THE WATER-ENERGY CONNECTION

Nationally, roughly 4% of total electricity used in the United States is for pumping and treating potable water and wastewater. The figure is a lot higher if you include energy use for the things we do with water, such as heating it. For example, 19% of California electricity use is dedicated to water when water heating is included.

The farther we have to pump water, the greater the energy use—especially if we have to pump it over mountain ranges, as in California. For many cities and towns in the US, water pumping and sewage treatment use more electricity than anything else. On a per-capita basis, this energy use for water pumping and treatment varies from about 350 kWh/year in the South Atlantic states to over 750 kWh/year in the Mountain states, according to a 2002 Electric Power Research Institute report—about as much annual use as a refrigerator.

Just as it takes energy to provide water, it also takes water to provide energy. Roughly 89% of US electricity is produced in thermoelectric plants—plants that use a heat source such as coal or nuclear fission to produce steam, which spins a turbine that generates electricity. Water is used to create the steam, and then more water is used to cool that steam and condense it back into water. Averaged nationally, thermoelectric plants use 0.47 gallons of water for each kWh of electricity produced, according to a 2003 National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) paper (see “Save Energy to Save Water,” EBN Oct. 2002).

Hydropower, which accounts for 9% of US generation, consumes a lot more water because of evaporation from reservoirs. The same NREL study examined evaporation from 120 of our largest reservoirs and extrapolated that to all 2,300 of our power-generation reservoirs, calculating a national average water-intensity of 18 gallons/kWh for hydropower—with much higher consumption in some states: 65 gallons/kWh in Arizona and 137 gallons/kWh in Oklahoma, for example. By weighting the thermoelectric and hydropower values, NREL found a national average of 2.0 gallons of water per kWh.

Water intensity is highly variable for fossil fuels. According to a 2006 Department of Energy report to Congress, conventional onshore oil extraction consumes 0.12–0.31 gallons of water per gallon of oil, but some oil extraction techniques can dramatically increase that. Canadian tar sands require 140–360 gallons of water per gallon of oil, according to data from the Pacific Institute. Another 1.0–2.5 gallons of water are required to process and transport each gallon of oil. With natural gas, conventional onshore extraction uses negligible water but processing and transport averages 3 gallons of water per million Btu.

On the renewable fuel side, corn-based ethanol is highly water-intensive. A 2008 paper in Environmental Science and Technology reported that a light-duty vehicle driven on an E85 ethanol mix (85% ethanol) “consumes” 28 gallons of water per mile! By conserving water we save energy, and by conserving energy we save water. It’s a win-win!

Consider refurbishment over replacement

The challenges faced by the hospitality industry throughout 2009 are still ongoing. And growth in 2010 is predicted to be sluggish at best. As organizations seek to lower costs and maintain profitability, it is increasingly obvious that the concept of sustainability isn’t just of interest to the environmental lobby; it’s also good business.

It may sound harsh, but institutions in both the public sector and the private sector simply haven’t delivered with regard to sustainable development.

In public sector organizations, where future budgets are set based on current spending levels, there is no incentive to seek cost-effective methods of maintaining and managing assets. Indeed, saving money through prudent reuse and refurbishment can penalize a public sector organization. As a result, organizations dispose of viable assets and try to use up any unallocated money in a flurry of spending. The technique is wasteful, but prudent for managers in need of funding. As the nation’s deficit will show anyone, this is no longer a viable option.

The private sector hasn’t managed much better. The corporate mindset that equates ‘new’ with ‘successful’ no longer holds water. Additionally, companies have had to use outdated tax codes, designed to bolster domestic manufacturing, which traditionally rewards replacement. As a result, little thought is given to sustainability.

However, in today’s economic climate, that attitude no longer makes sense. It’s time to see refurbishment as more than ‘making do.’ As increasing numbers of companies respond to consumer-driven demand for changing business practices through triple-bottom-line reporting, sustainability ranks highly.

By focusing on sustainability in resource management, companies that embrace the concept are better able to reduce costs and maintain profitability, it is increasingly obvious that the concept of sustainability isn’t just of interest to the environmental lobby; it’s also good business.
As hotel occupancy increases throughout the year, those businesses that have invested in upgrading rooms will attract the majority of customers. By opting for refurbishment over replacement, upgrades can be made at a far lower cost.

Although the recent economic climate has been challenging for everyone, it is possible to use it as a launch pad for a new, smarter attitude toward sustainability. This has rewards for all organizations, and in the hospitality sector it can lead to major cost savings. As the economy as a whole recovers, businesses and institutions that focus on sustainability can save money and make better use of the assets they have. Whether public or private, it's undeniable that sustainability makes operational and environmental sense.

