PARTNER MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

As usual, this issue focuses on success stories of GHA’s Partner Members. We are sharing these very successful environmental stories with all members. You are all working very hard at being green, and it’ll be easier for all by sharing information on what has worked for some. We know you’ll love reading these stimulating, interesting and very green stories! So, we begin again . . .

CASA MADRONA’S GREENING!

Casa Madrona Hotel & Spa, Sausalito, CA, is a 63-room property on a hillside overlooking Richardson Bay that is a hodgepodge of structures dating from 1885 to the 1980’s. Weekend business is mostly high-end leisure with rooms from $300-500 a night. Monday through Thursday is both leisure and corporate. They have garnered a few environmental awards recently, including the coveted Cool California Small Business Award (coolcalifornia.org). Stefan Mühle is now General Manager after serving 10 years greening two prominent boutique hotels in San Francisco.

Renovation changes:
- Toto dual-flush toilets 1.6/0.8 gpf.
- Occupancy sensors in guest bathrooms, 2 lights.
- Low VOC indoor paints, ALLY MEMBER Benjamin Moore and benjaminmoore.com Aura brands.
- Low VOC carpet, Interface and ALLY MEMBER Shaw Hospitality Group brands, both in rolls.
- FF&E (furniture, fixtures and equipment) Custom designed by truesculptures.com to fit spaces with a timeless maritime décor since this is a boating area. Sorrentino Mariani (smfurniture.com) manufactured the furniture which they now call “The Sausalito” line.
- Bathroom counters are Caesar Stone (caesarstoneus.com/about/environment-first), 93% natural quartz aggregates with pigments and polymer resins, very durable, no water rings, manufactured in Israel.
- Bathroom shelves are handmade opaque recycled glass by gleenglass.com.
- Re-used and refurbished existing materials whenever possible, i.e., bamboo flooring was removed, refinished and replaced; historically significant fireplaces were cleaned; flues replaced.

Ongoing Operations:
- Environmentally-friendly cleaning products – blueeagle-clean.com; all-in-one product used for floors and general cleaning. orbeco.net products are used on carpet—especially to control moisture. The spa uses an autoclave sterilizer for manicure and pedicure instruments.
- In-Room recycling – viamotif.com 2-section trash and recycling receptacle.
  - Towel and bed linen reuse program – hotel signage offers knowledge as well as an option - a challenge because of the room rates. Sheets changed every 3 days or on request.
  - Bodybliss.com products used in spa are cruelty-free, biodegradable and sourced from small farmers not using chemical pesticides, etc.
  - Retail body products are packaged in recyclable bottles.
  - Bathroom tissue and facial tissue made of biodegradable, recyclable and compostable sugarcane fiber. Kimberly-Clark’s Surpass® and Kimberly-Clark’s Surpass® brands are obtained via local vendor blueribbonsupply.com.
  - Use of Goodwood products for fireplaces (see goodwood-products.com/firelogFAQs.html).

Public transport:
- Participation in commutercheck.com/Home.aspx for staff commuting.
- Several staff members carpool from San Francisco to Sausalito via the Golden Gate Bridge.
- Offers an online package to hotel guests including ferry tickets and bicycle rental.

Miscellaneous:
- Local artist consignments featured in hallways (suziebuch-holz.com/#1) and spa (studio333.info).
- Working with ericryan.com to streamline energy and utility bills. Cost is $1/mo/rm to determine bill correctness, notification of leaks or aberrations.
- Considering association with EDC Technologies (savegas.com) to lower gas consumption through monitoring hot water temperature via thermometers in boilers at about $2/mo/rm.

Here’s to making a difference! Contact Stefan at 415/332-0502 or Stefan.Muhle@metwesterra.com for further info.

SOFTER SHEETS, LESS ENERGY AT MADDENS!

Madden’s Resort on Gull Lake (287 rms, 2 fls) in Brainerd, MN, hosts thousands of visitors each year April until October. In 2009, they started using a nutekinternational.com ozone laundry system. When used in laundry wash water, ozone allows for shorter wash cycles, works best with cold water, attacks most organic soils and kills bacteria much faster than chlorine bleach. Ozone is totally biodegradable and when it completes its function, it reverts rapidly back to oxygen, leaving no chemical residues behind. And because there is no chemical residue, the laundry is much softer.

Nu Tek units that create the ozone are attached to the washers and inject ozone into each wash cycle.

BENEFITS:
- Drying time is significantly less because the laundry is cool. Natural gas and electric bills were cut by almost 9% in 2011.
- Two 100-gal hot water heaters were eliminated because the
Newly renovated green cabins at Forever Resorts’ Cedar Pass Lodge in the extraordinary region of the 244,000-acre Badlands National Park of South Dakota include features that qualify the property for LEED Gold.

