



Courier

SUPPLEMENT

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For Fairfax County Employees: A Practical Guide to Being Green

Green. It used to be just a color.

Today, it represents a commitment to the environment. Being green can seem intimidating and overwhelming – turn on the TV, go online or read a newspaper and you'll see glaciers melting, dense smog in China or carbon footprint calculations – but it doesn't need to be.

Often, just small and simple changes can make a big difference in keeping the environment clean and healthy. This Courier supplement and the new Infoweb page at <http://infoweb/green> will show you how easy being green can be – at home and at work.

According to Fairfax County Environmental Coordinator **Kambiz Agazi**, even a simple step, such as replacing an older appliance with an Energy Star (www.energystar.gov) appliance can make a positive impact.

Inside this issue you will find a lot of practical ideas and ways you and your family can be green from county, state and federal officials and experts. On pages 2 and 3, county colleagues share their own creative tips.

Why be green? It isn't just something "nice" to do but a vital part of the county's future – and you and your family's future. Three important reasons include:

Protect Health

▶ Two out of every five U.S. residents are breathing air that could be hazardous to their health, according to the American Lung Association's annual clean air report.

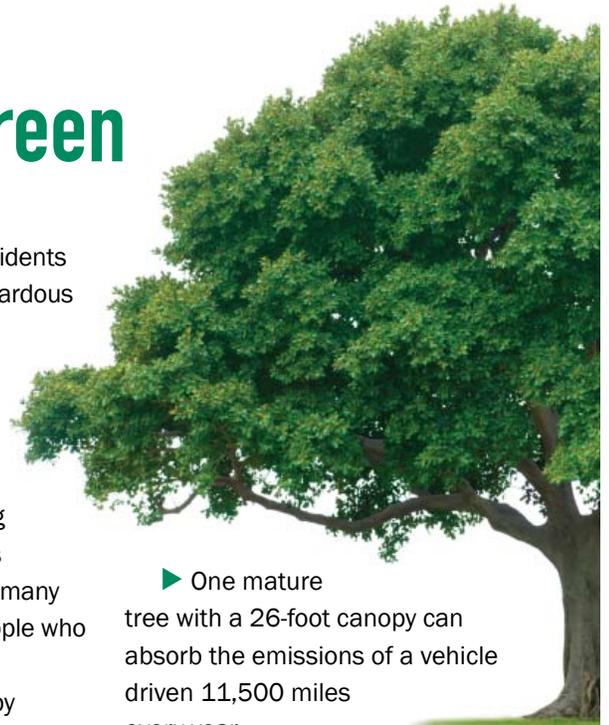
▶ There are 1.5 million residents especially vulnerable to the region's air pollution, according to Clean Air Partners. This includes adults with lung disease, children (many with asthma), older adults and people who are active outdoors.

▶ Reduce carbon emissions by 15 pounds and burn 450 calories (on average) by bicycling for one hour instead of driving.

Conserve Natural Resources

▶ More than 1 million residents get their drinking water from the Potomac and Occoquan rivers, which are fed by the county's creeks and streams.

▶ More than 50 percent of what we throw away is recyclable paper and cardboard. Making new products from recycled material uses less energy and generates less pollution in their production.



File photo.

▶ One mature tree with a 26-foot canopy can absorb the emissions of a vehicle driven 11,500 miles every year.

Save Money

▶ Cut water heater costs by 6-10 percent by turning the water heater down to 120 degrees. Change to the vacation or warm setting, when away for a few days.

▶ Reduce your energy bill by 30 percent and electric lighting charges by 40 percent, while cutting pollution by purchasing products with the Energy Star label.

▶ Save 75 percent of the energy used with incandescent bulbs by replacing light fixtures with energy-conserving compact fluorescent bulbs. ■



This supplement was printed on 100 percent recycled paper.
Courier is online at <http://infoweb/courier>. For more on being green, visit <http://infoweb/green>.

20 Green Tips From Employees

Courier asked employees to send in their tips for being green. Thank you to everyone who participated. A random drawing was held of all submissions and three winners received a native Virginia perennial plant for their yard, generously donated by the Park Authority's Green Spring Gardens (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp).

