



April
2011



Green Lingo: Carbon Footprint

Carbon Footprint—common term nowadays. Definition: the amount of greenhouse gases, and specifically carbon dioxide, emitted by something (a person's activities or a product's manufacture and transport) during a period of time, per Merriam-Webster. The average U.S. resident produces about 20 metric tons of greenhouse gases each year. In comparison, the worldwide average per capita GHG production is 4 metric tons, as estimated by Professor Timothy Gutowski of the MIT Mechanical Engineering Department.

Green Product of the Month: Biofence

Biofence was developed in 1993 as a biodegradable alternative to traditional hay bale and silt fence erosion controls. The system consists of rolls of dense burlap and wood fiber with looped seams that are fitted over wooden stakes. Biofence is made in the USA, and eliminates the environmental concerns of traditional erosion and sedimentation control, such as non-native weeds present in hay bales and toxic manufacturing oils and residues from plastic silt fences. Biofence is quick to install and has been tested to provide over 87% silt removal. The system will last for one year, with no removal required.

Green Current Events: RI First to Adopt International Green Construction Code

In 2010, Rhode Island was the first state in the U.S. to recognize the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) as an option for the design and construction of all major public facilities.

IGCC applies to new and existing buildings and can be a regulatory resource from which jurisdictions can draw upon for sustainable standards as an option to compliance under the Rhode Island Green Building Act. Rhode Island now recognizes IGCC as equivalent to LEED for the purpose of the requirement. The IGCC has a Chapter that covers sustainable guidelines for Site Development and Land Use.

Green at PARE

PARE has been busy hosting and attending Green events recently. Below are brief descriptions. If you are interested in more information about an event please contact the Sustainable Design Committee.

Webinars: The committee hosted a free webinar, "Become a LEED Green Associate," on April 7th for PARE employees. The webinar was developed by NEXUS out of Boston. Four PARE employees (Briscoe Lang, Brandon Blanchard, Keith MacDonald and Kevin Viveiros) attended the webinar to learn more about becoming LEED Green Associates. The committee also hosted the webinar "Designing with Nature: Compost BMP Design Webinar for Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development" on April 12th.

PARE sponsors NEMO Seminar: PARE attended and had a booth at the recent Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) seminar at URI. The event was held to review the new RI Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual. The seminar included water quality BMP's, wet vegetative treatment systems (WVTS) - both shallow and gravel, infiltration, permeable paving, filters, open channels, construction and maintenance. Dave Potter and Scott Lindgren attended and were available at the PARE table, which presented the sustainable and green techniques for the URI CBLs building's drainage.



PARE attends the USGBC Massachusetts Chapter Annual Meeting: The Massachusetts Chapter of the USGBC hosts a meeting and networking event each year. This year it was held at the Boston Architectural College on March 24th. Cari Powers attended the event. The meeting included a review of the past year's progress and updates from all twelve subcommittees. Updates included that the MA chapter would be hosting the Upper Northeast Leadership Summit later this month, which will include the welcoming address from Rick Fedrizzi, President and CEO of the USGBC. One of the newer sub-committees that presented was 'Deeper Green', a committee that researches and shares information on the newest green techniques. The chapter, anchored in Boston, is looking to expand to other areas of Massachusetts as well. For more information about the Massachusetts Chapter visit <http://usgbcma.org/>.

We Asked and You Responded:

More responses to our request, “Tell us all the *Green* things you do at home and at PARE.”

Tim Thies says, “My family started composting food and yard waste at home. I even constructed my compost bin from old wood pallets.”

<http://homecompostingmadeeasy.com/foodscraps.html>

While Allison Viens says, “I bought a spring jacket that’s partially made from recycled materials! And when I’m done wearing it, I can send it back and the company will recycle it.”

Upcoming Events

Earth Day Photo Contest: Submit your best photograph that shows what motivates you in your commitment to environmental protection and sustainability by April 18th and you could win! Remember to email your photograph, including a brief description, to Debra Poulos. Photographs will be voted on during that week, with a winner selected on Earth Day, April 22nd.

April 2011 SDC Meeting at Suite 600: The next Sustainable Design Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 28th at 5:00 pm. Unlike other meetings though, this one will be held at Suite 600, an upscale lounge on George Washington Highway in Smithfield. Please join us so that you can offer your feedback on ways our committee can improve, as well as hear some of our ideas for future events.

Do Your Part: The Break Room

There are a number of ways you can help lower your impact on the environment, even at lunch or during your mid-afternoon snack. Reducing the amount of waste you generate is a great way to do this. Try using fewer paper towels, and choose ceramic coffee cups and silverware over disposable cups and utensils.

Much of what cannot be reduced can probably be recycled. Our current recycling program allows us to recycle paper products, #1 and #2 plastics, glass, and metal cans. The following are some of the common items found in the break room that currently can be recycled:

BLUE BIN

Water, Juice, & Soda Bottles
Salad Dressing Containers
Most Condiment Containers
Soup and Tuna Fish Cans
Some Plastic Iced Coffee Cups
Creamer/Half & Half Cartons
Any Other #1 or #2 Plastic

GREEN BIN

Paper Towel Rolls
Clean Paper Plates
Supermarket Circulars/Fliers
Other Miscellaneous Paper Items

Please give your containers a rinse and check that your plastic items have a #1 or #2 printed on it (usually found on the bottom of the container) before putting them in the blue bin. In addition, plastic bags should be tied in a knot and placed in the bag hanging from the wall near the soda machine for future recycling.

Unfortunately, a number of items still cannot be recycled at this time. Plastics that do not have a #1 or #2 cannot be recycled. Common examples include yogurt containers, plastic utensils, and Styrofoam coffee cups. For a more comprehensive of what can and cannot be recycled, see the “Recycling at Work” flier posted on the bulletin board in the break room.

And coming soon, PARE will be introducing a food-composting program. Look for more information in upcoming editions of the Green Times.



***Thank you
for your
electronic
recyclables!***