

Give a Bark for a Clean State Park

Dogs are our best friends, and their “poop,” just like ours, can be a health risk and source of pollution to our rivers, lakes and coastal waters if not properly managed. Bacteria (such as E. coli) and parasites found in dog waste can threaten public health and in marine areas it can contaminate commercial shellfish beds. The nutrients in pet waste, notably nitrogen and phosphorus, make their way to ponds, lakes and streams. This can encourage weed or algae growth in the waterways, which may eventually lead to lower oxygen levels. Insufficient oxygen can harm fish and other organisms that live in the water.



Surface run-off to waterways contains many pollutants but it may be surprising that dog waste has been identified as a primary bacterial pollutant. Using genetic tracking, researchers determined that almost 20% of the bacteria in a Seattle area watershed could be matched with dogs. Other studies conducted throughout the country indicate that non-human waste represents a significant source of bacterial contamination in urbanized watersheds.

High bacteria and resulting beach closures due to pet waste and other non-point sources are a familiar problem. To help address this issue, a number of pollution prevention outreach programs throughout the country have been developed to reach pet owners. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently conducted such a program at one of the state's favorite swimming ponds at Chatfield Hollow State Park in Killingworth. Water quality test results showed that waste from dog

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Give a Bark for a Clean State Park

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visitors was the primary potential source of bacteria to that state pond.

The CT River Coastal Conservation District, a non-profit conservation organization, came to DEP's assistance in 2007 and conducted an education and outreach campaign to park visitors called "Give a Bark." Pet waste stations with bags and disposal containers were placed in 5 park areas. District volunteers talked to visitors about picking up after their pets, handed out "Doggie Bags" with biscuit treats for dog visitors, hand sanitizers and educational material for their human friends. In addition, the campaign distributed printed information to veterinary offices and pet stores. Their goal was to reduce bacteria levels by 5 percent to meet state standards for safe swimming.

How well did the campaign succeed? DEP park staff

monitored the pet waste stations and conducted surveys of uncollected dog poop, finding the waste bags and stations were heavily used during the project summer. Accounting for an increase in the number of park visitors with dogs from July to September, the amount of uncollected dog waste decreased. Health results were also positive. DEP reported no bacteria exceedances at the park's pond and there were no beach closures in 2007 compared with 9 instances of high bacteria and 4 days of beach closure in 2006.

The "Give a Bark" campaign was funded by U.S. EPA Clean Water Action Section 319 funds administered by DEP. Future plans include developing a public service announcement. To see the campaign website go to www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal and click on "Give a Bark."

What Can I Do?

Picking up after your pet every single time is important because it is a source of disease and an environmental risk. According to the U.S. EPA, 95% of fecal coliform found in urban stormwater was of non-human origin. And just one gram of dog waste contains 23 million fecal coliform bacteria!

Follow these steps to be part of the solution to pet waste contamination.

1. Always carry a plastic bag with you when you walk your dog. You can re-use old grocery or newspaper bags.
2. Using the bag like a glove, you pick up the waste, turn the bag inside out around the waste, tie it in a knot and dispose of it in a trash can. Another option is to flush un-bagged pet waste down the toilet.
3. Do not place the bagged or un-bagged pet waste in a storm drain or hose the pet waste towards storm drains — they drain directly to a stream, river, lake or other waterbody.

Have you stepped in dog poop one too many times at your local park and want to do something about it? You can organize a Pet Waste Outreach Campaign. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has published a manual to help you out, *The Inside Scoop: How to Conduct a Pet Waste Outreach Campaign* - www.des.nh.gov



Keep on (Green) Truckin'

Trucks roll down the highway day and night, bringing us food and new products from around the state and across the country. If truckers happen to pull into the American Auto Stop in North Stonington, they might discover something new. This rest stop along I-95 has 116 electrified spaces so that truck drivers can turn off their engines while they are resting. Eliminating truck idling has many benefits, including improving air quality and saving fuel.

The new electrified spaces are outfitted with CabAire service towers that enable a truck driver to bring in heat or cool air, cable TV and internet through a device that mounts in the cab window. If a truck arrives at night, sensors on the service tower turn on low energy LED lighting which also complies with low profile "dark sky" requirements. The towers even detect whether the vehicles are complying with anti-idling regulations. American Auto Stop had these devices installed in part to comply with local zoning demands and state requirements.

The CabAire truck stop electrification technology was the creation of a Connecticut company, Control Module. This Enfield-based manufacturer built the first generation of the devices for the American Auto Stop last year. Jim Bianco, Control



Module's CEO, hopes to outfit truck stops nationwide with his company's product over the next few years. "Big rig drivers are under tighter rules in recent years, including requirements to take more frequent breaks and anti-idling regulations," says Bianco, "These rules have increased the need for technologies that allow truckers to remain in their vehicles and have access to heat, air conditioning and electricity without

running their engines." The interest in electrification is growing, and so is CabAire, which recently was awarded a contract for a truck electrification project in North Carolina.