Congratulations to **Stephen Garland**, Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB); **Jennifer Roberts**, Department of Family Services (DFS); and **Jenny Pate**, Park Authority.

Here are 20 of the practical tips for being green that were submitted:

Plant Winners – Green Tip Drawing



Stephen Garland, CSB



Jennifer Roberts, DFS



Jenny Pate, Park Authority

1. Reduce the amount of junk mail received at work and home by getting off of mailing lists. (Go to www.directmail.com/directory/mail_preference.)

– **Teri Tucker**, Fryling Pan Farm Park

2. Instead of bottled water, buy a stainless steel thermos or a water container. Inexpensive water filters turn most tap water sparkling fresh at a fraction of bottled water's cost.

– **Gina Ash**, Department of Human Resources
– **Jaya Kori**, Department of Information Technology

3. To get rid of ants without using harsh chemicals, sprinkle corn meal around your house and yard. The ants take it back to their nest and are killed when they eat it.

– **Annette Lowery**, Risk Management Division

4. Use paper from the recycling bin that is blank on one side to make notepads in any size. Staple several times

at the top for durability. Use these pads for phone messages or notes.

– **Sandi Smith**, Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)
– **Wendy Murphy**, CSB

5. Recycle printer paper by keeping the paper that has been printed on one side only in a small bin on your desk. Reuse the paper by printing internal documents on the blank side.

– **Margie Benitez**, Department of Tax Administration (DTA)
– **Ginny Biggs**, Lee District RECenter

6. A full bus can take 40 cars off the road – so leave your car at home and take the bus to work. It conserves energy, relieves stress because you don't have to drive and improves air quality.

– **Beth Francis**, Department of Transportation

7. Hang laundry outside when the weather is nice. It's amazing how quickly things dry in the breeze outdoors. In bad weather, use a spare room as a clothes drying room.

– **Jenny Pate**, Park Authority

8. Clean the furnace filter monthly to increase efficiency of the heating and air conditioning unit.

– **Lisa Feibelman**, DPZ

9. Cool your leftover cooking water (pasta and veggies, etc.) and recycle it. Steamed and boiled veggies provide great nutrients for your houseplants. However, don't reuse the broccoli water, it really stinks!

– **Erin Abrahams**, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)

10. Employees can turn off the recessed pod lights located under cabinets.

– **Carol Dunn**, DTA



11. I shut my screen off when I am not using my computer. This saves about 150 watts or 1.5 amps per hour, plus the heat it produces.

– **Paul Bilowus**, Health Department

12. Use cloth reusable bags for groceries and other stores you visit. Keep them with you in the front of your car until it becomes second nature to take them in with you all the time.

– **Laurie Eytel**, DFS

13. Instead of throwing out a useful item, offer it on Freecycle or Craigslist (free). These are great online networks that help reduce what is going into landfills and help others at the same time. Go to www.freecycle.org or www.craigslist.org (in the free area for Northern Virginia).

– **Nichole Blankenship**, City of Fairfax Regional Library

14. Recycle Plastic Bags



Lois Maisel, Health Department, (right) displays the golf cart seat cover (on the golf cart seat back), runner and beach/shopping bag that her mother, **Madeline Lee**, (left) makes out of the plastic grocery bags from supermarkets. Lee, who lives in Florida, cuts the bags into strips and then crochets them into useful items that she sells. Photo provided by Maisel.

15. Bring lunch to work in a reusable lunch box. It keeps wrappers, plastic ware and other trash out of the landfill.

– **Laura Dice**, Health Department
– **Sherry Ali**, Department of Finance

16. Attend the Green Festival in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 8 and 9 featuring more than 100 speakers and 350 vendors of green stuff such as rain barrels, tankless water heaters, non-toxic paints, bamboo flooring, and solar heating systems. Go to www.greenfestivals.org for details.

– **Grace Lynch**, Area Agency on Aging

17. Take your hazardous household waste such as open old paint cans to one of the county's hazardous waste sites. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/disphhw.htm for locations and a list of accepted items.

– **Jennifer Roberts**, DFS

18. When washing vehicles, pull them up onto the lawn so runoff doesn't go down the driveway to the curb. The typical car washing soap has no adverse impact on the lawn, and the water stays in the yard's water table, rather than running down the curb to the storm drain.

