PARTNER MEMBER SUCCESS STORIES

As usual, this September / October issue focuses on success stories of GHA’s Partner Members. We are sharing these very successful stories with all members. You are all working very hard at being green, and sharing information will make it easier. We know you’ll love reading these stimulating, interesting and very green stories! So, we begin again . . .

Root-to-Stalk

Maine’s Sea Glass Chef finds culinary gems in food previously targeted for the compost bin

By Rauni Kew, Public Relations, Inn by the Sea, Cape Elizabeth, ME, 207/799-3134, C 207/602-8500, rkew@innbythesea.com, 61 rms

Sea Glass Chef Mitchell Kaldrovich learned most of what he thinks is important from his grandmother, helping her cook family dinners when a boy in his native Argentina.

“Nothing went to waste,” says Kaldrovich. “You bake bread today, tomorrow you make bread pudding. My grandmother respected local farmers and fishermen too much to waste the food they produced.”

Early lessons feed the chef’s enthusiasm for the Root-to-Stalk movement. A longtime advocate for farm-to-fork, trowl-to-table and fresh seasonal menus, the chef sees the culinary sense of using up the entire vegetable when possible, rather than tossing stalks, stems, fronds or leaves into the compost bin.

“Rather than using just the florets, a thin slice of a whole broccoli lightly grilled, with stems intact, is delicious, healthy and beautiful on the plate,” states the chef. “Presenting the entire vegetable brings attention to simple, lighter fare with an appreciation for the whole plant. It elevates the vegetable from a side to focal point on the plate just as more guests in Sea Glass are requesting vegetarian or vegan menu options and focused on health.”

Root-to-Stalk makes sense from a ‘waste not’ view. With global studies showing 40 to 50% of food produced being wasted, using it all up is better for the planet.

But it isn’t just about a counter culture to food waste, according to Kaldrovich, the Root-to-Stalk trend pushes chefs to find culinary gems in what was formally relegated to the compost bin. “Leaves, stalks, fronds and roots can introduce a new, sometimes earthy pungent flavors, a crunchy texture, or a new presentation that opens doors to delicious recipes, inventive menus or a visually appealing culinary experience.”

Beets are a favorite at Sea Glass. Beet tips are used for vinaigrette, great for salads, but also used by the pastry chef in red velvet chocolate cakes. Braised beet greens, as well as radish leaves, are treated like kale, while the beet itself is marinated, braised for salads, roasted and added to quinoa. Used raw, beets are sliced thin like a radish to add a crunchy texture, or fried for delicious, colorful chips. The chef’s summer menu features beet slaw with peeled, thinly sliced broccoli stems, tender broccoli leaves and light vinaigrette.

Most people are familiar with carrot and celery fronds and leaves, and view them as worthless, but Kaldrovich uses them both in soups and salads, or to make salsa. “They can be bitter, but are very healthy and, used sparingly, add flavor to soups, a mixed salad or slaw and are good in chimichurri.”

The chef doesn’t limit Root-to-Stalk philosophy to vegetables—at Sea Glass the same concept applies whenever possible to meat, Gulf of Maine seafood and lobster. “Today, people are interested in good food that is also good for them. They are focused on their health, but they also care about the health of the planet,” says Kaldrovich.

Throwing edible food away wastes resources, such as water and energy used to grow, haul or catch the product, as well as energy from packaging and transport. Wasted food usually ends in landfill, where it generates methane gas. In fact, no food is wasted at Sea Glass because local farmer John Tibbett composts all food waste, and his rich soil amendment is put back into both farmers’ fields and the inn’s gardens.

“Farmers were, as they are now, an important part of the community,” says Kaldrovich. “My grandmother understood the hard work and resources it took to get good tasting, healthy food to table, and she wasn’t about to waste any part of it.”

MORMON LAKE LODGE REDUCES AND SAVES!

By Leigh Gold, Dining Room Manager, 928/354-2227x14, Lgold@mormonlakelodge.com, 40 rms and cabins

Water conservation at Mormon Lake Lodge has been an ongoing process resulting in great success. As with most hotels and restaurants, guests generally don’t conserve water as they might at home. With our water consumption over the top, we decided to take action at our Mormon Lake, AZ resort in ponderosa pine country. We were able to reduce water consumption in our cabins as well as throughout the property.

