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GREENING NEWSLETTER

HOW TO BUILD A GREENER CITY

Can cities be part of the environmental solution instead of part of the problem? The question isn't an idle one. Urban populations around the world are expected to soar in the next 20 years, to five billion from more than three billion today. If the current rate of urbanization holds steady, cities will account for nearly three-quarters of the world's energy demand by 2030.

It wasn't long ago that the idea of using “green” and “city” in the same sentence seemed absurd. Cities were considered a blight on the environment: energy-hogging, pollution-spewing, garbage-producing environmental hellholes. But in recent years, they've begun to be seen as models of green virtue. City dwellers tend to walk more and drive less than their suburban counterparts and dense urban development encourages transit use. Apartment living generally means lower per-household energy use. Building on these strengths, planners and developers are devising innovative solutions to meet urbanites' energy, water, transportation and sanitation needs.

Some improvements are fairly easy, such as switching to energy-efficient LED lighting in buildings and streetlights, or setting aside bike lanes and widening sidewalks to encourage alternatives to driving. Others are more ambitious, requiring new construction or even an extensive rebuilding of city infrastructure—consider what is needed to add a second set of pipes for a water-reuse system. Some of the most ambitious projects—and the greatest source of innovative ideas—are the dozens of “eco-city” developments in the works or on drawing boards around the world. But green initiatives aren't just found on blueprints for new cities. Chicago, for example, has about 350 green-roof projects covering more than 4.5 million square feet. So, how can cities—old or new—take green to a new level? Here's a look at some of the ways.

DISTRICT HEATING: In a typical office building, heating and cooling account for nearly two-thirds of total energy use. So an alternative to traditional electricity or natural-gas HVAC systems can go a long way toward making cities greener. One solution: tapping the excess heat produced by nearby utilities or industry. A network of pipes distributes the heat, which can be used for hot water, space heating and in absorption chillers to provide air conditioning in the summer. These district heating systems are considerably more efficient—capturing up to 90% of the available energy—than in-building boilers. And they can tap any number of heat sources, including high-efficiency natural-gas turbines, large-scale solar thermal systems, biomass incinerators or furnaces in a steel mill. Common in Europe, high-efficiency district heating systems are being used in South Korea's Songdo IBD and are in the plans for other eco-city developments.



MICRO WIND TURBINES: The giant windmills that dot the countryside aren't suitable for cities, where vibrations can rattle windows and the noise would be annoying. So developers

are turning to microturbines. These small generators sit atop commercial or residential buildings and are designed to take advantage of the quirks of big-city wind patterns—lots of turbulence and frequent, sudden shifts in direction. The turbines are generally small, rated at one to three kilowatts each. But when installed in arrays and combined with high-efficiency solar panels, they can generate a large share of a building's energy needs, especially when the structure is equipped with a full set of energy-saving features. A handful of companies provide micro wind systems around the world, and the devices, while more expensive per kilowatt than bigger systems, have been installed at scores of locations, including PepsiCo Inc.'s Chicago office building.

PUMPED HYDRO STORAGE/MICRO HYDROPOWER: Wind and solar power are notoriously fickle, producing more power than needed at some times and less than needed at others. A city that wants to rely on such intermittent sources needs to find a way to bank that power. One technique: pumped hydroelectric storage. When wind or solar power is plentiful, electricity is used to pump water to an upper reservoir. Later, when power is needed, the water is allowed to flow downhill, turning turbines in the process. (The lakes have the added benefit as open-space landscaping.) Large-scale pumped-hydro systems are increasingly used for storing energy, and many isolated towns rely on small-scale micro hydro plants to generate electricity. Adding a pumped-storage capability isn't technically difficult, but it's expensive, especially on a small scale, and current technology generally requires a large “drop,” or change in elevation to produce much power—though companies are working on lower-flow hydro turbines that can work in more level settings.

WALKING AND BIKING: When it comes to transportation, dense urban areas like Manhattan already have an advantage over suburbs: By packing people, jobs and services close together, they reduce the need for many car trips and provide the density to support bus and transit services. Green-city planners do even more, designing streets so that walking is safe, convenient and interesting—with wide sidewalks, landscaping and abundant crosswalks—and providing separate designated bicycle lanes. Songdo's 1,500 acres are designed so that most shops, parks and transit stops can be reached in less than a 15-minute walk, and the city also has a 15-mile network of bike lanes.