– **Thomas Russell**, DPWES



File photo.

19. Invest in a programmable thermostat; they are inexpensive and easy to install. This allows you to adjust the temperature in your house for comfort when you are home and be more energy efficient when the house is empty.

– **Paula Harper**, Office of Public Affairs

20. Recycle your copy of Courier when you're done reading it, or share with colleagues and ask them to recycle.

– **Courier editor** ■

What's Your Tip?

▶ Do you have a creative, easy and practical tip that you can share with other employees? Send your green tip to webcontent@fairfaxcounty.gov.

▶ Employee green tips can be found online at <http://infoweb/green>.

What You Can Do at Home

Plant a tree, or two or more. Shade from trees can reduce a home's or building's cooling costs by 10-50 percent in the summer. Every 1 percent increase in tree canopy also reduces midday air temperatures by up to 2.88 degrees.

Ask your homeowners association if you and your family/neighbors can plant trees in open common areas.

The county also has a voluntary program to protect four types of trees from being cut down – specimen, heritage, memorial or street trees.

► For more information, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/trees.htm.

Get/make a rain barrel. Attach rain barrels to downspouts to collect runoff from the roof. Then connect a barrel's spigot to a garden hose so that the water can be used for outdoor chores. Rain barrels also improve water quality by reducing the flow of stormwater.

► For more information on rain barrels and how to make your own, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/rainbarrels.htm.

Become an eco-gardener. Avoid using gas-powered equipment for lawn maintenance; use rakes instead of leafblowers. Plant only native plants in your yard and help reduce the spread of invasive, non-native plant species that are damaging local ecosystems.

► For a list of recommended plants, as well as eco-friendly garden maintenance tips, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gsgp/gardening.htm.

► To purchase the Park Authority's new publication "Non-Native Invasive ID and Control," go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/invasiveID.htm.

Take care of your car. Driving at the posted speed limit and properly maintaining your car can reduce emissions and save money. Easy ways to keep your car and the environment in good shape include: schedule routine oil changes; avoid idling for long periods of time and consolidate errands.

► Go to <http://infoweb.fairfaxcounty.gov/dvs> and click on Fuel Conservation Suggestions.

Avoid phantom loads. Phantom load is the term used for electricity used by appliances that are powered down but not electronically disconnected. In an average household, 10 percent of the electricity consumed goes to the phantom load.

► Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties/neighborhoods/my-home.htm.

Clean up after pets. Pet waste should be placed in the trash or flushed down the toilet. Waste left on the ground washes into streams and contributes to the high levels of fecal coliform bacteria found in county streams.

► For more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/newsletter/scoopthepoop.htm.

Lighten up with Compact Fluorescent Light bulbs (CFLs). CFLs provide high-quality light output, use 75 percent less energy, and last six -10 times longer than standard incandescent light



File photo.

bulbs. When they are done, bring them to the county's household hazardous waste collection sites. Some retail stores also accept CFL bulbs for recycling.

► Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/publications/recycling/fluorescent.pdf

► For a list of county collection sites, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/disphours.htm#Haz.



File photo.

Properly dispose of pharmaceuticals and hazardous waste. Do not flush medicines down the toilet – they can end up in the county's rivers and streams. Throw away medicines in the trash.

► For more information, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dontflush.

► For a list of household hazardous waste and information on proper disposal, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/disphhw.htm.

Visit county farmers markets. Buy local and sustainable products at the county's open-air farmers markets. All products sold at the farmers markets are produced by the vendors within 125 miles of Fairfax County, including fruit, vegetables, plants, baked goods, eggs, dairy and more. Farmers markets are open from May to November.

► Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farm-mkt.htm#schedule. ■

What You Can Do at Work



Recycle! The Employee Recycling Committee (ERC) is your best resource for what to recycle and how to recycle in your county work site.

► Go to <http://infoweb.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/msw/erc.htm>.

Share a ride. Commuters who use vanpools and carpools share travel costs and benefit from reduced travel time, when they can use HOV lanes.

► To get matched with neighbors with similar commutes, go to www.commuterconnections.com/cgi-bin/signup.cgi.