In 2007 Mormon Lake Lodge and the Steakhouse began a series of practices to improve water conservation. We started in the Steakhouse dish room by installing a low-flow sprayer. We also trained our dishwashers to use tub washing instead
of trying to spray off every dish. This alone reduced water consumption in our Steakhouse profoundly. With such a huge impact on water consumption in the Steakhouse, we decided to take it a few steps further. With a budget of $11,600, we switched out all the toilets and shower heads in all 40 cabins and all over the property to low-flow and replaced our urinals in the Steakhouse and Saloon to waterless urinals. It took a while to get them all in place, having to shut down certain rooms for short periods, but most of the work had to occur in our off season between December and April. Our high elevation (7,120 feet) caused some issues along with some of our worst winters. One storm dropped 7 feet of snow in two days and another storm gave us temps as low as -26°F. We were able to finally complete the low-flow installations.

We researched our billing records from 1997 to 2013 to try to determine how much water is actually being saved. There are a lot of factors to be considered including volume of business, how many cabins were open, occupancy rate and winter weather. All of these affect our water usage, but comparable years’ statistics prove we have made a significant improvement.

In 2007 when we elected to install low-flow and waterless fixtures, we had used 2,786,700 gallons of water on the property and earned just over 3 million dollars in revenues. As the upgrades were completed in 2009, only 1,990,400 gallons were consumed with just under 3 million dollars earned. In that brief period, we were able to save 796,300 gallons or use 28.6% less water per year. Annually we continued to see a savings pattern even during busier years. In 2000 and 2001 when Mormon Lake Lodge only had 22 cabins on property, our water usage was 3,225,900 gallons in 2000, and in 2001 usage was 3,919,100 gallons. In 2000 we earned just over 1 million dollars and in 2001 revenues were just a little higher. In 2013 we had a total of 39 cabins and 16 rooms that are occupied 100% of the time in the summer, and consumed only 3,075,700 gallons while earning 2 million dollars. Not only have we been consistently busier, we have more variables as we are able to continue reducing water usage.

Last year we started to see a pattern on our guest comment cards stating that they did not like or understand why our water flow was so slow even though we had interpretive information in the rooms. We decided to add a brochure (printed on recycled paper) regarding water conservation including what guests could do while at the lodge as well as at home to save water and money. As a result, our guests are much more understanding about our water issues and our plumbing choices.

Did we stop there? No. We took conservation another step, and decided to look closer at energy conservation. So, in 2007 we made the decision to change all the incandescent bulbs on property to fluorescent. In early 2009 over 700 incandescents including dimmable bulbs were changed to fluorescent. We also instructed staff that lights in cabins or in the Steakhouse and Saloon must be off when they aren’t needed. As a result, we have been able to reduce our electricity usage and reduce our electricity bill just as we have water bill!

Not only are we saving money, but we are proud now to have become very environmentally friendly.

BARDESSONO SAVES!

By Jim Treadway, General Manager, Yountville, CA, dir 707/204-6001, jim.treadway@bardessono.com, 62 rms

What aspect of your green program are you most proud?

Without question, being LEED platinum certified in 2010, about a year after we opened, by the US Green Building Council. We were the second hotel in the US to achieve this distinction. Now, there are three. Our vision here was to demonstrate to the world that true luxury and extraordinary sustainability are not mutually exclusive; and we have succeeded. The four big components to our greenness are the materials from which we were constructed, our solar electricity (972 panels), our 72 300’-deep geothermal wells, and, finally, how we operate the property in a very environmentally-friendly manner.

What aspect of your green program saves the most money? The solar energy first, followed closely by heating and cooling geothermally. Also, our automated exterior blinds system and “smart rooms” are wonderful at conserving energy.

The phrase “smart rooms” stems from the fact that all our in-room systems are IP (Internet Protocol), and the thermostat controls several switches, as do motion detectors, at the door. For example, when you leave the room, the blinds close or go down, electricity and fireplace go off, and the thermostat defaults down to 62 F. degrees in the heating season, and up to 78 F. degrees in the cooling season. When you enter the room, all systems activate, the blinds open or go up, motion detectors determine the room is occupied, and the room reverts to the temperature set on the thermostat.

Other features of our smart rooms and their IP systems are:

* A do-not-disturb red-doorbell ring communicates to our pagers that the room is DND, so there are no wasted trips to those rooms.
* A housekeeping green-doorbell ring allows guests to summon a housekeeper to clean the room.

What aspect of your green program is commented on most by guests? They marvel at how we can be so green, yet comfortably luxurious at the same time.