PERSONAL RAPID TRANSIT: Not every urban trip can be made on foot, bicycle or public transit. Cities can encourage greener auto choices by providing electric-vehicle charging stations in parking garages. A futuristic solution: personal rapid transit, or PRT—pod-like, self-powered vehicles that can carry as many as six passengers. The vehicles can travel along dedicated roadways, like an automated airport transit system, or on streets equipped with buried magnets. There are no fixed schedules or routes; passengers pick their destinations, and a central computer guides the car



without intermediate stops. Although still a novelty, PRTs are operating at Heathrow International Airport near London and at the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology in Masdar City, an eco-city development in Abu Dhabi. Masdar, however, has put on hold plans to deploy the pod cars throughout the entire planned two-square-mile development.

PNEUMATIC GARBAGE COLLECTION: Even the greenest cities produce lots of garbage, which creates two problems: collecting the trash and getting rid of it. On the collection side, a centralized waste system, using an underground network of pneumatic tubes, can replace the fleets of trucks that block traffic, tear up streets and burn fossil fuels. The tubes can collect garbage from both households and outdoor trash bins and carry it to a centralized collection and sorting facility. Though some systems handle only food waste, others are set up to handle separate streams for paper and other recyclable trash. The systems are used in scores of cities



world-wide; a pneumatic trash-collection system on New York's Roosevelt Island has been in operation since 1975.

WASTE TO RESOURCES: Getting to zero waste is as important to cities as getting to zero carbon. This doesn't mean just encouraging residents to recycle—cities also can deploy technologies to tap the energy and other valuable resources buried in the trash. Advanced anaerobic digesters process organic garbage waste and the sludge left over from treating wastewater to produce biogas, which can be burned for energy; more common in Europe, the technology is just being deployed in the US for handling municipal garbage. High-temperature plasma-arc gasifiers can consume nearly the entire waste stream, making a synthetic gas that is burned to produce electricity; the leftover slag can be used in building materials. One novel approach under consideration by the PlanIT Valley project, an eco-city development planned for northern Portugal: Aluminum cans are processed with water and energy, producing aluminum oxide and hydrogen, which can then be used to power fuel cells. But because aluminum oxide requires tremendous energy to make aluminum, it may be more economically feasible just to recycle aluminum containers.

GREEN ROOFS: Rooftops, which take up a fifth of urban surface area, can be used to support solar panels or wind turbines, but they're otherwise underutilized. Covering the tops of buildings with grasses, shrubs and other plants can deliver a host of benefits. Though often more costly than traditional coverings, green roofs can provide insulation and trim a building's heating and cooling needs. They absorb rainwater, reducing the load on storm-water systems, and filter what water does run off so it can be used for many domestic needs. They also filter air pollutants.



Totty, Michael, "How to Build a Greener City," The Wall Street Journal, September 12, 2011

How Sustainability is Driving Employee Engagement and the Bottom Line

It's a broadly accepted fact that engaged employees are a major benefit to businesses of all types. The Gallup organization dubbed employee engagement "a leading indicator of financial performance" and backed it up with research showing that "engaged organizations have 3.9 times the earnings per share (EPS) growth rate compared to organizations with lower

engagement in the same industry." Great statistics, but what does this have to do with sustainability?

According to a 2010 study by Hewitt and Associates, it turns out that there is a strong correlation between engagement and socially and environmentally responsible organizations. It dawned on me that perhaps these employees are more engaged because they see their job as their cause. When your job is your cause, you are naturally motivated to work hard and innovate. Since sustainability is an important cause for a lot of employees, it makes sense that the companies with world-class sustainability programs also have higher engagement scores.

So, if employee engagement is a top business priority and sustainability programs are a way to drive better engagement, there is a clear imperative to make sustainability a part of the work experience. The question is: How? There are a number of innovative ways that companies are engaging their employees into their sustainability and CSR programs. Following are a few examples:

GREEN TEAMS: These are groups of employee volunteers that work together to improve the environment at work and the local community. Mostly, these groups focus on greening the work environment but increasingly these groups are taking on bigger challenges and responsibilities to the point where green teams are becoming a recognized organizational structure at some companies. Company examples include:

- **Outreach to customers:** The eBay green team started in 2007 as a grassroots effort to green the workplace. They went from eliminating Styrofoam cups to prompting eBay to build a large solar array. Then they had an epiphany: involve their customers. In just six weeks, the Green Team was 100,000 members strong, and now is pushing 225,000. The e-Bay team is harnessing the power of their online community to make the world smarter and greener.

- **Dumpster days:** In an effort to educate employees about waste reduction, the employees at North Carolina-based Burt's Bees flipped over their dumpsters in the parking lot and had employees separate out the recyclable items. Trash destined for the landfill was divided into two categories—items that should have been recycled but were not, things that should be recycled and garbage. With about five tons of stockpiled trash dumped onto the parking lot, employees donned Hazmat suits and dove in to find out what they could dig up. They saved approximately 2.8 tons of trash from landfills immediately, and had a lasting impact of a 50% cut in waste, saving the company \$25,000 per year.