► To find a vanpool, call the Department of Transportation (DOT) RideSources, 703-324-1111, or Commuter Connections, 1-800-745-RIDE, both TTY 711.

► Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/sources.htm.

Ride your bike and the bus.

Commuters can navigate the county by bike with DOT's new bike map, which shows primary and secondary trails.

► For a copy of the map, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike.

Fairfax Connector buses feature a front-mounted rack that holds two bikes –for no additional charge to the rider.

► For instructions on how to use the bike racks, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/bikehowto.htm.



Save money. The Board of Supervisors has approved funding that provides up to \$105 per month per employee for transportation by bus, rail or vanpool.

► Go to <http://infoweb/fcdot/transbenefit.htm>.

Use the county warehouse. Before ordering new office furniture, contact the Department of Purchasing and Supply Management Warehouse. The warehouse accepts items in good condition such as desks, chairs, file cabinets, and more for re-distribution and a second life.

► Go to <http://infoweb/dpsm/cs.htm> or call 703-658-3712, TTY 711.

Use both sides. According to the American Forest and Paper Association, U.S. office workers generate more than 12 million tons of waste paper each year. Make sure you print on both sides, whenever possible.

Buy green office supplies. When possible, order office supplies from county vendors who carry sustainable items. For example, the Green Book, an Office Depot catalogue, lists more than 3,000 sustainable items. In most cases, reduced energy consumption, reduced resources and waste and reduced chemical additives make these products cost-effective as well as high quality. Buying green will reduce environmental impact and save the county money.

► Office supply orders are only placed by authorized department representatives. For questions and assistance with buying green, contact **Chris McGough**, Department of Purchasing and Supply Management, at 703-324-3288, TTY 711.

Pack your lunch. Save money and the environment by bringing your lunch to work in reusable containers. ■



File photo.

Fairfax Teleworks

Board of Supervisors Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly** has been the champion for teleworking in the county and region, setting aggressive goals for all employers.

County Executive **Anthony H. Griffin** supports and encourages employee participation in the county's Fairfax Teleworks program. In addition to efforts that the county is taking to conserve fuel, teleworking offers a good opportunity for employees to save money and reduce fuel emissions. There are more than 1,300 county employees who are "official" teleworkers. You are encouraged to talk to your supervisor about teleworking if your work, and the work unit, support this option.

► Telework forms and more information can be found at <http://infoweb/telework>. ■

Fairfax County Green Initiatives



Gerald E. Connolly. File photo.

The Board of Supervisors has identified practicing environmental stewardship as a core vision element for the county. The board's environmental agenda is supported by the Environmental Improvement Program (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/eip), which provides a framework for the board and the county executive to make decisions regarding environmental investment, project planning and policy. These are just three of the county's initiatives:

Cool Counties

Fairfax County is helping to lead a national effort for counties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050, an average annual reduction of 2 percent.

Working in conjunction with the Sierra Club, the county has developed a road map showing the actions that counties can take to reduce emissions. The road map lays out a template for reducing emissions in seven key areas: energy efficiency, renewable energy, greening county vehicle fleets, land use, transportation, water conservation and educational outreach.

► For more information on Cool Counties, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties.

“Responding to global climate change may appear to be a daunting task, but we can and must make strategic investments to reduce our own emissions and lead by example within our communities.”

– Board of Supervisors
Chairman **Gerald E. Connolly**

Green Building Policy

Earlier this year, the Board of Supervisors adopted a green building policy for county facilities. The policy requires that buildings be constructed to meet minimum green building standards, if not exceed them.

The county uses the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating

system. At a minimum, county buildings more than 10,000 square feet will be required to reach silver level LEED certification.

The policy applies to the construction of new county buildings and renovations or additions to existing buildings. In addition, the county is working on a number of green building incentives to encourage private development to build green, according to **James Patteson**, Director of Land Development Services for the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.

Several recently built county buildings that meet LEED standards include the Burke Centre and Oakton libraries, as well as Fire Stations 40 and 41.

► For more information on LEED, go to <http://www.usgbc.org>.