ASHVILLE GREEN COTTAGE is Green throughout

By Victoria “Vicki” Schomer, 828/707-2919, info@ashevillegreencottage.com, 4 rms

Our choice to open a green hotel and B&B was easy. It was how we had lived our lives for decades, so the process to set it up was simple. Eight years later, operations and maintenance continues to be a breeze, but the most wonderful benefit is still the amazing people who stay with us. Easy going, health and ecologically-centric people make great B&B guests, and many have been
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What aspect of your green program are you most proud?
Because of the products and materials we use for our
furnishings and for maintenance and operations, and since we
are smoke- and fragrance-free, we are a safe place for people
with chemical sensitivities and compromised immune systems
to stay. I've worked in this field my entire career, and to be
able to offer this to folks with such a huge health challenges
makes us feel really good.

What aspect of your green program saves the most
money?
It's obvious that energy savings in our lighting and
efficient HVAC equipment saves us money, but what makes us
even more money is being a green place for folks to stay. We
can run an entire operation leaner and more efficiently, without
a lot of extra bells and whistles, yet offer an appealing and
desirable place for guests to stay.

What aspect of your green program is commented on
most by guests?
Not one thing, but the whole green and
healthy stay package.

Hilton Chicago Oak Brook Hills Resort
Greens its Golf Course

By Stefan Mühle, General Manager, Oak Brook, IL,
630/850-5554, smuhle@oakbrookhillsresort.com, 347 rms

At the Hilton/Oak Brook Hills Resort and Conference
Center protecting the environment is always in the forefront
of our green initiatives. One of the successful environmental
projects on our property was achieving certification from the
Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by our grounds team
at Willow Crest Golf Club. The Audubon Cooperative
Sanctuary Program for Golf is an award-winning education
and certification program that helps golf courses protect our
environment and preserve the natural heritage of the game
of golf. By helping people enhance the valuable natural
areas and wildlife habitats that golf courses provide, improve efficiency
and minimize potentially harmful impacts of golf course operations,
the program serves as a vital resource for golf courses.

In order to achieve Audubon Certification, a golf facility is
required to demonstrate that it is maintaining the highest
degree of environmental quality in several areas including
Environmental Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management,
Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety,
Water Conservation and Water Quality Management.

As part of the property’s environmental efforts to become
certified, Willow Crest Golf Club converted 14 acres of
manicured turf to natural, un-mowed environmentally sensitive
areas, which included all banks along the lake edges. With
the taller grasses and emerging plants, the
banks have become stabilized and have
reduced erosion and aquatic weeds, while
connecting habitats. Additionally, the increase
of shoreline species has provided nesting
areas, shelter and a food source for wildlife.

Further, the grounds team at Willow Crest Golf
Club partnered with students at the Westmont
Junior High School for the Audubon Adopt-A-
School program, which educates students on

the importance of protecting and preserving the environment
at school and within their own communities. Willow Crest Golf
Club also contributed to its certification process by building,
installing and monitoring 15 bird houses. The bird houses
are meant for bluebirds, but are being occupied more by tree
swallows.

BUCKET BEACH RESORT JOINS
WATER SENSE H2OTEL CHALLENGE

Aruba’s premier adults-only resort continues to raise the bar in sustainable tourism

By Ewald Biemans, Managing Director, Eagle
Beach, Aruba, biemans@bucuti.com, 63 rms

As a leader in both innovation and environmental stewardship, Bucuti Beach Resort has taken the pledge to be a part of the Water Sense H2otel Challenge. Water Sense is a US EPA program designed to help save water for future generations. Bucuti is the only resort outside of the US and North America that has taken this initiative at this time. The initial step of the program is “ACT.” Assess water use and savings opportunities; Change products or processes to incorporate best management practices and Track results. Upon assessment, Bucuti will begin replacing existing products with Water Sense-labeled models. Simply replacing a showerhead could save an average of four gallons of water per shower.

“After years of maintaining our multiple environmental certifications, it was time for a new challenge. The H2otel Challenge give us access to new and innovative products as well as case studies on what others are doing,” said Ewald Biemans, owner and managing director. “A high-quality guest experience and eco-friendly practices can co-exist and that is what our resort illustrates. We are passionate about protecting and preserving Aruba’s resources and look forward to implementing and developing initiatives that allow us to do so for years to come.”

The resort’s Green Team, led by Biemans, has set the benchmark in sustainable tourism, earning more than two dozen environmental awards and certifications, including the Highest Achievement Award as the top performing sustainable travel and tourism business in the Caribbean by Green Globe Certification. Additionally, the resort is the first in the Caribbean to be officially ISO 14001 and Green Globe certified. Bucuti is also in the process of pursuing LEED certification, which will be the fourth green certification the resort receives, adding to their long list of accolades.

