



Learn Before You Burn

As the nights get cooler, smoke from burning wood may be a common smell in your neighborhood. Wood, a locally-produced renewable natural resource, has been warming Connecticut families for centuries.



The Wastebusters test wood stoves in DEP's new video.

Although the smell of wood smoke may be pleasant to some people, **the smoke itself contributes to air pollution and can cause negative health effects.** It contains small airborne particles (particulate matter) which can become lodged in your lungs, making breathing difficult and leading to more serious short-term and chronic health problems — especially for people with asthma, respiratory or heart conditions, or other illnesses. Wood smoke also contains harmful gases, including:

- **Carbon monoxide (CO)** which reduces the blood's ability to supply oxygen to body tissues. Even small amounts can stress your heart and reduce your ability to exercise.
- **Oxides of nitrogen (NOx)** which can lower a child's resistance to lung infections.
- **Hydrocarbons (HC)** which can injure the lungs and make breathing difficult.

In order to improve Connecticut's air quality, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been working with the Department of Public Health, regional health officials and municipalities to get the

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word out on how to reduce smoke by burning wood more efficiently. DEP recently launched a **Burn Wise** campaign that includes a resource-filled webpage, colorful Burn Wise posters and a 5-minute video. The video features the funny antics of the Wastebusters Team as it busts myths about woodstoves and seasoned wood.

Burn Wise's message is that **you can reduce the impact of burning wood to you and your neighbors**, whether you use a fireplace or wood stove. By burning more efficiently, you can also reduce the amount of wood you need, saving you time and money.

Here are a few Burn Wise tips:

- **Use wood stoves or fireplace inserts** manufactured after July 1, 1992 and **certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** to meet emissions standards. These stoves burn more efficiently than older models. The fireplace inserts are available in many sizes and styles to fit into your existing fireplace — they allow excellent fire viewing and heat output with very little smoke. See EPA's website for certified models — <http://www.epa.gov/burnwise/approved.html>
- **Burn only seasoned, dry wood.** It should have a hollow sound when pieces are hit together. Besides being inefficient and smoky, unseasoned wood can cause dangerous creosote to build up in your chimney.
- **Build a small hot fire first** to avoid smoldering.
- **Refuel when the coals are still hot.**
- Get into the habit of glancing out at your chimney top every so often. **A properly burning fire should produce very little smoke** and a small amount of water vapor.
- **Do not burn any garbage** as this releases toxins into the air.



To read more wood burning tips, download a poster or view the Wastebusters video, visit DEP's webpage at <http://www.ct.gov/dep/owf>.

Local Wood is Also Wise

Get your firewood locally — the obvious advantage: saving fuel with shorter trucking distances. Also, tree-killing insects and diseases may be lurking in wood trucked in from other areas. These insects and diseases can't move far on their own but when wood is transported, they can jump hundreds of miles — spreading infestations that could destroy our forests in Connecticut. Before purchasing firewood, find out where it is from and be on the lookout for pests like Asian Longhorn Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer. For information on how to identify invasive pests and tips on buying firewood, go to <http://www.ct.gov/dep/forestry>.

Gus(t) uses Wind to Print

Clean, renewable energy is a reality for Phoenix Press, Inc. The company has installed a wind turbine — nicknamed Gus(t) — to capture electricity from passing breezes. Phoenix Press is the only printer in the country using on-site wind power for its operation. The turbine is designed to produce 100,000 kilowatts annually, which is equivalent to the electricity needed to power nine average households per year.



Phoenix Press is in a redevelopment district in New Haven where there are many family-owned businesses. Located at a windy site at the mouth of the Quinnipiac and Mill Rivers and on Long Island Sound, the Phoenix Press turbine tower is 121' tall and each of the three blades is 35' long. The interesting thing about siting the wind turbine — which included a public hearing — was that it did not raise a single negative comment from the neighboring businesses. It mostly just

raised curiosity and awareness. And the public has been coming into Phoenix Press (located right next to the wind turbine) with lots of questions. “Is it yours? How much electricity does it generate? Why doesn’t it make any noise? And the kids all say “It’s so cool...” (Speaking of kids, thousands of New Haven K-8 students participated in a contest to name the turbine this spring. The winning name, Gus(t), was contributed by Jessica D’Errico from Cold Spring School.)

Caring about the environment is part of the family-owned company’s culture; Phoenix Press has created a “WIND to Print” logo to celebrate its renewable energy capabilities. The logo lets its customers show their dedication to a clean environment when it appears on their printed materials.