- **Biofeedback for buildings:** At AMD, our new Lone Star campus is LEED Gold certified. While this certification means that the design features are amongst the greenest in the country, it does not guarantee that the people working in the building are always mindful of the environment. The AMD green team recently got a new and powerful tool to manage onsite energy use: Smart-e-building. This technology provides real-time feedback on the energy used in our offices. Armed with this technology, the AMD green team is planning to host an "energy night out" to find out which equipment is left on when people leave the office.

BEYOND THE GREEN TEAM: When working to engage your employees, there are a range of causes that may appeal to them. Below are a few ideas that may appeal to the altruistic of causes of your employees:

• **Skills-based volunteering:** The concept behind skills-based volunteering is to match the employee's skill set and/or development needs to a volunteer opportunity. This is the idea at the heart of the success of AMD's community corps program, which racked up more volunteer hours than we have employees last year.

• **Personal sustainability plans:** Walmart, the world's largest company with more than 2 million employees, offers each employee the opportunity to develop their own goals in a personal sustainability plan. Its global program, My Sustainability Plan (MSP), allows every associate to choose their own sustainability goals and track their progress.

• **Micro-volunteering:** The No. 1 reason people do not volunteer for a cause while at work is they do not have enough time. It turns out that most people do have enough time to volunteer, but it is cut up into small chunks. A company called sparked.com has figured out a way to take advantage of these smaller chunks of time with online volunteering that matches employees' skills with nonprofit needs. Their program has been described as "crowdsourcing for the common good."

Engaging employees in sustainability is a fast growing trend with significant business benefits. Not only will the employees who get involved help others, but by working on their cause as part of their day job, they will provide benefits to the bottom line.

Mohin, Tim, "How Sustainability is Driving Employee Engagement and the Bottom Line," greenbiz.com, September 29, 2011

Minibars: Automation boosts ROI

Minibars have long been a revenue-generating staple in many hotel guestrooms, and new technology gives hoteliers brand new opportunities for increasing return on investment. "The whole market has shifted to automation, since the demand for hassle-free operation has really dominated the industry for the last three or four years," said Walt Strasser, EVP of Minibar Systems. "We have introduced features like software automation, including automatic reconciling. We've even automated with some chains' guest entitlement programs, putting intelligence into the software to run the minibar automatically."

Minibar Systems' Smart Cube reduces the amount of space needed to install a minibar, while allowing hoteliers to network the devices into their property-management system. "Smart Cube is next-generation because of its open-shelf technology and use of infrared sensors," Strasser said. "Each product sits on individual infrared sensors, so there's nothing mechanical. We built all this with completely networked intelligence that keeps inventory, tracks guest use and helps inform staff members." This lets hoteliers better manage labor costs and keep tighter control of minibar inventory. It also eliminates the need for costly cabling from room to room.



"Automation reduces labor costs to as little as possible, because where hotels had four staff members they now have one," Strasser said. "There are also other intangible service benefits, like not having to post charges after a guest's check-out." Other vendors offer systems that can even keep track of minibar inventory during an electrical or Internet outage.

"We've installed Zigbee wireless minibars in many hotels, with the capability so that you don't have to deal with a third-party network," said Roger Abram, president of Innovative Hospital-

ity Concepts. "It's a self-standing system in the event of a power failure, so your charges are still coming in and you can perform every function. "The main thing we've been focusing on for the last two years is design and technology," Roger continued. "Minibars are kind of a boring product because they look like a box with little appeal in some cases. So we're integrating the minibar with overall guestroom design."

While energy efficiency and connectivity have been available in the minibar space for a few years, new options give hoteliers the option of reducing their minibar's in-room footprint. "One of the most exciting bars we'll be rolling out is the Flat eFridge that hangs on a wall and is only 9 inches deep," Abram said. "It is elegant, and the first unit in the industry that has such short depth." The Flat eFridge can be mounted on a wall or can stand free in a guestroom, while being customized to match the look of a property's décor. It features fully automated posting of charges and a computerized energy-savings system that can reduce the energy use of a unit in a vacant room.



"What changed was establishing an open architecture in the bar," Abram said. "You remove the obstacle between the guest and the product. Now the guest can touch and feel the product, and they have a grace period before they're charged. In terms of guest utilization, you want to make the bar very accessible, similar to a guest opening his refrigerator at home."

"Our units today are all certified green and can be recycled, because we manufacture for the world," Strasser said. "We make our products for the European Union, and they are way ahead of the US in terms of restrictions on what products and materials can be used." Europe has more stringent restrictions on energy use than the US, so an environmentally conscious hotelier may want to look overseas for their minibar vendor.