Mike Griffin, a truck driver for Heartland Express, loves the truck electrification service at the American Auto Stop. "With fuel prices so high, and fleet management focused on fuel conservation and engine wear, I welcome having the comforts of home while saving fuel and keeping the air cleaner. One thing I do appreciate is the quiet parking lot. With the engines off and CabAire's air conditioner, it's real quiet. Drivers need idle free quiet zones to get the rest they need for safer driving."

For more information on the CabAire Truck Stop Electrification Technology, visit www.CabAire.com

Did you know? DEP's anti-idling regulations apply to every vehicle in Connecticut, gasoline as well as diesel powered. Idling vehicles create emissions that contribute toward smog and ground level ozone, and produce carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas). Diesel exhaust even contains toxic air pollutants, including aldehydes (formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, acrolein), benzene, 1,3-butadiene, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). The U.S. EPA estimates that nationally diesel engines are the third largest source of fine particles, which can cause lung damage and aggravate respiratory conditions including asthma and bronchitis. These emissions can have a direct effect on the health of adults and children who inhale the exhaust.

To find out more about what you can do, click on DEP's anti-idling program page at www.ct.gov/dep/dieselreduction

Recycling Rundup

Recycling is a Glass Act: Everything You Wanted To Know About Glass Recycling



The bottle you recycle today could become a glass tile one day

You may not have as many glass food or beverage containers in your recycling bin as you have had in the past. Many items that were once packaged in glass are now in plastic or have a deposit and are redeemed at the store. But glass, like cans, can be recycled indefinitely, so it's important to recycle those bottles and jars.

Glass can be any color, but most food or beverage containers are clear (also called flint), brown/amber or green. Once it is brought to a recycling facility, glass is prepared to market specifications. Depending on the end use, the glass might be separated by color, contaminants are removed and the glass is crushed. The crushed glass is called cullet. Contaminates can be other types of glass like Pyrex and drinking glasses, bottle tops and light bulbs or plastics, metals and paper. Bottle glass is different than other kinds of glass. Even though they may look the same, they are chemically incompatible and have different melting points. Brown or green glass cannot be used to make clear glass, so the better the glass is separated at the recycling facility, the more valuable it is to manufacturers.

Cullet is an important part of the mix for making new glass containers. Glass is made from sand, soda ash, limestone and cullet heated to about 2800 degrees F and then molded into shape. The use of cullet saves the manufacturer money because it is cheaper than the other materials and since it melts at a lower temperature, using cullet saves energy and wear on the furnace. Using cullet is good for the environment too, because fewer virgin materials are used and less greenhouse gases are produced.

The demand is greater than the supply for clear, high-quality cullet for new bottles. Most recycled flint (clear) and amber glass is used to make new containers, but bottle manufacturers compete for cullet with producers of abrasives, bead manufacturing, fiberglass, frictionators (match tips), and more. Mixed color cullet is used in other applications, such as fiberglass insulation, roadbed aggregate, safety reflective beads and decorative tile.

Remember, your part in recycling doesn't end at the curb. There are many beautiful and useful products for your home made from the glass food and beverage containers you recycle. Just enter "recycled glass products" in your search engine on the web to get some inspiration on how you can "close the loop."

Glass Do and Don't s

- ✓ DO recycle or redeem all unbroken glass food and beverage containers.
- ✓ DO purchase items in clear glass when possible.
- ✓ DO rinse and remove all caps, bottle tops and rings (labels are ok).
- ✗ DO NOT put any other kind of glass items in your bin such as drinking glasses, mirrors, crystal, light bulbs, window glass, or heat-resistant ovenware like Pyrex. They are not produced in the same way and have different melting temperatures.

Glass Facts

Mining and transporting raw materials for glass produces about 385 pounds of waste for every ton of glass that is made. If recycled glass is substituted for half of the raw materials, the waste is cut by more than 80%.

When a bottle is made from recycled materials, there is 20% less air pollution and 50% less water pollution created than if the bottle was made from raw materials.

Every ton of glass that is recycled results in a ton of raw materials saved to process new glass, including 1,300 pounds of sand, 410 pounds of soda ash and 380 pounds of limestone.

Recycle CFLs at The Home Depot

The Home Depot, the world's largest home improvement retailer, recently launched a national consumer compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb recycling program at all their retail locations. Customers can bring in any burned-out, unbroken CFL bulbs, and give them to the store associate behind the returns desk. An environmental management company will coordinate CFL packaging, transportation and recycling to maximize safety and ensure environmental compliance.