- New one-bedroom cabins feature interior wall and ceiling wood paneling salvaged from Black Hills pine trees felled by beetles. The wood bears the distinctive “beetle-kill” markings on beautiful grey-streaked wood.
- The new cabins are furnished with regionally sourced handcrafted lodge-pole pine furniture felled by beetle kill.
- Furnishings and table tops by Levi Davis at lonepinepole.com were made from repurposed wood from an old grain storage structure built in the 1930s that later became the warehouse (circa 1940-50) used by Owenhouse Hardware, a company in Montana that is still in business today.
- Tempra 24 plus tankless on-demand hot-water heater with expected 50% energy savings installed in each cabin.
- Cool and heat the cabins with 20-SEER mini split energy-efficient units which are quieter than PTACs.
- 90% of the cabin structural wood-based materials are FSC-certified from dakotacraft.com.
- The decra.com roofing system (32% recycled steel) reduces energy consumption and landfill impact. It has a 50-year warranty for 120 mph wind and high impact resistance to hail.
- Windows are hurd.com dual-pane windows.
- Compact-fluorescent lighting is used throughout each cabin for energy efficiency.
- Bamboo towels will be provided for guests’ use in each cabin. They should dry quicker and last 3 times as long.
- AquaSource high efficiency 1.28 gpf WaterSense toilets.
- Modular cabins were manufactured locally over last winter inside a large warehouse which kept workers employed during the slow winter season.
- Recycling, reducing the impact on the environment and educating visitors of Cedar Pass Lodge will continue as part of the lodge’s Environmental Management System in place since 2002 called Forever Earth™.
- New cabins include custom repurposed-concrete bath slab countertops.
- New cabins have Energy Star Magnavox 32” flat-screen TVs, along with Danby refrigerators, coffee makers and microwaves.
- New cabins were built to meet LEED Gold specifications.

However, Forever Resorts chose not to apply for the LEED certification because of the time and expense required. However, the US Park Service wanted the information, so they kept track of the necessary paperwork.

Darla Cook, General Manager (605/433-5460, dcook@forever-resorts.com) would be pleased to answer questions or clarify aspects of the story.

**CEDAR PASS LODGE’S GREEN RENEWAL!**

Madden’s received the Explore Minnesota “Sustainable Tourism Award” in 2009.

Tim Schultz, Resident Manager, Madden Inn, Madden’s on Gull Lake, dir 218/855-5941, tschultz@maddens.com will be glad to respond to questions.

**TREE PLANTING WITH LOCAL VILLAGERS**

The City of Aurangabad, Maharashtra, India, was founded in 1610 AD, is a tourist hub and is also one of the fastest growing cities in the world with a population of one million plus. It is surrounded with many historic monuments, including the Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves, which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites, as well as the Baby Ka Maqbara, a memorial monument similar to the Taj Mahal.

One of the great things about Aurangabad is the presence of hills and hillocks in and around the city. These hills / hillocks are a reason for people to get out of the concrete jungle that Aurangabad has become. It is not only important that we preserve the hills, but we also must increase their green cover so that we can improve the quality of air we breathe. It is clearly recognized that sustainable tree planting cannot succeed without the active involvement of locals and without meeting the trees’ development needs.

We at the Keys Hotel The Aures are associated with the Dr. Hedgewar Trust in Aurangabad, which runs a hospital and is a healthcare not-for-profit. This trust has done water conservation work in a nearby village and on the adjacent hill. They have used the technique of continuous contour trenches (CCTs). CCTs are built around the hill at different heights. Each CCT is made to slightly slope at a particular side, so that the water flowing down the hill is retained and soil erosion is minimized. This is a great example of rainwater harvesting. The water saved / accumulated has ceased many hardships faced by the farmers, especially after monsoons.

To complement the existing work of water conservation, we joined the trust for tree planting. On the occasion of Indian Independence Day (15Aug2012), more than 1,000 trees were planted in the village and on the hill. The Keys Hotel The Aures not only paid for the sapling trees, but 18 to 20 managers and staff worked on the planting. The trees are planted giving enough distance between each other so they don’t hamper the growth of neighboring trees. The trees chosen are those found locally such as neem, sal, custard apple, etc.

The neem tree is a fast-growing evergreen tree relatively unknown in the US, a cornerstone of the ancient Ayurvedic healthcare system and is one of the most widely used medicinal herbs in the world. In its native India and tropical countries around the globe, neem is called the “village pharmacy” for its incredible healing properties.