Sheivachman, Andrew, "Minibars: Automation boosts ROI," Hotel and Motel Management, September 1, 2011

How a Passive Building Aggressively Saves Energy

Silicon Valley is well known for its exciting new technology. John Suppes, founder and president of Clarum Homes has been shattering energy efficiency records while appealing to the demanding Silicon Valley executives who are his primary customers. His most recent development is the first certified passive house on the San Francisco Peninsula that realizes a 90% improvement in energy efficiency compared to a standard home.

Why Green: Suppes shared more about his firm's mission. "First and foremost, it is a commitment to the environment," he said. Suppes has sought out leading edge building techniques to ensure that the homes his firm builds require a small amount of natural resources to operate.



In 2002, Suppes was an early adopter of an integrated building systems approach that is supported by the National Renewable Energy Lab research. NREL's goal is to share research on building homes that require minimal or "near zero" energy.

The Next Evolutionary Step: "Passive" Homes: Most

recently Clarum Homes built a certified Passive House in Menlo Park, CA. A “passive” house is named to contrast with the traditional home that uses “active” mechanical systems to heat and cool the home. In comparison, a passive house is designed to rely very little on mechanical systems and uses non-mechanical or passive methods such as insulation and site orientation to maintain comfortable living conditions to reduce energy use by 90%.

A passive house requires strict compliance to a set of performance standards. To be certified as passive, the building shell must be virtually airtight and pass a blow test that measures how much air leakage. Suppes explained that a traditional



home has hundreds of small leaks, even with the door locked, the windows closed, caulking in-place, and insulation that meets current building codes. The Department of Energy estimates that 25 to 30% of a home’s heating or cooling energy is lost due to

leaks. A well-insulated Energy Star house will experience 10 times more leakage than a passive house.

The passive house standard also specifies aggressive energy goals for heating / cooling and total energy use to cover appliances, lighting and other homeowner electronics. Compared to the most popular green construction methods, LEED and Energy Star, the passive house uses a whopping 80+% less energy. Clarum exceeded the air tightness test by 65%.

Pro-Active Design Beats the Brute Force “Active” House:

To achieve this high level of energy performance, the first step is design. Modeling software was used to design the energy measures appropriate for the house and its site. Building orientation is the first consideration. Solar gain through windows is used in winter to warm the house, but solar gain in summer is avoided by limiting windows with a southern exposure. The next step is to create an airtight barrier to prevent cold air from getting in and warm air leaking out on a cold day. The reverse process holds for a hot day. Once the house has stabilized to a comfortable temperature it tends to stay that way.

Suppes insulates floor, walls and roof to the extreme—at least 50% more than California’s strong building code specifies.

The passive house used a new building material, **Structural Insulated Panels**, SIPs manufactured by Premier Building,



that provide both insulating and air-tightness properties. SIPs are made by sandwiching a rigid core of Styrofoam between two panels of wood. The SIPs were cut to order for the Clarum project. Suppes found that building with SIPs saved time, money and labor. The

framing time was cut by 40 to 50%. Waste was reduced by two-thirds.

An energy drain in any home is its windows. Suppes advised to “spend on the windows and exterior doors.” Suppes installed **double-pane windows by Serious Energy. Exterior doors and operable triple pane windows** were installed from **Gaulhofer**. He pointed out that the seal when the windows are closed is critical and hard to achieve on operable windows. The Austrian Gaulhofer windows were selected because of their five lock-points, durability and other high performance features.

The installation of materials is critical to achieve the highest level of performance. The construction team went beyond the typical visual inspection. Suppes explained, “We conducted a blow test prior to the installation of drywall and then again for certification when the house was complete. Doing the test before drywall installation helps to identify areas that need more sealing.” A sealed house without proper ventilation would be a disaster. It would be unhealthy because of the stagnant air and the build-up of condensation would provide a breeding ground for mold. The breakthrough that makes passive house design viable is its innovative **central ventilation system**, by the German firm **Zehnder**. Heat is transferred with 90% efficiency from the stale air leaving the house to fresh air entering from the outside. The outside air passes through a HEPA filter to remove any dirt, dust, pollens and particulate pollution.

Finally **low energy appliances and lighting** were used. Special consideration was given to the cooktop (conduction), clothes dryer (special condensing dryer that requires no exhaust), water heater (solar) and bathing areas (zoned hot water).

Attracting More Than Green Ideologues: To stay in business, Suppes needed to find a way to translate his environmental mission to a message that was intriguing and a product that satisfied discerning customers. Even those homeowners that share his environmental concerns still want a “normal” house and not a green experiment.

Suppes proves that environmentally friendly is homeowner friendly. Too often “environmentally friendly” is presumed by consumers to require sacrifice—fewer features, higher up-front costs, more maintenance and cramped space. Suppes presents his green product as “a home of the highest quality that never compromises its beautiful aesthetics.”