**THROWING AWAY FOOD**

The US produces about 591 billion pounds of food each year, and up to half of it goes to waste, costing farmers, consumers and businesses hundreds of billions of dollars.

In his new book, “American Wasteland,” Jonathan Bloom examines the story of discarded food, from vegetables left to rot in the field to unsold hamburgers shoveled into restaurant trash bins. He also offers potential remedies, such as taxes on landfills, expanded composting programs and incentives for farmers to harvest all that they grow and to donate what they can’t sell.

Food waste begins at farms. With lettuce, for example, the average harvest rate has been estimated at 85-90%. The rest of the lettuce—heads that don’t look or feel perfect on quick inspection—are left in the field. One cucumber grower said that at least half of the cucumbers on his farms aren’t harvested, mostly because they are too curved (making them hard to pack) or have white spots or small cracks. Farm losses are generally higher for hand-picked fruit and perishable vegetables than for machine-harvested commodity crops like corn and wheat; about 9% of commodity crops planted in the US aren’t harvested.

The average item in the produce section of your supermarket travels some 1,500 miles before arriving at its destination, either a wholesaler or a supermarket’s regional distribution center. These journeys by truck, train, plane and ship bring more opportunities for lost food, as items decay or get damaged en route. In-transit losses reach 10-15% for some crops, with tomatoes, leafy greens and grapes among the most fragile.

US supermarkets throw away an estimated 30 million pounds of food every day—damaged goods, expired products, dented boxes and the like. According to a recent study by the USDA, in 2006 supermarkets tossed out, on average, 8% of their fresh meat and poultry and 9% of their fresh seafood. (Among the most frequently discarded items were mustard greens at 61%, papaya at 51% and veal at 28%.) Some of the unwanted food gets composted or donated, but most of it ends up in landfills. Researchers also estimate that American households waste 15-25% of the food that they buy, but the actual figure may be higher. A recent study in the United Kingdom found that British consumers throw away a third of the food that comes into their homes.

Commercial kitchens (in hospitals, schools and restaurants) throw away between 4-10% of the food that they purchase, for reasons like overproduction, spoilage, expiration, trimmings, burned items, catering leftovers and contamination. Up to 10% of the items at fast-food restaurants are discarded because they’ve sat too long after being prepared. The losses continue on the plate. A researcher from the Cornell University Food and Brand lab found that diners leave an average of 17% of their meals uneaten, because of factors like large serving sizes or unwanted side dishes. And roughly 55% of major leftovers aren’t taken home.

Food scraps are the second-largest component of the national waste stream, making up 19% of what we put into landfills. (Americans compost only about 2.5% of the food that they discard.) Food in landfills creates methane, a source of greenhouse gas. Some cities and countries have taken action. Seattle and San Francisco made household composting mandatory in 2009, and last summer, Norway banned food and biodegradable waste from its landfills.

“Throwing Away Our Food,” The Wall Street Journal, October 16-17, 2010

**STAFF: DUMP YOUR TRASH**

To save money, offices around the US are adding a new chore to their employees’ routine: taking out the trash. Some 20,000 Texas state workers, who once had night janitors empty their desk-side waste baskets, now must tote their own trash and recyclables to common bins. City workers in Phoenix are doing the same, as are employees of some colleges and companies.

One of the really labor-intensive parts of custodial work is walking to people’s desks and emptying the trash, and most people only have a fist-sized amount of trash. By having workers dump their own trash, Texas is expected to save at least $825,000 annually on labor costs—a tiny piece of the state’s 2-year budget of $182 million. In addition to the savings on custodial labor, employers expect to save money by reducing the trash they generate, as well as collect more money by producing greater amounts of recycling, one of the program’s goals.

Texas is spending about $195,000 to set up its program, for small individual bins, larger centralized bins, signs and brochures. Officials said the preliminary results have been promising: A 13% increase in the collection of recyclable materials is worth $35,000 a year if that pace continues. Diverting the materials from the trash should save $45,000 more a year.

Reddy, Sudeep; “Memo to all Staff: Dump Your Trash,” The Wall Street Journal, November 1, 2010

**Directing employees doesn’t work, but coaching does**

Have you ever noticed that the more answers you have, the less people are listening? Chances are you’ve been promoted as a manager and leader because you were good at the work you do. But it turns out that knowing how to do something does not give you the skills to get others to be able to deliver those same results.