One more interesting fact is that Aruba has no water in natural form. There are no rivers, no springs and as little as 9” of rain a year. Desalination provides the island’s only source of drinking water, and the process requires burning huge amounts of extremely expensive imported oil. So water conservation gain is double—conserving oil, a natural resource, and conserving water. Water is a super precious resource in Aruba.

With an average rainfall of less than 20” a year, an average daytime temperature of 82° F. (27° C.), a location completely outside the hurricane belt, and the constant cooling influence
of the trade winds, Aruba is one of the most temperate islands in the Caribbean. Today, the island is populated by 100,000 people and attracts more than 700,000 international visitors annually.

**CityFlatsHotel, Holland, MI**

By Jack Peaphon, CTA, Marketing Coordinator, 866/609-2489, jack.peaphon@cityflatshotel.com, 56 rms

**What aspect of your green program are you most proud?** We are most proud of our LEED Gold certification for our CityFlatsHotel location in Holland. Our company is committed to the conservation and protection of our environment as well as bettering the quality of life for our guests and employees. With these beliefs in mind, all future CityFlatsHotel projects will be designed and built to achieve LEED certification.

**What aspect of your green program saves the most money?** CityFlatsHotel Holland was built so that 90% of all spaces receive natural light through our floor-to-ceiling treated windows. We were able to cut down on the amount of light fixtures in the hotel because guests receive enough natural light during daytime hours to enjoy their stay without hindering any of their regular activities. All fixtures in the hotel are equipped with LED lights to further our energy savings.

**What aspect of your green program is commented on most by guests?** The green aspects of our guest room design are what are most commented on by guests, especially the cork flooring incorporated into each room. Cork flooring is naturally hypoallergenic giving guests added peace of mind on the cleanliness and freshness of their room. Though not as soft as carpet, cork is softer than a wood or tile floor, which guests enjoy. Additionally, cork comes from the evergreen oak tree and can be harvested many times throughout the life of the tree without having to cut it down, making it a very eco-conscious and renewable choice.

Located atop the hotel (on the 5th floor) is CityVū Bistro. Fresh gourmet flatbreads and an array of seasonal entrees are usual fare.

CityFlatsHotel Holland was the first hotel in the Midwest and east of the Mississippi to receive LEED Gold certification, and also the second hotel in the world to receive LEED Gold certification through the USGBC.

**GREENPORTER HOTEL, Greenport, NY**

By Deborah Pittorino, Owner, 631/477-0066, info@thegreenporter.com, 30 rms

**What aspect of your green program makes you most proud?** We use so many green practices, but the one we are most proud of is the use of discarded hand soaps in our all-purpose cleaning solution that we use to clean all surfaces including floors and walls. We dilute the soap in water and add essential oils such as tea tree oil, lavender, mint and eucalyptus. We mix it and put it in spray bottles for the housekeepers. The essential oils give a fresh scent to the rooms, and we have had many requests from customers to purchase the solution! This practice has reduced the waste of these partially-used bar soaps, and has also cut down on our purchase of cleaning solutions at the hotel. Additionally, because we use eco-friendly soap and essential oils, the cleaning solution is free of chemicals and is safer for our staff, our customers and the environment.

**SHAHEEN'S MOTEL, Tupper Lake, NY**

By Terry & Robyn Doolen, 518/359-3384, info@shaheensmotel.com, 31 rms

Shaheen’s Motel is a family-owned lodging property in a small village located in the Adirondack Mountains. We have been members of Green Hotels Association since January, 2010. Our property is certified by Audubon International (2009) and TripAdvisor (2014).

“Our eco-friendly initiatives started out small with a waste management recycling program, conversion to CFL bulbs, and a guest reuse towel program,” stated Robyn. The linen reuse program began timidly, but now over 90% of our guests hang up their towels for reuse and opt out of daily linen changes. Projects blossomed each year as we undertook additional endeavors and became confident that our property could make a difference. Shaheen’s is now in a continual refresh mode when it comes to sustainable efforts. Equipment is also purchased with a green mindset.

**THE AMBROSE, Santa Monica, CA**

By Anne Carmack, Environmental Practices & Food & Beverage Director, dir 310/315-3181, anne@ambrosetelhotel.com, 77 rms

**What aspect of your green program makes you most proud?** 75% of waste is recycled through our hotel-wide recycling program. This makes us very proud!

Also, we provide all Ambrose employees with complimentary bus passes in an effort to lower employee commuting costs and in honor of our commitment to sustainability. All Ambrose team members are eligible for this benefit.