Passive House was founded in Germany and supported by the PassivHaus Institut. The designs in Europe are typically small and boxlike and thus easier to make air-tight and insulate. The Clarum passive house is a 3,300 square foot Mission Revival with a charming facade. It is relatively modest by executive standards, but it still exceeds passive house recommendations of 500 square feet maximum per person.

With the windows closed, it was as quiet as an old stone cathedral. No loud landscape blowers from the neighbors penetrated the passive house. The uniformity of temperature throughout was appreciated. I also noticed some high-tech European appliances. But most importantly the home was open and bright.

Suppes presented me with technical information on how the house was engineered and built. One decision on aesthetics versus performance was the front door. Suppes installed a door that provided 16% less performance than a more robust but plainer door. He was worried about the air tightness test, but other components made up for the more attractive Mission style front door.“

One big benefit that may not be obvious is the air quality. “The passive house is significantly healthier and more comfortable to live in,” Suppes explained. “Even with all those leaks, a traditional home does a poor job providing clean air. An EPA study found that indoor air quality is often more polluted than the outside air. In the passive house, fresh air is continually recirculated throughout the house.

With fewer mechanical systems such as traditional heating and A/C requiring maintenance, the house is low maintenance. The appliances that do require maintenance, such as the HEPA filters, are easily accessed and maintained. The HEPA filters may be washed in the sink or dishwasher.

The certified passive house required 4% more in direct construction costs compared to Clarum's already energy efficient houses.

Results: Green Is Beautiful. Suppes found that his near zero energy homes were well received even in the trough of the housing slump. His most recent project, the certified passive house, was purchased by a well-known Silicon Valley entrepreneur and venture capitalist. Suppes predicts that "all homes in the future will be built to this [near zero] energy standard."

Girrbach, Claudia, greenbiz.com/blog/2011/09/13/how-passive-building-aggressively-saves-energy, September 13, 2011

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2011 TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence

By Maria Lougaris, Castelli Hotel

Castelli Hotel, Zakynthos, Greece, received a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for 2011. We strive to offer our guests a memorable experience, and this accolade is evidence that our hard work is translating into positive traveler reviews on TripAdvisor.com.

Being recommended on TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel site with approximately 45 million reviews, is indeed an honor, and definitely influences potential guests when searching for their next holiday stay. We always hold the first, or a very close to the first position in our general area on TripAdvisor's rankings. This year we've received this recognition as well! Our team is truly honored. At the moment, we're also ranked number 1 hotel in Laganas (the general area of Agios Sostis, where we are located), with a score of 88%. Wow!

COMMUNITY RECYCLING DRIVES

How to engage your community in recycling events, and what not to do

Ellen Markel, General Manager, Holiday Inn Grand Rapids Downtown

The Holiday Inn Grand Rapids Downtown has a very important aspect of its environmental sustainability program: community involvement. In addition to focusing on the hotel's own energy and water use, and providing the greenest experience possible for guests, I also believe in turning an eye to the community at large. This means providing services that benefit the surrounding neighborhood. Events have ranged from donating a portion of sales to a nearby environmental organization to barbecuing free bratwursts on the 4th of July, but the biggest, most successful events have been community recycling days.

These events have taken shape in two forms: electronic waste recycling and Christmas tree recycling. For the first, the hotel partnered with a local recycling non-profit that agreed to pick up the materials from the hotel free of charge. A day in June was set aside, and the word was spread that everyone was welcome to bring in "anything with a plug or battery" for recycling, free of charge. The purpose of the event was to not only provide a service for the convenience of residents, but also to raise awareness about the harm of letting electronic

appliances go to the landfill. A press release was written and several local news stations picked up the story. The event was a huge success, with over 4,800 lbs. of materials collected from residents, students and even a nearby hotel.

Buoyed by the overwhelming response, the hotel decided to serve as a drop-off location for Christmas tree recycling during the following holiday season. Partnerships were again formed with local organizations, this time with a hauling company that offered to ship the trees to a local composting facility, which in turn offered to process them free of charge. The City of Grand Rapids already provided Christmas tree recycling services to residents, but their two drop-off locations were less accessible on the outskirts of town. Once again, the local news picked up the story and the event was a huge success, with over 150 trees collected.

We decided to make the e-waste recycling a bi-annual affair. A second collection day was scheduled for February and another for the following June. Unfortunately, neither came close to the level of the first with less than 1,600 pounds collected each time. February had seemed like a great time to get rid of old electronics, assuming that many had received new ones during the holidays. As it turned out, freezing winter temperatures kept most of the crowd away. June brought warmer temperatures, but a lack of news coverage meant far fewer participants.