Sal is one of the most important sources of hardwood timber in India, and the dry leaves of sal are a major source for the production of leaf plates and leaf bowls. The used leaves/plates are readily eaten by goats and cattle that roam the streets freely. The tree has therefore protected northern India from a
flood of Styrofoam and plastic plates that would have caused tremendous pollution.

In India the custard apple tree is cultivated, runs wild in many areas though nowhere is particularly esteemed. A leaf decoction may be given as a vermifuge. Crushed leaves or a paste of the fruit flesh may be poulticed on boils, abscesses and ulcers. The unripe fruit is rich in tannin; if dried, pulverized and employed against diarrhea and dysentery. The bark is very astringent and the decoction is taken as a tonic and also as a remedy for diarrhea and dysentery.

Any tree planting drive will not be successful if the trees are not nurtured by watering, so local villagers are committed to nurture and care for the young trees. Two major challenges facing us are cattle grazing and awareness. The first one is tackled by planting only those trees which cattle do not care to consume. The Hedgewar Trust has taken up the task of creating awareness among the locals of the importance of water conservation and tree planting. Henceforth, Keys Hotel The Aures shall celebrate August 15th every year as a Tree Planting day.

Satyajit Kotwal, Operations Manager, Keys Hotel The Aures, satyajit.kotwal@keyshotels.com, will be pleased to respond to your e-mails.

Farm to Fork & Trawl to Table at Inn by the Sea

61-room Inn by the Sea is located in Cape Elizabeth on sandy Crescent Beach, Maine’s premier beach destination. The luxurious property has both Maine DEP Green Lodging and Silver LEED® certifications, and was selected as one of the 2012 Top 50 US Resorts by Travel & Leisure.

The argument over whether touting sustainable initiatives in business really helps the bottom line continues. Inn by the Sea has had many sustainable initiatives in place for over a decade, and has been successful at marketing the property as both a luxury and a green hotel. Success has come by creating programs that engage the guest in the inn’s environmental message through fun, food, whimsy and education.

These programs speak volumes about the inn’s commitment to sustainability without being boring or preachy. Unless incredibly eco-minded, most people don’t want to hear about businesses’ initiatives around water, waste, energy and chemicals. But happily, the same is not true when it comes to food—a good story around food that’s local creates a unique and memorable dining experience, and adds great value to a guest stay.

Letting the guest in on a story about the fungi forager who brings locally foraged mushrooms or fiddleheads to your menu, or on the Nubian goats at a neighboring farm that produce the chevre for your velvety cheese cake just makes food taste better. (See menus at innbythesea.com/sea_glass_dining_new/menus/)

Celebrating food that is local, and exposing a sense of your hotel’s community, with support for local vendors and growers, is an important part of sustainability. Giving credit to, and adding the names of the farms, foragers, fishermen and vendors to restaurant menus not only adds color and local interest while supporting your community, but assures guests that your food is fresh and nutritious.

Inn by the Sea’s Executive Chef, Mitchell Kaldrovich, and Rauni Kew, their PR and Green Program Manager, served on the Gulf of Maine Research Institute’s (GMRI) steering committee to develop a collaborative effort with local fishermen and area chefs to raise consumer awareness around lesser known and lesser valued seafood. The goal of this GMRI restaurant program, Out of the Blue, is to improve the market for a greater diversity of seafood, give overfished populations a break, help local fishermen get better dock prices for species that are abundant and to support a sustainable seafood industry in Maine.

You won’t find Cod or Haddock on the menu in Sea Glass restaurant at Inn by the Sea. Chef Kaldrovich only serves up delectable, but lesser known, underutilized seafood in support of Out of the Blue. Guests not only enjoy the delicious menu offerings, but love hearing about the collaboration between fishermen, chefs and research in support of a sustainable seafood industry in Maine.

Reaching out to local agencies and collaborating with competitors can benefit an entire community and have a larger impact on environmental issues than individual initiatives. Out of the Blue has been successful at bringing attention to fish that are abundant in the Gulf of Maine, but previously had little demand, and it has proved to be a delectably compelling and successful “fish story” for guests at Inn by the Sea.

Rauni would be pleased to respond to your questions via rkew@innbythesea.com, 207/799-3134 or C 207/602-8500.

CASTELLI HOTEL’S FERTILIZER

Our optimistic success story has to do with our fertilizer, which we use for the hotel grounds’ needs.