**Why directing does not work:** If you have all the answers, you get to keep the problems and the responsibilities. No one likes to be told what to do, whether they are 5 years old or 50.


- Directing people on what to do places the accountability on you, not them.
- Directing is an important management tool. Managing is facilitating people, product and process.

**How coaching is different from managing:** Coaching puts the responsibility in the chair over there.

- Coaching is the ability to help a person find the right answers and direction so they own the work and therefore make it happen.
- Coaching ensures a clear plan of action that allows the manager to still be involved, but does the responsibility out.
- Coaching is the ability to optimize people and potential.
- Coaching gets your people delivering measurable results.
- Coaching allows you to create 100% responsibility in the people who work for you. Imagine never having to chase an employee down to review the same requests over and over. The dream is possible when you coach.
- Coaching requires different skills than directing. Being a coach might take more time and other skills, such as fully present listening. A sense of curiosity is necessary, so you wait for the answers and direction instead of doing them out.
- A coach makes a person right even when their direction sounds insane and then points them compassionately in a different direction.
- A coach establishes guidelines for following up so that the employee is accountable. When you focus on coaching your people instead of ordering them around, you will create responsibility and be able to hold people truly accountable.

Stop directing and start coaching, so the responsibility is in the chair over there!

Cavallari, Renie, CEO of Aspire, aspiremarketing.com, “Directing employees doesn’t work, but coaching does,” H&MM, September 2010, HotelWorldNetwork.com, p. 16

**Off the Bottle**

Vail Resorts and its RockResorts subsidiary are phasing out the use of plastic water bottles at the company’s 14 properties.

When the Fairmont Pittsburgh opened, part of its mission was to not have plastic water bottles anywhere on the property. The hotel offers guests a glass bottle with locally filtered water. The filtered water is available on every floor next to the ice machine. Guests can simply fill up, take it with them and then return the bottle when they are done with it. It’s a clever way to actively engage the guests with the sustainability goals of the hotel!

“No more plastic,” Hotel Operations, H&MM, October 18, 2010, hotelworldnetwork.com, p. 22

**OLED Light Panels**

The lighting industry may have success in using OLED display technology from cell phone screens as a light source such as a light bulb. Novaled AG of Germany displayed OLED-based lights at a recent technology show, including a prototype of a desk lamp made of several cell phone-sized panels put together. Novaled expects to have such products in the stores in about two years.

OLED technology uses less energy than incandescent bulbs and, in laboratory use, is nearly as efficient as fluorescent. The color of the light OLED produces is closer to natural light than either of the two dominant bulb technologies. The OLED lights can be both

**Sparkling Water Fountains**

In the latest of a series of unusual efforts to make Paris green, the city is offering residents free sparkling water to try to wean Parisians not from red wine but from overconsumption of plastic bottles.

Inaugurated recently by Eau de Paris, the public water company, “la petillante”—“the bubbly”—is a water fountain installed in a wooden hut on the Jardin de Reuilly, in eastern Paris, that delivers sparkling water. They chill the water to 42.8 to 46.4°F., and then inject carbon dioxide into regular tap water to make the bubbles thin and tasty.

The fountain is connected to the public water system and uses six taps to provide both sparkling and flat water. The idea was conceived in Italy and grew very popular there. Italians have installed 215 fountains of the same type in the country’s northern regions. Each provides an average of more than 920 gallons a day, half of which is sparkling water. So, it means saving 2,300 plastic bottles of 1.5 liters each a day. The French consume about 40 gallons of bottled water per person each year, one of the highest per capita amounts not only in Europe, but also in the world.


**INTRODUCING RENEWAL WATER!**

ALLY MEMBER Renewal Water introduces the future of bottled water—100% premium spring water in a bottle made from 100% renewable resources.

‘Going green’ is an important shift in the way people live their lives and the way companies do business. In the past, making a sustainable choice regarding bottled water was challenging. Most brands offer a petroleum-based plastic bottle—4 out of 5 of which are discarded to pollute the oceans and planet.

Renewal premium spring water is packaged in a 100% plant-based (PLA) water bottle made from corn, allowing it to compost naturally, have a clean incineration or be recycled. The label is also made from eco-friendly PLA. We believe this is the gold standard in eco water with our private natural spring showing one of the lowest impurity readings on the standard drinking water index.

We would appreciate the opportunity to provide Renewal as an option to your guests. Many organizations and consumers are looking to make a shift away from plastic bottles in favor of a ‘green’ alternative at a competitive price. Renewal premium spring water is the product that allows this to happen. For more information, visit renewal-water.com or call Lonnie Nielson at 916/710-5928 today!