In summary, public recycling drives are a great way to get a hotel's name out in the community for a good cause, and they often cost nothing. However, media coverage is essential, with press releases sent out weeks in advance. Residents can't participate in an activity that they don't know is going on. Time of year should also be considered, as warmer weather usually brings more involvement.

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Antibacterial Chemical Raises Safety Issues

The maker of Dial Complete hand soap says that it kills more germs than any other brand. But is it safe? That question has federal regulators, consumer advocates and soap manufacturers locked in a battle over the active ingredient in Dial Complete and many other antibacterial soaps, a chemical known as **triclosan**.

The Food and Drug Administration is reviewing the safety of the chemical, which was created more than 40 years ago as a surgical scrub for hospitals. Triclosan is now in a range of consumer products, including soaps, kitchen cutting boards and even a best-selling toothpaste, Colgate Total. It is so prevalent that a survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found the chemical present in the urine of 75% of Americans over the age of 5.

Several studies have shown that triclosan may alter hormone regulation in laboratory animals or cause antibiotic resistance, and some consumer groups and members of Congress want it banned in antiseptic products like hand soap. The FDA has already said that soap with triclosan is no more effective than washing with ordinary soap and water, a finding that manufacturers dispute.

The outcome of the federal inquiries poses a significant risk to the makers of antimicrobial and antibacterial hand soaps, which represent about half of the \$750 million market for liquid hand soaps in the US.

Richard Theiler, senior VP for research and development at

Henkel, the German-based manufacturer of Dial Complete, said there was no real evidence showing that triclosan was dangerous for humans. He also said that several recent studies had proved the effectiveness of triclosan in killing germs, and that those studies had been submitted to the federal regulators. "It has been used now in products safely for decades," Mr. Theiler said.

But as consumer groups have campaigned against triclosan, some consumer product manufacturers have removed it and substituted less controversial ingredients. Reckitt Benckiser removed triclosan from three face washes, for instance. And citing "changing consumer preferences," Colgate-Palmolive replaced triclosan with lactic acid in Palmolive Antibacterial Dish Liquid, and its Softsoap liquid hand soap has been reformulated without the chemical.

Colgate, however, continues to use triclosan in its Colgate Total toothpaste because it has been proved to fight gingivitis, a claim approved by the FDA. "The safety and efficacy of Colgate Total toothpaste is fully supported by over 70 clinical studies in over 10,000 patients," the company said in a statement.

The concern is based on recent studies about the possible health impacts of triclosan, which the FDA said, in a 23Feb10, letter to Mr. Markey, "raise valid concerns about the effect of repetitive daily human exposure to these antiseptic ingredients." Several have shown that triclosan disrupts the thyroid hormone in frogs and rats, while others have shown that triclosan alters the sex hormones of laboratory animals. Other studies have shown that triclosan can cause some bacteria to become resistant to antibiotics.

According to a lawsuit filed last year by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the FDA first proposed regulating over-the-counter topical antiseptic drug products like triclosan in 1972, but the review has never been completed. In 1978, the FDA proposed eliminating triclosan as an active ingredient in hospital scrubs and in hand soaps within a couple of years. The agency issued a similar order in 1994, but again, nothing final was authorized, the lawsuit says. The environmental group's lawsuit sought to pressure the FDA to complete its regulations of antiseptic soaps.

"A lot of people mistakenly believe that if they buy something with a chemical in it that is antibacterial that it's a plus," said Dr. Sarah Janssen, a senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council. "I think the marketing of these far outweighs the statements on FDA's website, which most people don't even go to."

Martin, Andrew, "Antibacterial Chemical Raises Safety Issues," *The New York Times*, August 19, 2011
<http://blog.enn.com/?p=1036>

Wave Bottle Made from Plastic Ocean Trash

Method, the company that used green chemistry to turn age-old concepts for making and marketing soap on their head,



has come up with another innovation that explodes a long-held idea—that the trash trapped in the North Pacific Gyre is unredeemable. Working with Envision Plastics in Southern California, Method came up with a model for collecting and upcycling some of the debris that's swirling in the currents of the gyre, a swath of ocean

covering 20 million square kilometers. By some estimates, the amount of plastic awash in the ocean is twice the size of Texas and in some areas the ratio of plastic to plankton is now 10 parts of plastic to 1 part of plankton, according to Jared Blumenfeld, the head of the EPA in the Pacific Southwest.

"We asked ourselves, 'What if we could take some of the plastic that's floating in the North Pacific Gyre and make bottles out of it?'" said Adam Lowry, who founded Method 10 years ago with business partner Eric Ryan. "Well, we did it."

The "ocean bottle" is 100% high-density polyethylene plastic, 25% of which comes from plastic from the gyre, according to a post by Lowry on the Envision Plastics website.