We are situated at beautiful Zakynthos, in the Ionian Sea of Greece; a green paradise, with very hot weather for about 6 months, and very rainy winters. Our hotel’s grounds are approximately 12,000 square meters (3 acres), a large part of which are gardens—the botanical garden, our vegetable farm, lemon trees and olive groves.

The island’s characteristics reflect instantly a holiday paradise. At the same time, we believe our guests will also enjoy learning more about the local community, thus adding more color to their precious leisure time—taking walks around the scenic villages, visiting the Castelli farm and getting acquainted with Greek nature’s wealth, taste the fresh fruit, pick olives with our team and see how the local pure extra-virgin olive oil is produced.

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

713/789-8889, Fax 713/789-9786
First, a few words about our buffet breakfast. It features our home-made breakfast cake, baked with our own fresh, pure ingredients—pure extra-virgin olive oil, eggs from our farm, oranges/grapefruit from the garden.

The olive groves that surround the hotel are not sprayed with toxic chemicals, and the pure virgin olive oil produced is used for baking the home-made cake served at breakfast, and also for salads at the pool snack bar. In other words, our gardens’ perfect status is a high priority, and essential for the hotel guests’ richer experience. Gardening demands a great deal of laborious hours and has many costs, one of which is fertilizer.

Until last year, the local fertilizer supplier served our needs, but since April, 2011, our composter is creating our fertilizer! We mostly recycled materials we already had on the premises to build the composter, so the cost was very low. All food-preparation staff are involved, so now all vegetable waste is used to create our organic fertilizer. In just 6 months, we produced more than 10 sacks of fertilizer—more than enough for last autumn’s needs. Since each 50 kg (110 lb) sack would have cost about €50 ($62.50), it is a big achievement!

Once the waste is separated and passed to the gardener, the extra time needed is very little. We are actually using waste to create something essential, and we produce this fertilizer as pure as possible, which is very difficult to find in the market.

At the same time our waste volume is reduced, so cleaning ladies need less time to carry the waste to the bins, and fewer plastic bags are used, so more benefits arrive at the same time! This year we have already increased our fertilizer production—great practice of reusing and recycling! And our guests thoroughly embrace it, which makes us even more confident for greater results in the future!

As Castelli celebrates 20 years in business, we also proudly celebrate the award of our third Green Key eco-label awarded by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FFE) through The Greek Society for the Protection of Nature (esepp.gr). The Green Key committee evaluates both green management and education actions, taking into consideration sectors such as water and energy-saving policies, recycling and also how the guests and staff are involved in the greening. Castelli also celebrates its second Gold Travelife.org Award (2012) which acknowledges our very high commitment to sustainability.

Contact Maria Lougaris, Managing Director, at info@castellihotel.com for more information on this exciting project.

**COMFORT INN & SUITES BOSTON/LOGAN INTL. AIRPORT GREENS!**

Built as an environmentally-friendly hotel, the 208-room, 8-floor Comfort Inn and Suites composts leftovers food. In 2005, the property began composting with savethatsstuff.com. A compost collection drop hole, beautifully aligned with recycling and trash collection drops, is provided in a dining area counter for guests and employees to discard unwanted food. In addition to table scraps, all plates, cups and flatware are compostable barebysolo.com products, and can be tossed into the same drop hole. The compost is transported to Brick End Farms, a large composting facility, where it decomposes, and is sold under the “KidzBKidz” brand at Whole Foods.

Diverting as much waste as possible from the trash by composting and recycling is the goal. In 2011, the Boston airport property composted 18 tons of food waste and tableware. Recycling accounts for 28% of total property waste by weight while composting diverts 11% more.

Among the first initiatives at the Comfort Inn and Suites were amenity dispensers which save roughly $40,000 a year. Both the dispensers and liquids are the products of dispenseramenities.com, and the shampoo and shower gels are “WindRiver” Salon products. “WindRiver” products are environmentally-friendly, biodegradable and are purchased in five-gallon containers. The dispensers are designed to provide a sufficient amount of shampoo or soap, and the cost is only for product used. Individual amenity bottles always result in wasted products. Each unit is locked, preventing tampering. Dispensers are refilled daily. To fill the dispensers, housekeepers use refillable squirt bottles that are replenished from a larger bulk supply.

Megan Falkenberry, Environmental Program Coordinator (mfalkenberry@ecological-solutions.net, 781/485-3600) may be contacted for further information.