**OFF THE BOOTTLE**

Beginning at The Pines Lodge in Beaver Creek, CO, the Water on the Rocks program will replace bottles with two refillable glass bottles of filtered water in each guestroom, and logged stainless steel or BPA-free plastic reusable bottles available for $4 at reception. The resorts will have water stations throughout. The program is expected to keep 640,000 plastic water bottles out of the waste stream once it is fully in place.

“Rock Resorts Weans Off the Bottle,” Successful Meetings, June 2010, p. 40
flat and flexible, even placed in glass that is transparent when the light is off. A small white OLED panel would cost more than $100 to produce today, but manufacturers in the lighting industry are seeking to bring down the cost to $10 or less.

OLED stands for organic light emitting diodes and is similar in name to another technology, LED or light emitting diodes. But the two technologies differ in their structure and the type of light they produce. LEDs, which are seen in products ranging from flashlights to giant video billboards, are discrete points of light, or basically very small light bulbs. OLED-based lights emit light evenly across a thin panel of glass, producing more diffuse light than an LED does.

Ramsted, Evan; “Rethinking the Light Bulb,” The Wall Street Journal, October 29, 2010

HELLO GENTEC!

ALLY MEMBER Gentec’s AMBIANCE, the most advanced temperature and energy management system of the hotel industry, allows hotels to improve the comfort and satisfaction of their guests, while considerably reducing their energy expenses. Already installed in more than eighty resorts including Holiday Inn Express, Marriott, Best Western, Days Inn, Comfort Inn and Quality Hotels, this system includes electronic thermostats which control the heating/cooling units of every room. The thermostats are linked up in a centralized computer interface entirely configured according to the needs and priorities of the property.

AMBIANCE provides guests with the comfort and stable temperatures they need. The use of broader temperature ranges in slow periods and the elimination of extreme setpoints by hotel occupants allows greater reduction of energy consumption.

Unlike other energy management systems, AMBIANCE can also control electric water heaters, air make-ups, swimming pool heaters, generators and heating/cooling units of common areas. By measuring the energy consumption of the building in real-time, the system can perform clever and automated management of this equipment to keep electrical demand under a pre-established threshold.

System installation, maintenance and optimization are undertaken by the hotels' preferred HVAC/Control supplier under Gentec’s supervision. To learn more, see ambiancecontrol.com TODAY!

Wal-Mart to Seek More Local Produce

Wal-Mart plans to double its sales of locally-sourced produce in the US by the end of 2015. The move by the world’s biggest retailer is part of a new sustainable agriculture strategy that looks to steer more business to small and medium-sized farmers globally while also reducing farming’s environmental impact. More than half of Wal-Mart’s $405 billion in annual revenue is from food.

In other countries, the goals are bolder. Wal-Mart said it would source 30% of its produce in Canadian stores locally by 2013’s end and set a goal of 100% when local sources are available.

Chapman, Michelle, Associated Press, “Wal-Mart to seek out more local produce,” Houston Chronicle, October 15, 2010

Trendy Kitchen Gardens

Kitchen gardens are the hottest restaurant trend this year according to slashfood.com. In a recent survey by the National Restaurant Association, more than third of the chefs responding cite kitchen gardens as the top trend of 2010. Most chefs have by now embraced the local food movement and the farm-to-table concept, but having their own gardens takes this one step further. You can’t get more locally grown than harvesting from your restaurant’s own backyard.

The Marriott Newark International Airport has a large raised planting bed, seven large terra cotta pots and several window box planters where they’re growing a great variety of herbs, all from seedlings. The herbs are picked daily before service or whenever a recipe calls for it. The garden is part of the green initiative implemented by the hotel this year, and is cultivated using organic fertilizers and organic methods of insect control.

“Kitchen Gardens Trend Sprouts at Marriott Hotels & Resorts,” Marriott Hotels & Resorts, October 28, 2010

Modo’s Eco SUNGLASS Collection

ALLY MEMBER MODO is taking its direction to Sustainability and introduces ECO (Earth Conscious Optics), the first sunglass collection entirely made of recycled materials. With ECO, MODO has reinvented the whole product lifecycle from an environmental perspective. Styling is very contemporary with a wide variety of metal and plastic options for both men and women—lenses are polarized to cut glare.