In addition to the CFL recycling program, The Home Depot has also launched an in-store energy conservation program to switch its light fixture showrooms in U.S. stores from incandescent bulbs to CFLs by fall 2008, which should save \$16 million annually in energy costs.

For more information, visit
www.homedepot.com/ecoptions.

Gray Matters

What is your idea of retirement? Writing your memoirs, traveling far and wide, pampering your grandchildren, golfing? How about forming a Green Council to promote conservation and environmental awareness?

That's what Robert Lane and other like-minded residents did when they formed the Green Council at the Whitney Center, a retirement community in Hamden. For their efforts, they were awarded a 2008 CT Climate Change Leadership Award. Their award was one of seven presented to Connecticut residents and businesses to recognize innovative work in helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The residents at Whitney formed the Council to "undo" the harm they felt their generation unknowingly inflicted on the environment. Armed with information about how they could change their own behavior and those around them, they are determined to "repair the damage" for generations to come. To this end, the Council created a website www.grayisgreen.org. The website provides information on all kinds of environmental issues and resources, such as "greentips", recommended reading, films and videos and how others can get involved.

They have also written two excellent documents available on their website: a *Handbook on Conservation for Retirement Communities* and *Shades of Green*. The *Handbook* is a comprehensive resource for residents and managers of retirement communities on how to save energy, purchase "green", recycle, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and much more. *Shades of Green* is a self-evaluation checklist for retirement communities that describes environmental policies and practices

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WHAT'S NEW IN P2?

from the Connecticut DEP

CT Commuters Race to the Finish

Governor M. Jodi Rell kicked off the Tri-State 5,000,000 Mile Rideshare Challenge in 2007 — a year-long event that challenged companies and commuters to carpool and reduce 5,000,000 miles of driving in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.

The Tri-State Challenge took place from April 1, 2007 to April 30, 2008 and the results are in. Connecticut commuters reduced their driving by 3.4 million miles. This is equal to having every major road and highway throughout the state being completely empty of cars for 1 hour, preventing about 1,500 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition commuters also saved 153,000 gallons of gas, the equivalent of 17 tanker trucks worth over \$600,000.

Area employers actively supported the challenge by “racing” against each other and promoting the event to their employees. In July, Governor Rell presented awards to approximately 20 participating companies and agencies for their high achievement. The CT DEP received an award for its a high participation rate. (See press release for all Connecticut winners and sponsors at www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?A=3293&Q=420226).

Over 30 local and national sponsors also supported the events and provided \$118,500 in rewards and prizes to participating commuters. NuRide, an online carpooling and ridesharing site was utilized for the Tri-State Challenge. For more information, check out www.nuride.com.

Help with Home Energy Costs

Energy prices are climbing through the roof, with heating oil predicted to cost \$5.00 per gallon this winter. There are ways to cut your energy costs, and, in Connecticut, there are some new financing programs that will make taking on an energy efficiency project easier.

If you've been thinking about replacing your old furnace, now may be the perfect time. Connecticut residents can take advantage of a rebate program to help replace old furnaces with new energy efficient ones. Here's how it works: homeowners who buy EnergyStar-rated natural gas furnaces or oil or propane furnaces that are at least 84% efficient between July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2017, can receive a rebate of up to \$500, depending upon household income. Homes and apartment buildings with four units or less qualify. Call the Furnace Rebate Hotline is 1-866-940-4676 or visit www.ct.gov/opm and click on “Furnace Replacement Rebate Program”.

There is also a loan program to help Connecticut residents make other energy saving improvements in their homes. The loans can be used for insulation, replacement windows, programmable thermostats, heat pumps and other improvements. Single family homeowners can borrow up to \$25,000; multi-family homes can borrow \$2,000 per unit. The length of the loan is 10 years.

Visit www.chif.org/owner_borrowers/index.shtml for more information.

And, that's not all. Other state and federal programs are available for a variety of energy improvements, including home energy audits. Information can be found at the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund website, www.ctsavesenergy.org/ and www.ct-energyinfo.com.

So, what are you waiting for...winter's just around the corner!



Ask Eartha



Note: This feature offers answers to select environmental questions.
Send your question to the editor's address -- judith.prill@ct.gov
and watch future issues for an answer.

Dear Eartha:

When I go to my sister's house, she always has those plug-in air fresheners which I find overpowering. Are there any issues with these that I can let her know about? (Maybe then she'll stop using them!)

Steve G.,
Bristol, CT

Air fresheners and other fragranced products can emit dozens of different chemicals, many of which are considered toxic or hazardous. And even though manufacturers of perfumes and personal care products are required by federal law to list ingredients on the label, the chemicals that make up the fragrances don't have to be listed.