Method's new plastic ocean bottle is on the far left in the picture. The bottles beside it contain bits of plastic from stages in the recycling process.

Guevarra, Leslie, greenbiz.com/blog/2011/09/15/method-makes-new-recycled-plastic-bottle-garbage-sea, September 15, 2011

WELCOME KCG GREEN ENERGY!

ALLY MEMBER KCG Green Energy Consultants, LLC provides independent energy auditing and inspection services to building and property owners. KCG specializes in a variety of energy inspections and audits for commercial and industrial property owners, educational facilities and campuses, multi-family housing, apartment buildings and hotels, to identify inefficient energy usage. We identify whole-building energy consumption, through billing analysis, diagnostic testing, and building simulation modeling to measure performance and usage.



KCG provides a full range of energy consulting services and offers specific expertise in Energy Auditing/Inspections, Consulting/Energy Management Solutions, LEED Certification/Energy Star Label, Billing Analysis/Data Acquisition, Measurement and Verifications, Benchmarking Energy Usage, Sub-metering, Solar Energy and Wind Energy.

Our knowledgeable inspection team is experienced in improving the energy efficiency to conserve energy and save money. Our LEED APs, certified energy auditors and certified building analysts will assess whole building performance, set performance goals and create and implement action plans, making energy conservation a priority. KCG has audited over 1 million square feet of residential and commercial property with an average of 20% reduction in energy consumption.

Information and technology, detailed summary reports and recommendations using accurate and real time data are used to make knowledgeable decisions. To learn more, call Will Nichols, Project Manager, at 317/443-2398 or visit kcggreenenergy.com TODAY!

Food Carton Recycling

Cartons—as in milk cartons. Just trash or something that can be recycled and become sustainable? The City of Dallas has launched a new effort to add food and beverage cartons as part of its residential curbside recycling program. Dallas will be the first major city in Texas to have a carton recycling program. Cartons are recyclable! Made mainly from paper,

cartons are in demand to be recycled into new paper products.



The implementation of carton recycling in Dallas is the latest example of a national trend. In 2008, only 18% of US households had access to carton recycling programs. Today, this number has nearly doubled to almost 36%, with cities in over 40 states representing approximately 40 million households. Dallas increases these numbers by an additional 235,000 households, and joins a growing number of cities across the country such as Los Angeles, New York and Boston that have expanded their recycling programs to include cartons.

Last year, the City of Dallas recycled more than 50,000 tons of materials and is on track to recycle nearly 65,000 tons this year. Carton recycling will help the city toward their 31% diversion goal for the year. By increasing their recycling rate and coming up with innovative ways to increase waste diversion, the city saved \$1,185,260.21 of landfill space.

Soos, Andy, ENN, <http://recyclecartons.com/>, September 15, 2011

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New Japanese Wind Turbine Triples Power Output Without Increasing Size

Necessity, as we’ve all been told, can sometimes be the mother of invention. In Japan, there is a necessity for a power source that does not require fossil fuels, since they don’t have any. So the Japanese invested heavily in nuclear power,

which, at the moment, is looking like a tenuous investment given the recent Fukushima meltdown. Fortunately, they did not put all their eggs in one basket either. In fact, researchers at Kyushu University, which houses the International Institute for Carbon-Neutral Energy Research, had a hunch that the answer just might be blowing in the wind, if only they could squeeze a little more out of it than what conventional technology would allow.

That’s when they came up with the wind lens. What is a wind lens, and what does it do? What does any lens do? It focuses. Except instead of focusing light, a wind lens, which is an inward curving ring around the perimeter of the circle inscribed by the turbine’s blades as they rotate, focuses airflow, directing and accelerating the air as it enters the blade zone.

Siegel, R. P., ENN, http://www.triplepundit.com/2011/09/wind-lens/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+TriplePundit+%28Triple+Pundit%29&utm_content=Google+Reader, September 9, 2011

SUSTAINABLE CONCRETE

Concrete is the most widely used building material for residential and commercial buildings. From its humble origins in Roman times, this mixture of Portland cement, aggregate, water and chemical additives is now a \$35 billion industry in the US alone, employing over two million workers. However, when it comes to greenhouse gases, concrete is believed to be a major culprit. The construction and operation of buildings in the US accounts for about 40% of all greenhouse gas emissions. According to a new study from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), certain measures can be taken to drastically reduce and possibly eliminate the carbon footprint of new concrete buildings, and even some older ones.

The study looks at the carbon emissions produced over the entire life-cycle of a concrete building, including construction, use and demolition. It was published by the MIT Concrete Sustainability Hub, funded by the cement and concrete industries, and led by associate professor, John Ochsendorf. The two-year study is believed to be the most detailed accounting ever taken of the life-cycle of buildings, focusing on all the details like the source of raw materials and how they were transported.