The collection has become the first-ever consumer brand and eyewear collection to receive an Environmental Claims Validation™ (ECV) from UL Environment (ULE), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Underwriters Laboratories (UL). The ULE validation substantiates that the eyewear is made of at least 95% recycled stainless steel and plastic. Eco plants a tree for each SUNGLASS sold together with Trees for The Future in a program called One Frame, One Tree. This program is upheld with the standards of 1% of the Planet, a worldwide network of businesses that give at least 1% of their annual revenue to environmental causes.

In addition, ECO has special packaging. The sunglasses are shipped in a pouch of organic cotton and packaged with 100% recycled paper. Included is a return envelope for customers to donate their unwanted sun wear to OneSight. For more information, contact Donna Hawley at dhawley@modo.com or call 800/223-7610.

SEA CENSUS

A 10-year census of marine life has uncovered thousands of new species and illustrated how interconnected the ocean environment is. The unprecedented study by more than 2,700 census scientists has revealed a watery world full of abundance, with creatures ranging in size from microbes to whales living from the icy poles to the equator. Some of the more startling creatures discovered include a hairy-clawed “yeti crab,” luminous fish that live so deep that sunlight never penetrates and a shrimp that was thought to have become extinct in Jurassic times. The Census of Marine Life will provide a benchmark from which future changes in ocean life can be measured, according to those who helped coordinate

Chapman, Michelle, Associated Press, “Wal-Mart to seek out more local produce,” Houston Chronicle, October 15, 2010

Internet: greenhotels.com, e-mail: green@greenhotels.com

713/789-8889, Fax 713/789-9786
the effort.


WELCOME ECO ADVERTISING!

ALLY MEMBER Eco Advertising and Marketing is a full service marketing firm located in Dallas, Texas, and our slogan is “Your ECONomical and ECOlogical Marketing Solution.” Services include advertising, audio and video production, bilingual campaigns, graphic design, image branding, marketing including social media marketing, media and public relations, photography, printing, promotional items, signage, special events and website design. The firm is one of the few agencies to offer renewable energy web hosting plans.

“Positive media coverage is an excellent way to get the word out on your property,” says President Perla Saramia Johnson. “Our talent is knowing how to write an effective press release that will interest media in coverage,” she adds. The firm’s specialty is providing affordable campaigns along with quality, environmentally-friendly products and media. The firm utilizes electronic media, print media including soy ink, recycled or recyclable paper and outdoor media with 100% recyclable vinyl billboards. The agency also offers promotional items that are recyclable, reusable, organic or biodegradable. All can be customized.

Eco Advertising prides itself on personal service with an experienced, creative team that will design a customized campaign to help your property stand out from the competition. For more information, visit ecoadvertisingco.com or call 972/322-1096 TODAY!

Styrofoam Densifier

Recycling Styrofoam can now be accomplished through Quality Bilt Equipment’s new FD-25 Styrofoam Densifier. Styrofoam is a continuing problem in handling, storage and waste disposal. Most facilities have simply been throwing their waste Styrofoam into a dumpster and sending it to a landfill. Since Styrofoam is literally 98% air and 2% plastic, the expense of disposal of this material is expensive and a disaster for the environment. Styrofoam is very stable and does not degrade over thousands of years. Burning is restricted in almost all situations. Recycling is almost out of the question because of the cost of shipping to any recycling center.

The foam densifier is designed to reduce the volume of Styrofoam 80:1, thus making the storage and shipping of this recyclable affordable. The FD-25 is designed to handle the needs of most end-users. The FD-25 shreds and then melts the large blocks of Styrofoam quickly and extrudes the output into a ¾ “rope” that quickly solidifies into a small “patty” which can be stored for later shipment. A roomful of Styrofoam can be reduced in minutes down to two or three 12” diameter x 4” high patties.

Quality Bilt can also supply names of recyclers that will buy the recycled Styrofoam and pay for that product which can be formed into picture frames and such. Reducing the disposal costs down to $0 and then adding the income generated from this recycling program will make this a very attractive proposition. This is a win/win/win situation for the warehouse facility, the distributor and not the least of which—the environment! See qualitybilt.com.

WELCOME IMPACT INDUSTRIES’ accessory items!

Impact Enterprises, Inc. has stirred excitement, adventure, and creativity into the manufacturing industry for ‘Green’ accessory items. Impact’s custom menu covers, guest services directory covers, binder covers, presentation folders, table-top accessories and guestroom accessories are international favorites.

Founded in 1987 by Bobi Hamilton, Impact has become the acknowledged leader in ‘Green’ custom cover manufacturing and design. Her focus and foresight, together with her refusal to accept ‘industry dictated’ designs and standards have created unique and branding opportunities for the ‘Green’ hospitality industry. Our continual research into working with new materials allows us to produce product and designs that have never been manufactured before. We are challenged by new designs, new products and new construction techniques demanded by new materials.