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**SHOWER FIXTURES’ WATER USAGE**

by Patricia Griffin, President, GHA

When choosing shower plumbing fixtures, a choice must be made between one- and two-handle fixtures when building new or refurbishing hotel baths and showers. Probably the most common shower fixture in US hotels today is the one-handle version. It’s true that one-handle fixtures may make it slightly easier to find the water temperature preferred. However, the one-handle shower fixture generally allows no choice of water pressure. The one-handle fixture is pulling full water pressure at all times, and obviously uses much more water than a two-handle version. The two-handle fixture means we can dial in the exact water temperature we want, and we can also dial in the water pressure preferred. Because the two-handle version allows us to dial in the water pressure preferred, it means we can choose a very soft rain-like version, a hammer-pounding pressure or anything in between. We can also choose to use less water with a two-handle version, which is perfection for some of us.

Following are the steps and the results of a GHA test using Waterpik 2.5 gpm showerheads with one-handle and two-handle fixtures. After water reached approximately the same temperature in each shower, we placed a 5-gallon bucket under the showerhead and let in run for 15 seconds. We measured the water using a gallon jug and measuring cups. After we found the volume of water for 15 seconds, we multiplied that number times four to find the gallons-per-minute rate of each shower. Then we multiplied times the number of minutes to
find the volume of water that would be used for longer showers or a quantity of 10-minute showers. As you can see, the difference is significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE-handle shower fixture</th>
<th>TWO-handle shower fixture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>0.9063 gal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 min</td>
<td>5.4375 gal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>9.0625 gal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>13.5938 gal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**100 10-minute showers**

- 2,093.75 gal
- 906.3 gal

**1,000 10-minute showers**

- 209,375 gal
- 90,630 gal

We at “Green” Hotels Association® have never seen the difference in water use of these fixtures documented, but we know the difference is definitely significant enough that hoteliers and innkeepers need to be aware of the matter when choosing shower and bath fixtures.

A call to a local plumbing house revealed that both Moen (Moen) and Delta (17 Series) offer one-handle shower fixtures that include a second smaller handle which controls water pressure. Both may need to be special ordered and are priced at $250-350—pricing generally too high for most properties.

**HOWDY Green Express Direct!**

Finding unique products that lower utility costs and increase recycling efforts is the goal of ALLY MEMBER Green Express Direct. While that may sound a bit boring, in the search they have found some pretty special things that support eco-friendly hotels. One of the latest finds is the Kitchen Cultivator—the size of a dishwasher, this hydroponic device grows fresh herbs and micro greens for professional kitchens at a fraction of the cost of buying them from growers. Extremely simple to use and good looking, this new product will be a boon to “green” hotels with dining customers.

Another novel product line from Green Express Direct is their wireless lighting and power controls. Specifically designed for the hospitality industry, wireless key card devices turn the power on in guestrooms only when the key card is inserted. Now rooms can be cooled and lit only when the room is occupied by the guest. These devices are easy to install as retrofits and will dramatically lower your hotel’s power consumption.

Green Express Direct keeps their own costs low by committing most of their advertising to electronic means, thus keeping waste out of the landfill. Their electronic catalog grows every day with innovative products that will help your “green” hotel save money by reducing utility and water bills and aid in your recycling and other green projects. They even offer a free “How-to-Guide to Business Recycling” at greenexpressdirect.com/howtguide.tpl. Download yours today, and view their complete product line at GreenExpressDirect.com or call 877/433-7763 TODAY!

**DESIGNING NEW TOILETS**

These aren’t your typical loos. One uses microwave energy to transform human waste into electricity. Another captures urine and uses it for flushing. And still another turns excrement into charcoal. They are part of a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation competition to reinvent the toilet for the 2.5 billion people around the world who don’t have access to modern sanitation.

Scientists from around the world have taken up the challenge, and the foundation announced some projects recently that will be getting more money to take their ideas from the lab to cities. There, local entrepreneurs will use the new technology to turn pollution into cash. “We couldn’t be happier with the response that we’ve gotten,” Bill Gates said. To pass the foundation’s threshold for the world’s next toilet, it must operate without running water, electricity or a septic system, not discharge pollutants, preferably capture energy or other resources and operate at a cost of 5 cents a day.

The United Nations estimates disease caused by unsafe sanitation results in about half the hospitalizations in the developing world. About 1.5 million children die each year from diarrheal disease. Scientists believe most of these deaths could be prevented with proper sanitation, along with safe drinking water and improved hygiene.

The foundation expects to field test its first prototypes within the next three years. Most of the prototypes turn solid waste into energy. This is both a practical and pragmatic solution to the solid waste puzzle. Many recycle waste into other usable substances such as animal feed, water for irrigation or even just energy and water to run their own systems. Some, like the winning project from Caltech, use chemistry and engineering to completely transform the waste.