The researchers found many areas of potential savings that would also cut emissions. For example, concrete is typically used for its structural properties, but could be more greatly used for its thermal properties, which could reduce a building’s energy needs. For example, pipes could be embedded in concrete floors, walls and ceilings to better insulate them. Also, buildings can be designed so that exterior concrete has direct exposure to sunlight in the winter so it can store heat, even at night.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has identified green building as the most cost-effective policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But before real reductions take place, a reliable method for quantifying emissions need to be established. According to lead author, John Ochsendorf, the MIT study provides that.

The MIT report attempts to provide a more complete approach, examining cradle-to-grave analysis for all materials that go into concrete. For example, the impact of adding fly ash (a waste product from coal combustion) was studied. They looked at the question of whether to include its transportation into the overall life-cycle analysis, because the fly ash would have had to be transported anyway. This was a common question for all

beneficial secondary use materials.

The goal of reducing life-cycle emissions from concrete buildings have been embraced by many. The American Institute of Engineers has entered into the 2030 challenge, an initiative to spur dramatic reductions in building energy use. Cities and other organizations have also agreed to the initiative which calls for a 60% reduction in emissions immediately and 100% reduction by 2030. At that point, concrete buildings will have no net energy consumption at all.

MIT Report: <http://web.mit.edu/cshub/news/pdf/MIT%20Buildings%20LCA%20Report.pdf>

Gabel, David A., "Sustainable Concrete," ENN, September 2, 2011

How to get rid of a nuisance fish: Eat it

Asian carp may be a plankton-gobbling nuisance threatening the Great lakes, but Illinois officials are hoping to change that perception one bite at a time. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources last week held a public tasting event featuring a Louisiana chef-turned-advocate to start a campaign that may lead to feeding the invasive species to the growing number of people facing hunger. Anti-hunger advocates are praising the idea of serving the carp, especially with increasing demand for food stamps.

A community dinner was held to taste as well as learn more about the fish that's better known for its ability to grow to 100 pounds, sail out of the water when startled and for a voracious appetite that could devastate the Great Lakes. If Asian carp ever reach the Great Lakes, they could decimate food supplies and starve out native species, disrupting a \$7 billion fishing industry.

The idea is to exploit Asian carp's nutritional value along with the fact that it's a good protein source, low in mercury and high in Omega 3 fatty acids. The main problem is that the fish has a bad public image.

Tareen, Sophia, Associated Press, "How to get rid of a nuisance fish: Eat It," Houston Chronicle, September 25, 2011

TURTLE SUCCESS

The number of sea turtles accidentally killed in US coastal waters has plummeted over the past 20 years, mainly due to improved designs in fishing gear, according to a new study. Researchers at Duke University Project GloBAL and Conservation International say that before the measures were intro-

duced, more than 300,000 turtles were accidentally snared, with about 70,000 being killed in the process. The number of sea turtle deaths in fisheries is now estimated to be only 4,600 each year. Among the measures that have proven successful is the use of circle hooks and dehooking equipment in longline fishing, which reduces the severity of turtle injuries. The use of turtle excluder devices in shrimp trawl nets has allowed captured sea turtles to more easily escape. The closing of fisheries during times when turtles are most likely to be present has also helped.

"Turtle success," Earthweek, Houston Chronicle, September 25, 2011

TREAT WINTER BIRDS

In spring and summer, birds feed mainly on insects in the tree canopy. But as insects get a might scarce in winter, the birds drop down to the feeders. Because birds need the kind of fat-rich protein derived from the insects of their usual diet, their winter food should include extra fatty protein in addition to the birdseed. You can buy suet cakes at bird-supply stores, or you can make them yourself.

SUET CAKES FOR THE BIRDS

2 C rendered fat
2 C nuts, dried fruits, unsweetened cereal
Jams, jellies, honeys
Cornmeal, oatmeal

Melt rendered fat and let it cool. Add nuts, dried fruits, cereal and sweets. Stir well. Form into golf ball-size balls, roll balls in cornmeal and/or oatmeal, place on a cookie sheet and freeze for one hour. Then put balls into a storage bag or bowl and return to freezer. Tuck into wire mesh suet feeder, and watch to see how long it takes birds to find it! The ratio of nut butters and rendered fat to jellies and honey should be about nine parts to one to keep the mixture from containing excessive sugar.

Caution: Suet made with rendered fat should be removed from feeders on warm days lest it become rancid and make birds sick.

Clark, Gary, "Mix a nutritious treat for winter birds," Houston Chronicle, December 11, 2010

FINAL WORDS . . .

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