Impact’s ‘Green Solutions’ program allows for unique designs to be manufactured in materials that reduce landfill growth and contamination. These materials have been researched for durability, recycled content, sustainability and toxicity. They are particularly excited about their solid wood products manufactured from woods harvested from Verified Sustainable Forests. Impact Enterprises has become a favorite supplier for eco-resorts and hotels. They are also the first manufacturer to use blue pine, the greenest of green solid woods. Eco-friendly is Design-friendly at Impact. Visit impactenterprises.com TODAY!

Making Green Buildings Safe for Firefighters

Green buildings are subject to fire hazards just like any other building—but sometimes in unique ways. The Alstonvale Net-Zero House in Hudson, Québec, burned nearly to the ground in May 2010 while still under construction. Likely factors in the fire were the application of spray polyurethane foam under hot, poorly ventilated conditions and the trapping of heat by the curing foam as it underwent its exothermic reaction.

Green buildings may present special challenges for firefighters because of new technologies, building materials and building techniques. That’s the concern raised by Fire Safety and Green Buildings—Bridging the Gap, a new website at GreenBuildingFireSafety.org developed by the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM). A handbook on the topic has also been released.

The project started with the premise that “fire safety is green because any fire that takes place is doing really bad things to the environment,” said Karen Deppa, director of external relations for NASFM. Funded by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the new resource is the culmination of a year of research, begun by interns and continued by an advisory board that includes representatives from the International Code Council, the US Department of Energy, and the Green Building Initiative, among others.

Two of the main issues addressed by NASFM’s guidelines are light construction and solar installations—both of which have been the subject of regulatory attention. In May 2010, officials in Wilmette, IL, passed legislation requiring fire sprinklers in new homes built with light construction and in all commercial buildings. The town already had an ordinance requiring plac-
ards in commercial buildings warning firefighters of the presence of engineered-wood trusses and joist assemblies. And a 2008 Underwriters Laboratories study showed that homes built with dimensional lumber last longer in fires than those built with engineered-wood systems. Engineered-wood systems are considered environmentally friendly because they limit the use of large-dimensional lumber that comes from old-growth forests. (They’re also ubiquitous in all light construction—not just “green.”)

The fire-safety concerns with photovoltaic (PV) panels stem from both the placement of the panels, which can limit firefighter access, and the electrical connections, which can remain live even when power from the electrical grid is cut off. In April 2010, an inverter box connected to a photovoltaic array on a house in San Diego, CA, caught fire. Although the homeowner cut the power feeding into the grid, electricity from the photovoltaic panels kept the fire going until an electrician was able to cut the wires leading from the panels to the inverter box. Having a cut-off switch on those wires would have allowed firefighters to stop the fire earlier, according to coverage in North County Times, and the fire led authorities to consider changing fire safety codes for solar installations. PV panels also pose a threat to firefighters who climb onto roofs to cut vent holes for smoke. Since they continue to produce electricity even when not connected to the grid, they pose an electrocution hazard.

NASFM’s website and guidelines offer advice for incorporating fire safety into green designs, including:

- balancing emergency access with pedestrian-friendly community design by creating fire-equipment staging areas;
- planning landscaping to account for plant growth and the potential for spreading fires;
- installing any foam installation according to the manufacturer’s directions;
- ensuring that vegetated roofs allow firefighter access by including perimeter setbacks and pathways;
- integrating automatic window controls with fire alarm and sprinkler systems; and
- ensuring proper support for rainwater cisterns to avoid structural failure, and identifying underground cisterns for fire trucks.

Allyson Wendt, Environmental Building News, Vol. 19 No. 10

CLEANING PRODUCT INGREDIENTS

New York consumers will get a newly detailed look at exactly what’s in common household cleaners, as regulators plan to start enforcing a nearly 40-year-old state law that would force manufacturers to reveal their products’ contents. The move comes amid growing scrutiny of the chemicals that make up consumer goods. Possibly the only measures of their kind in the country, the 1971 New York law and related regulations call for manufacturers to provide ingredient lists and research on the products’ health and environmental effects.

“All due to increased public interest in such information, I have decided to begin the process of implementing the department’s authority to require” the disclosures for all household and commercial cleaning products sold in New York, state Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Alexander B. Grannis told the environmental law group Earthjustice in a letter.