Tree Canopy Goal

The Board of Supervisors adopted a tree canopy goal last year to cover 45 percent of the county with tree cover by 2037. This tree canopy goal is one of the most ambitious for any local government in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area. The goal supports the Cool Counties initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and it also pushes forward the county's Tree Action Plan.

Besides protecting the environment, increased tree canopy is expected to save taxpayers money. Once matured, the trees should provide \$5.3 million of air pollution removal and \$4.7 million of energy conservation every year.

To reach the goal, the county and the public needs to plant an additional 2.6 million trees, or 20,400 acres of new canopy — as well as maintain existing trees.

► For more information, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/environmental/trees.htm. ■



Dennis Holder and Salah Osman, both DPWES, are among the county employees who are LEED accredited and qualified consultants and administrators for buildings that comply with the requirements in the LEED program.

Calendar and Resources



What's Coming Up in Recycling

(For more details on recycling events, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/calendar.htm.)

Sept. 6, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Community cleanup event (household hazardous waste, document shredding). Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale.

Sept. 13, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Document-shredding event. Sully Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly.

Oct. 1, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Hazardous waste cleanup event for qualified businesses. I-66 Recycling and Disposal Facility, 4618 West Ox Road, Fairfax.

Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Household hazardous waste collection event. McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean.

Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Computer and electronic recycling and document shredding at Fall for Fairfax, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

Oct. 4, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Fall for Fairfax: Children's festival with an environmental theme. One or more county agencies will be distributing 1,000 free compact fluorescent bulbs to residents. The bulbs have been awarded to Fairfax County through the National Association of Counties and Office Depot, from the 2007-08 Energy Star "Change a Light" program. 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

Oct. 11, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Document-shredding event. Braddock Governmental Center, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke.

Nov. 15 – America Recycles Day

Nationally recognized day dedicated to encouraging residents to recycle and to buy recycled products.

Earth Day 2009 – Look for information in Courier and NewsLink next spring for information on the Employee Recycling Committee's Earth Day Expo held in April.

Government Resources

► Fairfax County Environmental News and Information.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment

► Green Information for and about Fairfax County employees.

<http://infoweb/green>

► The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/who-we-are.htm

► How to Implement Cool Counties in Your Neighborhood.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties/neighborhoods

► Clean Air Partners.

www.cleanairpartners.net

► The Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council.

(Advisory board to the Board of Supervisors, staffed by the Department of Planning and Zoning.)
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/eqac

► Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

www.deq.virginia.gov
Call 1-800-592-5482, TTY 711.

► U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency.

www.epa.gov ■

Green Roof on County Parking Garage



Several members of the Board of Supervisors participated in the Aug. 4 unveiling of the recently completed green roof demonstration project located on the top level of the Herrity Building parking garage. The project will help the county to better design these kinds of eco-friendly roofs in the future. A green roof reduces stormwater runoff, keeps buildings cooler in the summer and absorbs air pollutants. On the green roof are (l-r) Supervisors Penelope A. Gross, Linda Q. Smyth, Pat Herrity, Sharon Bulova and Chairman Gerald E. Connolly.

Recycling Guide



Recycling YES

IN THE BIN



Plastic Bottles & Jugs



Metal Cans



Glass Bottles & Jars



Soda Bottles & Cans



Pill Bottles

IN BIN, BAG, OR CONTAINER



Newspapers, Mixed Paper, Junk Mail, Magazines & Catalogs



Paperboard Boxes



Phone Books



Flattened Cardboard

YES AT THE CURB



Grass Clippings



Leaves



Brush

Recycling NO



Yogurt, Dairy Tubs



Pizza Boxes



Plastic Bags, Food Containers & Trays



Paper Plates & Napkins



Styrofoam Containers & Packaging



Foil Tins & Wrap



Alkaline Batteries



Lightbulbs

NO AT THE CURB



Rock and Bricks



Propane Tanks



Logs over 6 inches in diameter

The residents and businesses of Fairfax County combined to recycle 38 percent of all the waste generated in the county during 2007 – an increase of 3 percent from the previous year.

— The 2007 Recycling Rate Report prepared by the Solid Waste Management Program,

► For more information on recycling at home or work, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/recycling.

► This chart was provided by the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, Solid Waste Management. ■

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