Clement Cid, a Caltech grad student from Trouillas, France, said it has been intellectually rewarding to work with scientists from a variety of specialties. “You can come up with great ideas,” he said, adding that the toilet fair offered more opportunities for idea sharing.

Other projects on display were not so high-tech, including one from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine that sends black soldier fly larvae inside latrines and even home toilets to process waste, resulting in high quality, environmentally friendly animal feed at a cost of a penny a day.

The Gates’ toilet focus started just about a year ago, and including recent grants, $370 million in foundation dollars have been committed to reinventing the toilet. Reinventing the toilet has the potential to improve lives as well as the environment. Flush toilets waste tons of potable drinking water each year, fail to recapture reusable resources like the potential energy in solid waste and are simply impractical in so many places. Gates predicted that “some of these designs would also be solutions for rich and middle-income countries.”

**TOBACCO LABELING IN AUSTRALIA**

Australia’s plain packaging act says that tobacco products must be in plain packaging without logos and bear graphic health warnings as of December 1. Australia is the first nation in the world to require “plain packaging” for tobacco. Only the brand and variant name will differ against a drab, dark-color background. Other government initiatives against tobacco have included a 25% excise in 2010, restrictions on Internet advertising, and more than $85 million in anti-smoking...
social marketing campaigns. The Australian law requires cigarettes to be sold with no company logos and with the same font for all brands on a dark brown background. Graphic health warnings will cover 90% of the back of the packaging and 70% of the front.

According to the World Health Organization, tobacco kills nearly 6 million people a year, 10% of them from secondhand smoke exposure. The WHO says the death toll could rise to more than 8 million a year by 2030 without urgent action.

“Our biggest concern is the effect plain packaging will have on illicit trade,” Stewart said. “Plain packaging will make Australia a magnet for the growing black market in tobacco, which already costs the Australian Government nearly $1 billion per year in lost revenue.”

“It means that governments are pretty much free to do what they feel is necessary to protect their population from tobacco marketing, including marketing on packages. In other words, it’s a blow for public health.”

Last year the United States unveiled nine graphic health warning labels that must cover half the area of cigarette packages by this September, joining 41 other countries that mandate pictorial warnings.

Tobacco use is the nation’s leading preventable cause of death, responsible for about one in five deaths—or 443,000—a year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Additionally, cigarette smoking is responsible for $96 billion in direct medical costs and $97 billion in lost productivity each year, according to the US government.

In a report last year, the CDC found in a 14-nation study that graphic health warnings on cigarette packages have led to a “substantial” number of smokers to consider quitting. The World Health Organization says 19 countries meet the “best practice for pictorial warnings,” which include warnings in the local language and which must cover at least half of cigarette packages. Less than 11% of the world’s population is protected by comprehensive national smoke-free laws, it says.

A monarch expert cautioned that “predatory individual tree removal (by individuals and small groups of loggers) is largely undetectable” by studying aerial and satellite images.

He said he had seen forest degradation during visits to the reserve in 2010 and 2012, and said “until the government establishes a system of close and continuous year-round, on-the-ground monitoring and official guarding, this ongoing and progressive degradation will continue.”

The number of monarch butterflies wintering in Mexico dropped 28% this year, according to a March report, a decline some experts attribute to drought in areas of the US and Canada where the butterflies breed and begin their migration south.

COMPANIES EMBRACING SUSTAINABILITY
GAIN MORE THAN THOSE THAT DON’T
“Embracer” companies making sustainability a critical topic of importance are benefiting more, new report finds.

While some businesses are putting sustainability high on their corporate agenda, others are going at it in pieces, focusing more narrowly on “energy cost savings, material efficiency, and risk mitigation,” according to a new study.

The MIT Sloan Management Review and The Boston Consulting Group have released their 2nd annual Sustainability & Innovation Global Executive Study which reveals a significant divide in the world of “sustainable business.” And which group do you think is doing better?

Well, yes, you read the headline, turns out the “embracers,” as the researchers termed businesses in the first group, the folks who care more about the endangered plants and animals of the world (not to mention humanity), are doing better. But the “cautious adopters” (members of the second group) are, for the most part, looking to catch up. The whole business world is now leaning towards the way of the embracers, the study found.

Embracer companies are now creating, in the real world, the definition of a holistically green business. “The report identifies seven specific practices exhibited by embracer companies, which together begin to define sustainability-driven management,” MIT Sloan Management Review notes.