Some companies have voluntarily sent data to the DEC. But the agency historically hasn’t demanded the information, saying the law just allows—not requires—it to be collected and made publicly available. The format, timeframe and other details for the disclosures are yet to be determined. While the New York law affects only the state, advocates hope it will help spur broader changes in the chemicals in cleaners and other products.

“(The information) will be available to everybody in the country,” said Deborah Goldberg, an Earthjustice lawyer. “One hopes that by having this disclosure, there will be an incentive for these companies to start developing greener cleaning products.”

Federal environmental laws don’t require ingredient lists for most household cleaning products. The Consumer Product Safety Commission requires hazard warning labels on some cleansers, and the National Institutes of Health offer some health and safety information for hundreds of cleaning products, drawn from data gathered for industrial use.

Some studies have linked cleaning product components to asthma, antibiotic resistance, hormone changes and other health problems.

Industry groups unveiled their own ingredient-listing initiative this year, offering information on participating manufacturers’ websites. Some 99% of American Cleaning Institute (formerly The Soap and Detergent Association) members’ thousands of products are now included, spokesman Brian Sansoni said.

The New York law and subsequent regulations authorized the DEC to make manufacturers detail household cleaning products’ ingredients, as well as any company-led research on the products’ health and environmental effects.

“No consumer wishing to purchase a detergent for washing of clothes or dishes or for cleaning the human body, can realistically gauge the detrimental effects of such products unless informed as to the ingredients of the product,” then-Gov. Nelson Rockefeller wrote in signing it. The law, he said, would “provide the consumer with meaningful information.”

It was the only such law Earthjustice attorneys found in searching the country for tools to prod more disclosures, Goldberg said.


KL DESIGNS CONTAINS SMOKERS’ WASTE!

ALLY MEMBER KL Designs’ smoking receptacles are designed to be garden art, to attract interest and for smokers’ disposal of cigarette butts. Keep your property clean, neat and fire safe without the litter of cigarette butts. KL’s eco-friendly designs are made from recyclable steel and are powder coated for durability. These clever, unusual and durable containers will compliment any environment and help keep your property free from unsightly and polluting cigarette butts.

These beautiful designs can be placed anywhere on your property. No more messy sand, ashes or cigarette butts blowing out of an open ashtray. KL Designs’ receptacles hold hundreds of butts in the bucket in the base. The butts are de-
PREPARING FOR THE AGELESS TRAVELER

We hear so much about the younger generation—how connected they are, about their wants and expectations. So it was interesting to learn more at a recent meeting for designers from Adrian Berg, CEO of Generation Bold (generationbold.com), about the older generation of travelers and how their travel needs will affect the hospitality industry.

Ms. Berg’s statistics include: Whereas the median age in 1900 was 47, today the fastest growing segment of the population is centenarians—those greater than 100 years old. In 2080, there will be more than 1 million centenarians. Baby boomers will affect the US in significant ways. Today, Florida tops the list with more than 1 in 7 citizens aged 55 or older. But by 2025, all but seven states will have reached that 1 in 7 threshold.

Much as the media tries to categorize the baby boomers; it is a diverse group that doesn’t want to be pigeonholed. But it’s fair to say that a large number of them enjoy traveling and consider it a right, and that won’t be changing anytime soon. “The baby boomers are reinventing aging,” Berg said. “Middle age has been elongated, and it now lasts from 45 to 75 or longer.”

And older travelers are going to be hitting the road for myriad reasons, Berg said. One interesting trend she sees is what she terms “respite travel”—getaways for caregivers who need a break from the intense physical and emotional demands of caring for a spouse or parent. Other boomer travel will revolve around hobbies, reunions, bucket lists, medical tourism, spa experiences, intergenerational trips, romance/dating and adventure.

Berg encourages hoteliers not just to aim for ADA or even universal design, but sustainable design that encompasses all ages and feels comfortable for all.

It’s interesting how many little things can slip by even the smartest hotelier. How obvious do you think the difference is between your shampoo and conditioner amenities? Picture yourself as an older traveler in the shower—without glasses on—trying to figure out which is which. Are you still convinced you’d know one from the other?

What about door handles? Do you have knobs or levers? What about your sales and marketing efforts? I can’t tell you how many kid-centric promotions for traveling families come across my desk each month. Yet, I don’t recall the last time I’ve seen one for intergenerational travelers. Why not focus your next marketing effort on families that are bringing the grandparents along with them? Or, why not focus solely on the grandparents themselves? Start thinking about this new group of guests.

WELCOME T-Y GROUP!

When ecology meets technology . . . T-Y Group introduces the ECOSOURCE airless dispenser, the first dispenser of preservative-free cosmetics that are as soft for the skin as for the environment.

