon their return to the store.

Sources:
<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,2121041,00.html>
www.reusablebags.com
www.treehugger.com

Recycling Surveys Shed Light on U.S. Trends

According to a report by the USEPA, the nationwide recycling rate is 32%. Studies conducted by other organizations reveal interesting facts about how recycling rates further break down demographically. A June Harris Interactive poll found different regional recycling behaviors across the U.S. Those on the East and West coasts are over 85% likely to recycle, while only about 70% of Southerners and Midwesterners are likely to recycle. Age also plays a role: 30% of adults aged 18-30 say they do not recycle, compared to 19% of those aged 62 and above. Some reasons provided for not recycling? No available service, too much effort, and high costs. Interestingly, another recent study found that 63% of apartment dwellers report recycling regularly.

Sources: http://www.multi-housingnews.com/multihousing/search/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003591677
www.wastenews.com/headlines2.html?id=1184690473

Green Building News

The green building movement celebrated a turning point this month as the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) welcomed its 10,000th member company. The USGBC, which oversees the LEED green building certification program, encourages companies interested in green design and high performance buildings to become members on a national level. Local chapters are also available in many cities to connect people and organizations interested in green buildings.

If you or your company are interested in green design and the USGBC or wish to pursue LEED certification, contact your Great Forest representative.

Source:
www.usgbc.org/News/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?ID=3242

Feature of the Month



Solar Powered Film Festival & More at Solar One!

Every summer, environmental education center Solar One hosts dance, music and film festivals, all powered by the solar panels atop their facility. This year's film festival takes place August 15-24th and includes a mix of classic and modern films and documentaries. Solar One is located at Stuyvesant Cove Park – 23rd Street and the East River.

More information: www.solar1.org

Recycle Electronics and White Paint at Build It Green!

Build It Green, a building materials reuse center located in Astoria, Queens, is now working in conjunction with the Lower East Side Ecology Center to permanently host electronics recycling for residents of NYC. Additionally, Build It Green is collecting white paint for recycling and resale. Drop off electronics or white paint during regular business hours.

Electronics Recycling

Working and non-working:

Computers – laptop & desktop
Servers, mainframes, monitors
Printers, scanners, fax-machines, copiers
Peripherals – keyboards, mice, cables, etc.
Network devices – modems, hubs, etc.
Components – hard drives, CD Roms, etc.
TVs, VCRs, & DVD players
Audio visual devices
Radios and stereos
Cell phones, pagers, PDAs
Phones, answering machines
Media – floppies, CDs, VHS tapes

Paint Recycling

Do you have any white paint laying around the house, perhaps two or three half cans that you just don't know what to do with? Drop them off at Build It Green! They will combine your paint with other whites to make aggregate white and ivory colors. The paint will then be sold at their regular discounted prices. Please, no rusted cans or dried paint.



Location & Hours:

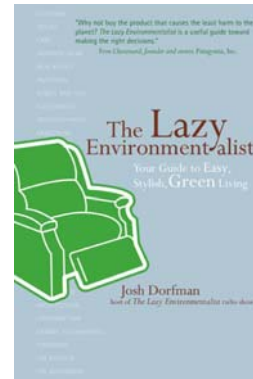
3-17 26th Ave, Astoria, Queens
Tuesday – Friday: 10-6
Saturday: 10-5

Need to dispose of non-white paint? Try donating excess paint to a local community organization, or contact your Great Forest representative for information on proper disposal of old paint.

For More Information:

www.bignyc.org

The Lazy Environmentalist: Your Guide to Easy, Stylish, Green Living



A new book entitled *The Lazy Environmentalist* aims to help Americans take care of the planet without compromising their style, aesthetic, and lifestyle choices. Author Josh Dorfman is the founder and CEO of Brooklyn-based eco-friendly furniture store, Vivavi, and host of The Lazy Environmentalist talk show on Sirius radio.

In the book, Dorfman examines such topics as home décor, fashion, gardening, recreation, financial investments, and more, with a major focus on products that allow for green living with minimal behavior modifications. For example, interesting technological improvements come in the form of toilets: Dorfman explains how a new product connects your bathroom sink to your toilet, filtering water from the former into the latter so that you can easily use a greywater system (recycled water) each time you flush.

A book review from online blog, *The Nashville Scene*, said the following: “Driving a hybrid car is all well and good, but the truly committed earth friend needs clothes, shoes, furniture, kitchenware and even coffins that are free from environmental sin. And it’s all gotta look good, because what’s the point of saving a dowdy planet? Enter Josh Dorfman, style maven and environmental evangelist, with his book *The Lazy Environmentalist*.”

Be sure to check out Dorfman’s *The Lazy Environmentalist* website as well for eco-friendly products to fit all aspects of your life.

For More Information:

www.lazyenvironmentalist.com/pages/2005/06/the_book.php

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