LOGGING STOPPED IN MEXICO RESERVE FOR MONARCHS
Illegal logging has practically been eliminated in the western Mexico wintering grounds of the monarch butterfly. Mexican officials now hope to use the successful program of anti-logging patrols and payments to rural residents to solve other forestry conflicts throughout the country. The government, environmental groups and private donors have spent millions of dollars to get residents of forest communities in the butterfly reserve to plant trees and start eco-tourism businesses to benefit from widespread fascination with the monarchs yearly multi-generational migration through Canada, the US and Mexico. They hope a similar solution can work for areas where illegal logging has caused armed conflicts and killings.

It is the first time that logging has not been found in detectable amounts since the mountaintop forests west of Mexico City were declared a nature reserve in 2000, according to a study of aerial photographs.

“The battle is not yet won,” said Omar Vidal of the environmental group WWF Mexico, saying that policing efforts in the pine and fir forests must be continued. He said small-scale logging may still be going on, and that more efforts are needed to offer economic alternatives to the communal farmers who live in the reserve and formerly made money from logging. Logging was once considered the main threat to the reserve. At its peak in 2005, logging devastated as many as 1,140 acres annually in the reserve, which covers 193,000 acres. Around the same time, armed police were assigned to patrol the reserve and shut down illegal logging operations. Simultaneously, donor groups started nurseries in the local towns to grow seedlings for reforestation efforts and helped build tourism facilities, to give communal farmers alternative sources of income. Some are paid to be part-time guards and report the presence of loggers.

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Associated Press, “Illegal logging wiped out in Mexico reserve for monarchs,” Houston Chronicle, August 16, 2012

“These include the need to move early, even if you don’t have complete information; to be authentic and transparent both internally and with the external stakeholders; and to work aggressively to ‘de-silo’ sustainability, integrating it throughout company operations.”

Embracers were more heavily large, resource-intensive companies. They see sustainability as offering a competitive advantage, they drive it from both the top and bottom, and integrate it throughout their companies.

There were a number of benefits embracers anticipated from deeply incorporating sustainability into their agendas, but there were some unexpected benefits and benefits that far exceeded their expectations as well.

Overall, the biggest benefit identified was “improved brand reputation.” This currently gives companies a competitive advantage. However, as mentioned above, the whole business world is moving toward this model. So, it seems that it is becoming more and more of a basic necessity and, eventually, if you don’t have it, you just won’t be able to compete.

Sustainability is seen as being most critical in the automotive industry right now. Approximately 80% of those surveyed saw sustainability as a critical necessity in that industry now. Perhaps it won’t be too long before that is the case in all industries.

HELLO RECYCLE THAT!

ALLY MEMBER Recycle That, LLC provides creative, environmentally-friendly solutions when you need to retire your linens, towels, uniforms and even unclaimed lost-and-found items. With roots in the thrift recycling industry dating back to the 1950s, we are experts in managing textile material at the end of its life cycle.

We service the textile needs of all property types including hotels/motels, bed & breakfasts, resorts and spas. While we can offer direct purchase options, we challenge you to consider donating!

Our program is motivated by working with local charitable organizations to help them raise funds through your linen donations. Recycle That can connect you with one of our charitable community partners, who will receive your items, and benefit from your donation. We purchase the items from the charity—thus keeping them out of landfill while raising funds to support their mission. There is no cost to you and Recycle That manages all the logistics.

We are a local family-run business, focused primarily in Colorado, Wisconsin and the New England states; however, we will work to find the best solution to meet the needs for hotels across the country. Connecting the community to recycling by reusing and repurposing its goods is our mission. Call 303/426-0668 or visit recyclethat.com to learn more.

CRACKED WINDSHIELDS?

If your car’s windshield is cracked, you may be from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Calgary is one of the few Canadian cities that use gravel rather than salt or sand on winter roads. Of course, the gravel is still on the roads during warmer seasons. Most Calgary residents know that windshield replacement is almost inevitable. Calgarians are even encouraged to drop their windshield-glass insurance coverage to reduce their annual premiums. Many get to know the vendors that charge $30 to fill windshield chips by first name. Many also are forced to replace the entire windshield every couple of years to the tune of several hundred dollars. Drivers have to decide how long they can deal with a spider web of windshield cracks before replacing it. Bad for windshields, but must be good for the local economy and environment.

Slobodian, Andrea, “Rubbing salt into my car’s wounds,” The Calgary Sun, July 18, 2012

Atlanta bans smoking in public parks

Atlanta recently became the largest city in the South to ban smoking in public parks. The punishments are steeper here than even in New York City—up to $1,000 fine, six months in jail and community service. More than 200 cities, large and small, across the Deep South have outlawed smoking in bars, restaurants or workplaces in recent years. In 2009, Virginia and North Carolina, the nation’s top two growers of tobacco, passed bans on smoking in bars and restaurants.