Phoenix Press is currently expecting to generate about 30 percent of their power usage from the turbine. Since the installation/commissioning in March 2010, the company has started to see actual savings by generating its own power. About half of the funding for the project (\$263,000) came from a Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF) grant. The CCEF helps promote renewable energy and efficiency projects in the state through a variety of programs. The grant made the project happen as the owners say they couldn’t have financed it alone and now that they have reduced their energy costs, the savings can be passed onto their customers.

For more information on Phoenix Press, visit <http://phoenixpressinc.com> or on CCEF grants, visit <http://www.ctcleanenergy.com>



Installing Gus(t), the Phoenix Press wind turbine.

It's the Latest, It's the Greatest, (It's the Greenest?), IT'S THE LIBRARY!

Libraries aren't just about books anymore! They are the heart and soul of the community; they provide a free and welcoming place to all for information, recreation and social interaction; they enrich our towns and our daily lives. So, what better place to "go green," to model environmental awareness and green practices?

The Connecticut State Library is leading by example. Their staff worked with DEP's Pollution Prevention Office on actions to take so they could serve as a model for all Connecticut libraries. Their Green Team started off by identifying a few changes that will save the library money and implemented these first. For example, they recycled more items, reduced paper use by double-siding and using e-mail and internet, and set up a Supply Exchange Center to reuse office supplies.

"The key is to try to recycle everything you can, go single stream," says Sharon Brettschneider at the State Library (this may require changes to your trash removal contract). "Flyers and notices will alert staff and visitors as to what can be recycled, how to recycle and where to recycle."

Your local library is in a unique position to take on this challenge by making changes to everyday operations and enlightening patrons about environmental issues. The first step your library can take is to form a Green Team made up of staff from different job titles — the building manager, cleaning staff and even local residents. Next, put together a list of ideas or a plan with ways to reduce waste, conserve energy, buy "greener" products, and promote less polluting transportation and landscaping practices.

Consider recycling bottles, cans, magazines, toner cartridges from printers and copiers, Tyvek envelopes, batteries, computers, CDs, cables, diskettes. If a special event or meeting is being held at your library, avoid using individually packaged items; instead, use large dispensers for drinks and serve in reusable cups.

Reducing energy use is another money saver. Some simple steps to take are to use occupancy sensors and energy efficient lighting, buy ENERGY STAR equipment and turn off equipment at the end of the day. If



The State Library's Green Team can't wait to recycle!

your library is not doing so already, consider shutting down computers and copiers when the library is closed, as the State Library has recently done, and adjusting thermostat settings (68 degrees in winter, 78 degrees in summer).

Since many everyday products contain toxic substances, try to choose products that contain less harmful ingredients and are made from recycled materials. The maintenance staff at the State Library is now using green cleaners. Towns are able to take advantage of the State's contracts

to purchase environmentally-preferable products to help defray costs. When renovating or replacing larger items like flooring, for example, look for low VOCs, modular and a “return & recycle” program.

Your library can also help improve Connecticut’s air quality by posting a “No Idling” sign in your parking lot. Encourage visitors to bike or take the bus by having bike racks and local bus schedules available.

There are several low-cost and no-cost ways of getting the message out. The State Library’s Green Team is sending weekly emails to staff with tips on how to green their offices and their homes and is planning to have presentations on environmental issues as part of their Third Thursday Brown Bag Luncheon series, open to staff and the public.

Libraries are the “greatest” and yours can be the greenest! Just take one step at time — take on projects that save money first, measure and celebrate your successes, collaborate with peers in other libraries and have fun while making changes. In the end, you’ll have a healthier and more sustainable place for staff and visitors.

Resources for greening your library:

<http://www.greenlibraries.org/>

<http://ct.gov/dep/p2> “How to Green Your CT State Agency”

http://ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/p2/government/deppresentationtostatelibrary_association-april2010.pdf

How Green is My Library, Sam McBane Mulford; Ned A. Himmel
ISBN: 9781591587804

Considering an expansion, renovation or a new building?

Look into making your library a “green building.” When a new library was being planned in Darien, it was decided from the get-go that it would be a green building. Completed in 2009, the library serves as an educational model of environmental leadership and has received LEED Gold certification. The energy-saving features will save up to 48 percent of the energy compared to a similar building.

For more details: <http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6656755.html>.