This exclusive technology enables products to be heated and packed in airless sterile refill bags, thus offering a unique combination of quality, ecology, innovation and security. The use of airless technology avoids any risk of oxidation or bacterial contamination and allows the liquid to remain fresh and clean.

ECOSOURCE airless dispenser is available in various cosmetic brands and colors. It can be personalized for your hotel. The products available are Gentle soap, Hair & Body Gel, Conditioner, Hand & Body Lotion, Hair & Body Gel / Conditioner and Gentle soap / Hand & Body Lotion.

T-Y Group began its great tradition over 30 years ago as a small towel and robe mill in Colombia, South America. Today, the family-owned company is a leading manufacturer of robes, linens and towels in the hospitality industry. In 2006, T-Y Group augmented its product lines with an expansive bath-room amenities division.

Allow T-Y Group to be your exclusive source for all amenity dispenser needs . . . your guests will thank you. Visit T-YGroup.com.

A Guide to Green Auditing

Chief engineers at all accommodation properties would do well to have green auditing training and experience. The usefulness of the training would pay off as chief engineers go about their work every single day.

In the wake of the sagging US job market, environmental proponents are finding something to be thankful for—the need for a “green-collar” workforce, specifically workers adept in energy-efficiency measures. Those with building and contracting experience already in place, or those looking for a fresh start (or a lucrative side job) are turning to green auditing.

As of August 2010, the average salary for a building energy auditor on indeed.com was $102,000. Other sites quote auditor salaries at anywhere from $45,000 (blisstree.com) to $65,000 (simplyhired.com).

What’s a Green Auditor? An environmental auditor makes sure a company is in line with federal and company regulations and finds ways for businesses to curb inefficiencies to promote profit, improve worker health and raise environmental performance. They also evaluate businesses and homes for air leaks, poor insulation and indoor pollution problems.

Erica Braben, a manager of Existing Buildings for Steven Winter Associates, Inc., with experience in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification says, “Cutting consumption often means optimizing the systems you already have, such as sealing ventilation shafts and tuning boiler controls. Buildings are full of holes, which mean air leakage, stack effect, infiltration, heat loss and pathways for pests. Air sealing all these holes saves energy.”

And it’s not only contractors who are qualified to become audi-
Getting Trained: There are a few avenues for getting certified. Building Performance Institute (BPI), the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) and the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) all offer auditor training. BPI offers certification in green auditing with the completion of a field test and a 100-question written exam. Once certified, BPI auditors “conduct blower-door tests, combustion appliance inspection and repair, air-quality testing including carbon monoxide detection, duct testing and airflow testing.”

Edward Smyth, director of KEMA Services, an energy consulting company, drew on his previous experience when seeking AEE certification. “I had spent two years doing lighting efficiency projects for an electrical contracting firm,” he says. “These helped offset the challenge of being less knowledgeable with some of the other technologies required in the exam.” To gain certification from AEE, test takers must first acquire Certified Energy Auditor (CEA) accreditation. Those looking for CEA membership must complete an auditing seminar along with an intense four-hour written exam.

Would-be auditors becoming certified via RESNET do not have to go through training before taking the exam, but it’s highly recommended. The typical RESNET certified course lasts one week, and training includes both in-class and field experience. The RESNET exam itself is a two-hour, 50-question commitment, and test takers must also perform at least two energy ratings.

Greener Still: Those looking for a “more green and sustainability-focused option,” says Brabon, might opt for LEED certification instead. The Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) administers the exam. In order to be able to take the exam, the GBCI requires one of the following: experience in a LEED-registered project, employment in a sustainable field of work or the completion of an education program that addresses green building principles.

Certified Energy Manager Tom McLam advises: “Know what sections you are going to take, tag all the sections in the books, know how to convert oil to gas, [and be able to] money problems ahead of time.” With LEED Green Associate certification, members are required to complete 15 hours of continuing education each year. Classes can be taken online.

With a growing number of homes and businesses looking for greater energy efficiency, the demand for green auditors is growing too. But the job provides more than just a good income. Says Anthony Sotire, president of consulting company Energy Smart Solutions: “I find conducting green audits rewarding. The most challenging part is helping the customer understand how important and valuable this whole process is to them—for their hotels, businesses, homes, safety and the chance to save money and energy.”

Consider green auditing training for at least one member of your staff!


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FINAL WORDS . . . Our land is everything to us . . . I will tell you one of the things we remember on our land. We remember that our grandfathers paid for it—with their lives.

John Wooden