The Multitasker: Garden Hose

Homeowners lugging garden hoses around the yard might start to notice a few leaky holes and want to ditch them. But an old rubber hose may offer a few extra uses both in—and out of—the garden.

Make a better hose: Poke even more holes in the hose—about one inch or so apart—and make a “soaker” hose out of it, useful for efficient watering in veggie or flower beds.

Make a toy: Kids can play “telephone” with funnels on each end. Or cut a piece to use as a dog chew toy (with drawn-in eyes above), or to play fetch.

Make a Christmas wreath: Use it as the “bone,” or frame, for a wreath, on which greenery can be tacked.

Build new flower beds: Some landscape designers like to use a hose as a straight-edge, or let it naturally make an S-curve, to “outline” a new bed.

Build a better grip: Protect little hands by cutting off pieces of old hose to cover chains on swings, or to cover handles of heavy paint cans for a more comfortable grip.

Steady a tree: Use a piece of hose as a guide—anchored to a stake—to straighten a wayward tree trunk.


WATER FIGHT HITS THE SLOPES

Fresh-fallen snow may get all the credit, but many ski resorts can’t keep their runs open without water that is piped in, often from miles away. Control of that water is the source of a battle.
between resort operators and the US Forest Service. Federal officials had to respond by March 12 to a lawsuit by a trade group for the owners and operators of ski destinations, challenging a new directive that requires resorts operating on Forest Service lands to transfer water rights to the federal government.

The group's suit, filed in US district court in Colorado in January, alleges the change is an "uncompensated taking of private property" by the federal government. Ski-area owners contend it will diminish the value of the water rights they obtained "at great expense," according to the suit, and prevents them from selling those rights to anyone but another ski operation. The Forest Service says the new directive will guarantee the water will always remain with the mountain.

Ski resorts require considerable quantities of water for snow-making, as well as sanitation and cooking for guests, and they frequently gain access to extra water by securing water rights from private landowners or from the federal government, in accordance with state laws. The ski companies use tunnels, pipelines and reservoirs they build at considerable expense to transport the water—the amount, source and cost of which vary widely.

The ski-resort operators argue the regulation covers water rights they have purchased from both federal and private lands. But the Forest Service insists it only pertains to water rights obtained from federal lands, and the agency said it plans to change the directive's language to make that clear. Even so, the ski operators say they still wouldn't be satisfied. The suit marks the latest turn in a decades-long push and pull between ski operators and the federal government over water rights. Such water fights are becoming increasingly common in many parts of the US, especially the Rocky Mountain states, where population growth is putting new strains on resources, and land ownership laws don't always automatically include the rights to the water there.

The new federal policy on water rights, part of the permit a resort must secure if it operates on a mountain owned by the Forest Service, has alarmed the National Ski Areas Association, which estimates it affects 121 resorts in 13 states. The ski association and its members are concerned that they wouldn't get fair market value for the water rights if there was only one type of buyer, rather than allowing numerous bidders. "We had no choice but to defend ourselves and our property by filing suit," said Geraldine Link, the group's director of public policy.

Officials with the Forest Service, part of the Department of Agriculture, said the aim of the revamped clause is to make clear that resorts cannot sell the water rights and leave towns and mountains high and dry. "The issue becomes, what if the water becomes so valuable that the resort owner sells it off for a different use, and the communities dependent on the ski areas are no longer viable," said Jim Peña, associate deputy chief for the Forest Service.

Mark Squillace, a law professor and director of the Natural Resources Law Center at the University of Colorado, said the resorts' claim that the government was taking their property "seems overwrought," given that the law ultimately gives the government the right to do what is deemed in the public's best interest. But he said "they may have a legitimate argument" in another claim in the suit, which also argues that the government didn't give the resorts sufficient notice of the change and an opportunity to comment.

Tensions have been brewing over ski-area water rights since the late 1980s, when legislation governing the ski-resort permits on Forest Service land gave the federal government ownership of water rights on federal land. That changed in 2004, when ownership of most of the water rights moved to the resorts.

Last fall, after news of the impending permit clause became public, the ski association and several congressmen asked the Forest Service to study the issue further and get public comment. The agency declined and began enforcing the directive in November.

Ski groups noted that under the new clause, the federal government would be permitted to sell off the same water it is worried the resorts will auction to the highest bidder. The Forest Service's Mr. Peña said his department plans to strengthen the language to make clear it doesn't intend to sell the rights or repurpose them for any use but skiing.

FINAL WORDS:
Let the clean air blow the cobwebs from your body. Air is medicine.
Lillian Russell (1862-1922)