Over 80,000 different chemicals are registered for use in the U.S. but data on the complete health and environmental effects is only available for about 10% of these chemicals. Traditional tests for the safety of chemicals look for immediate effects, not those that emerge years after exposure. And most studies look for effects of one chemical at a time, but in real life, we are exposed to complex mixtures of chemicals.

Chemicals of concern that are often found in synthetic fragrances include petroleum-derived VOCs (volatile organic compounds), which make up the scent, and phthalates, which are added to the formulas to extend the fragrance. The University of Washington recently analyzed the air surrounding six fragranced products, including air fresheners, fabric softeners and laundry detergents, for VOCs. Nearly 100

VOCs were emitted from the six products and none of the chemicals were listed on the product label. A plug-in air freshener tested contained more than 20 different VOCs, including some that are considered hazardous air pollutants.

What Can You Do to Avoid Using Air Fresheners?

- Don't just cover up smell, find out the source and deal with it. For example, fix the moisture problem that is causing that mildew smell (mold can also be an asthma trigger along with fragrances), ban cigarette smoking in your home and clean that stinky litter box!
- Clean your home regularly and get rid of clutter. This will help cut down on offensive odors and allow better air flow.
- Use baking soda in the refrigerator, garbage can or other problem areas to absorb odors.
- Make your own potpourri with dried flowers and fruits or use dried used green tea leaves, which have a long tradition of being used as a deodorizer.
- Place a small bowl of vinegar on the kitchen counter or other areas to absorb offensive smells.
- Use zeolite, a natural mineral, to absorb odors and excess moisture in the air. It can be purchased in mesh bags that can be placed in closets and other places where the air gets stale.
- Ventilate well. When the weather cooperates, open a window to get fresh air. Run vent fans in high-humidity areas like the bathroom or in the kitchen to get rid of cooking odors (unless they're from fresh baked pies or cookies – I just love that smell!)

- Eartha

Gray Matters

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that retirement communities should strive to put in place and practice. They have also incorporated a new organization, the National Senior Conservation Corps, to expand their work.

But the Council has achieved much more — they have caught management's attention at the Whitney Center. Mike Ramberose, Vice President of Development, says that the Council has prompted them to bring conservation to the top of their minds. Even though they have not been able to implement everything the Council would like, they are making steady environmental improvements. For example, they have hired a consultant to help them improve their recycling, switched to compact fluorescents in common areas, replaced 447 windows with more energy efficient models, and will replace two pieces of HVAC equipment that will use 1/4 of the natural gas and electricity they are using now.

The age group that Tom Brokaw named the "greatest generation" can teach us all a thing or two about conservation and that it's never too late to make a positive impact on the world through our actions.

See www.climatechange.com for all seven 2008 winners and a description of the awards program or contact Lynn Stoddard at (860) 424-3236.



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Gina McCarthy, Commissioner

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P 2 C A L E N D A R

A S E L E C T I O N O F E N V I R O N M E N T A L E V E N T S

October 4, 2008

National Solar Tour

Various locations in Connecticut

Homes and commercial buildings throughout the state will be open for the public to see firsthand solar technologies (solar power, solar heating and hot-water, daylighting, and other green and renewable technologies). Visit sites of your choice, speak with homeowners and experts, and learn how the technology works, what it costs, and why it makes sense. For more information: www.solarconnecticut.org

October 24, 2008

Cleaning for Your Health

Mohegan Sun Convention Center, Uncasville

Learn about safer alternatives to cleaning products and develop an action plan for implementing green cleaning in your building. Co-sponsored by a variety of health and environmental agencies and organizations, the conference is geared toward public health professionals, nurses, school faculty, custodians, and municipal officials. For more information: <http://oehc.uchc.edu/images/PDFs/GreenableCT.pdf>

October 10, 11 & 12, 2008

OneThing Expo

CT Convention Center, Hartford

Three-day expo featuring a variety of "OneThings" that schools, businesses and residents can do to save energy and protect the environment. More than 250 exhibitors will take part, featuring recreation, building technology, transportation, alternative energy, consumer products, and more. Visit the OneThing Palooza!, a 24,000 sq. ft. interactive area, designed by the CT Science Center and the Stepping Stones Museum for Children. For more information: www.onethingct.com

November 13, 2008

Statewide Smart Growth Conference

Omni Hotel, New Haven

The 2nd annual conference theme is "Tying it all Together: Transit, Jobs and Housing" with keynote speaker Carol Coletta, CEO's from Cities. Also featured are information booths, workshops and networking opportunities. For more information: www.1000Friends-ct.org

Now Is The Time To Make Your Home More Energy Efficient
www.energystar.gov