Turn over a New LEEF (Lawn Equipment Exchange Fund)

Your town or city may be able to buy a new piece of lawn and grounds maintenance equipment and have DEP refund 80 percent of the cost. Under the new LEEF program, municipalities can apply to exchange their old air-polluting equipment, such as mowers, leaf blowers, chippers, chain saws and trimmers, for new, low-emitting machines. If their application is approved, your municipality will receive a refund for 80 percent of the cost of the new equipment after the old equipment is scrapped. For more information, go to <http://www.ct.gov/dep/mowerexchange>.



What’s
NEW
in P2?





Man versus Food Waste

Have you ever been to a catered party or other event and wondered what happens to all those leftover trays of delicious food? It's hard to believe, but most likely they end up in the dumpster! In fact, Americans waste an astonishing amount of food; each one of us throws away about 1 pound of food per day according to a University of Arizona study. In Connecticut, food waste makes up about 14 percent of our trash. With so many people going hungry, why would we want to waste so much food?



A little over a year ago, Andy Geremia was listening to the radio on his way to work and heard about an organization in San Francisco that rescues excess food and gets it to those in need. He realized if he wanted this to happen in Connecticut, he had to do something about it. While there are many food banks and pantries in our state, they focus primarily on non-perishable items,

like canned and dry goods. In June 2009, Andy formed Food Runners CT to deal with perishable and prepared foods from sources such as catered events and corporate or college cafeterias. Food Runners CT coordinates volunteers to pick-up and deliver the excess food. Pick-ups can be arranged daily, weekly, or whenever is convenient for the donator. Several local farms, farmers markets, bakeries and caterers are now donating unused produce to Food Runners CT. Current recipients are community organizations that feed hungry children and families, such as soup kitchens, shelters and food pantries in Connecticut.

Food Runners CT's mission to provide wholesome food to the needy is noble in itself, but the benefits don't stop there. The organization is helping improve the environment by reducing waste, therefore reducing harmful emissions from waste combustion. Less food ends up in dumpsters, where it not only causes odors but can attract vermin and other pests. Businesses donating the food can benefit as well by saving money on waste disposal costs, taking a tax deduction for donating food, and improving their public image by helping those in need. It's a win-win!

Want to help?

Contact Food Runners CT to donate surplus food or to volunteer — www.foodrunnersct.org

Find out about EPA's Food Recovery Challenge — www.epa.gov/foodrecovery

Learn how you can compost food waste — <http://www.ct.gov/dep/composting>



Recycling Superhero at Camp Courant!

Using two of DEP's Recycling Education Kits — *Trash Detectives* and *Recycling Match-Up Game* — radiography students from Hartford Hospital headed to Camp Courant this summer for some interactive learning and playing. With the help of Captain Recycle, the students put the campers to the test in a fun way about what household items are recyclable, which items are reusable and which are trash. Approximately 450 campers, ages 5–12, participated and all got to see products made from recycled plastic, glass, paper and metal. Check out these and other Educational Resources on our webpage, www.ct.gov/dep/p2 or contact the P2 Office for more information about borrowing educational materials at 860-424-3357.

Ask Eartha

Help! I have two teenagers who are obsessed with using hair products, nail polish, body sprays and make-up. Their bathroom looks like a lab and the stuff costs a small fortune. How healthy are these products for my family and the environment? Are there safer alternatives?

Jane S., Chester



You are right to be concerned about health and environmental effects of personal care products! The Environmental Working group (EWG) conducted a study on 20 teenage girls. They found an average of 13 hormone-altering chemicals in their bodies. The chemicals they found are commonly used in cosmetics and body care products. Some studies have linked these chemicals to reproductive problems as well as to breast and prostate cancer. *(Although the study was on girls, boys use their fair share of personal care products and are susceptible to similar health effects.)*

Another concern is heavy metals, such as lead, that have been found in some lipsticks and other makeup products. Teens, babies and young children are more vulnerable to the health effects of chemicals because their bodies are still developing.

In addition to the negative health effects, the propellants in the sprays and the volatile chemicals in the nail products can negatively impact air quality. And there are the environmental impacts of manufacturing, packaging and shipping of personal care products, as well as impacts on water and aquatic life when products are sent down the drain or disposed. *(To see how personal care products and pharmaceuticals enter the environment, check out EPA's website <http://www.epa.gov/ppcp/>.)*

Some of the chemicals in personal care products can cause immediate health effects, such as triggering asthma attacks or irritating your skin or eyes. Others are carcinogens or are linked to other long-term effects, such as disrupting your body's hormonal systems. Here are some examples:

PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS OF CONCERN – AVOID WHEN POSSIBLE
Nail polishes, removers and adhesives	Dibutyl phthalate, formaldehyde, toluene
Shampoos and toothpaste	Sodium lauryl sulfate and sodium laureth sulfate Coal tar (dandruff shampoos)
Hair Spray (aerosols)	Isobutane, isopropane and other propellants
Liquid soaps and lotions	Triclosan, parabens
Powders	Talc (magnesium silicate)
Lipstick, mascara and other makeup products	Lead and other heavy metals
Sunscreens (can be found in make-up also)	Oxybenzone, parabens
Colognes, perfumes, body sprays and fragrances added to other products	Phthalates, synthetic musks and many other chemicals (Manufacturers don't have to list what makes up the fragrance)

You might ask, “Who is watching out for the consumer?” Most of these products are not required to have premarket approval from the FDA — except for color additives or if the item is both a personal care product and a drug (e.g., a dandruff shampoo). But this may soon change. In July of this year, the federal Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (H.R.5786) was introduced. It would give the FDA authority to ensure that the products we use are free from harmful ingredients.

Let's “face” it, every “body” wants to look as good as he or she can. Teenagers or not, we aren't going to give up our make-up and personal care products anytime soon. **But, here are some things you can do to choose products that are better for you and the environment:**

- **Read labels.** Even “natural” or “organic” products are not

necessarily safer. You must read the ingredients. For example, the product might use organic ingredients, but the manufacturer might use parabens as preservatives. Learn more about the ingredients to avoid — <http://www.safecosmetics.org>, <http://www.thegreenguide.com/personal-care/dirty-dozen>, http://www.ewg.org/files/EWG_cosmeticsguide.pdf.

- **Check the safety rating of personal care products** by entering the name of the company or product into EWG's Skin Deep database <http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/>.
- **Make your own** with ingredients from your kitchen! There are many books and internet sources available, such as Care2 at <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/personal-care>.

Eartha answers selected environmental questions. Email your question to judith.prill@ct.gov and watch future issues for your answer.

P 2 C A L E N D A R

A SELECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

October 5 – November 30, 2010
Green Job Training: Deconstruction and Recycling

Location TBD, North Haven

Safe, skilled deconstruction practices and adherence to regulations and codes are covered in this course offered through Gateway Community College's Green Job Training Program. www.gwcc.commnet.edu (go to "Center for a Sustainable Future" link)

October 6, 2010
Walk to School Day

Various Connecticut communities

This is an international community building event. Walking and biking to school is beneficial to children's health and the environment. www.walktoschool.org

October 9, 2010
The Passiv Haus

St. Bridget School, Manchester

The passive house concept is a simple approach used in Europe for years to design and construct energy efficient buildings. www.solarenergyofct.org

October 9 & 10, 2010
Audubon Hawkwatch and Festival

Audubon Sanctuary, Greenwich

Celebrate the annual hawk migration with guided hikes, games, environmental exhibits and eco-friendly vendors. <http://greenwich.audubon.org>

October 14, 2010
Invasive Plant Symposium

University of Connecticut, Storrs

Discussion and information on the challenges and successes of invasive plant management. www.hort.uconn.edu/cipwg or 860-486-6448.

October 13 & 14, 2010
Enviro Build Expo

Connecticut Expo Center, Hartford

Educational sessions and exhibits will feature the latest products, services, equipment and ideas for sustainable and efficient buildings. www.envirobuildexpo.com

October 16, 2010
6th Annual Environmental Justice Conference

UConn Business School, Hartford

Sponsored by the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice, the focus is "The Price of Oil: Paying with Our Health." <http://www.environmental-justice.org>

October 21, 2010
Connecticut Clean Fuels & Vehicles Expo

Connecticut Expo Center, Hartford

Learn the latest on alternative fuels, electric vehicle technology, and funding opportunities, sponsored by Clean Cities Coalitions of Connecticut. www.ct-ccc.org

October 23, 2010
End of the Season Gardening Workshop

Common Ground Environmental Education Center, New Haven

Learn about soil amendments, when to turn your soil, cover crops, cold frames, and putting your compost pile to rest for the winter. http://www.commongroundct.org/for_the_community.php

November 4 & 5, 2010
Rain Gardens — What They are, How to Build Them

Classical Magnet School, Hartford, CT

Hands-on training for landscapers and others in the principles and installation of rain gardens to reduce the impact/pollution of stormwater from rooftops and paved areas on waterways and local treatment plants. To sign up, call 860-345-5225 or e-mail michael.dietz@uconn.edu.



Kids, Teens and the Environment – www.ct.gov/dep/p2



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Amey Marrella, Commissioner

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