**What aspect of your green program saves the most money?** By being an Energy Star certified building and using all Energy Star certified appliances, we are able to use 30% less energy annually saving the property an estimated $32,300 per year.

What aspect of your green program do guests comment on most? We’ve had a green program in place since 2005. Over the years we have received feedback on all aspects of our program. Our guests continue to especially appreciate our recycling and water conservation efforts, our non-toxic cleaning program and our room service and catering menus which offer options made with local, organic and seasonal ingredients.
“We are super proud of our 10kWh 40-panel Grid-Tied Rooftop Solar System which lessens our dependency on brown power and saves money in electrical costs,” Terry added. In the last two years the entire building was updated with high-efficient Energy Star and NFRC certified windows. Water conservation was always on the agenda as we switched to low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and recently we finished a three-year goal of replacing toilets to American Standard 1.28 gpf models which use 20% less water than the 1.6 gpf models. Terry installed a 50-gallon Rain Reserve Water Barrel which is integrated into the gutter system and provides water for the garden and plants. During the season approximately 200 gallons of Mother Nature’s finest gift—water was put to good use! Yard waste and clippings are composted in the back woods and used as fertilizer.

A local community-help closet receives the gently used furniture items, linens, and mattresses from Shaheen’s Motel. As participating members of the Global Soap Project, all partially-used guest soap is collected and shipped to a location where it is sterilized and repackaged for distribution to those in need of basic hygiene items.

Non-toxic zero-VOC paint and stains are used and guests appreciate that the rooms are cleaned with environmentally safe products. Suggestions are solicited from the guests through in-house forms. Tips from guests which were implemented include using recyclable paper products and wooden stir sticks in the breakfast area. To alleviate lights being left on at bedtime, small low-wattage nightlights were installed for guests’ safety. A “Going Greener” bulletin board offers helpful hints and educates visitors on local environmental issues.

Getting the most from the environment is easy, but giving back is harder because it takes personal commitment. It’s important to encourage others to try because each of us can make a difference. Take the step, start somewhere and become part of the solution to preserve your community. Set a goal, reach it and then begin again.

Each time comments such as “We love your green philosophy, Your green practices are the reason I chose your motel or Thank you for recycling and keep up the good work, we’ll be back” are received, we are very happy!

**HYATT REGENCY SACRAMENTO**

By Charlie Bane, Director of Engineering, 916/321-3595, sacramento.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html, charlie.bane@hyatt.com, 503 rms

The Hyatt Regency Sacramento has been effectively recycling since 2010. Prior to that, we were recycling cardboard in a cardboard bailer, glass bottles in a bottle bin, and newspapers in small recycling cans. In 2010 we hired a waste company that allows us to comingle recyclable materials. We now have a 7-yard recycle compactor that allows us to put all recycle materials into one compactor to be sorted off property. This made it significantly easier for our staff to recycle.

In 2011 we also began recycling food waste, which technology processes and converts into renewable energy. For this we have been recognized in California as a leader in recycling organic material.

Our used cooking oil is also made useful by being converted into biofuel.

We went from recycling a fairly negligible amount of material to diverting around 350 tons of material per year from landfills.

Our staff has become increasingly aware of our ability to recycle in part through exposure to our mascot the “greenman” who makes surprise appearances to various departments.

**ALPINE HOUSE, Jackson, Wyoming**

By Erika Anderson, 307/739-1570, erika@alpinehouse.com, 22 rms + 4 cottages

Our property installed Edison Forever incandescent light bulbs throughout its property to convey the vintage antique bulb shape and look. Expected life of the bulbs is 1,000 to 3,000 hours. Our low-flow showerheads along with linen cards and HVAC cards ensure that guests have opportunities to participate in our green program.

Our guests’ absolute favorite amenity here is our loaner cruiser bikes to glide around our small town rather than driving their cars. Guests can just roll around town, have a meal out or visit the farmers market, etc. The bicycles include baskets for guests’ convenience. We originally started offering the bikes as a way to help control automobile traffic. Since we’ve been providing the 4 mens’ and 2 ladies’ bicycles, several other local properties have begun also offering loaner bikes, and we’re especially proud of being mimicked in this instance.

When our guests ask for suggestions on how to enjoy Jackson Hole more thoroughly, we always tell them about JH Eco Tour Adventures whose outings are based on wildlife exploration. The company is owned and operated by lead guide Taylor Phillips, and he’s a real local favorite.

**ANDREW PINCKNEY INN, Charleston, SC**

By Barry Hutto, General Manager, 843/937-8800, charlestonwehotels.com/portfolio/andrew-pinkney-inn/, bhutto@charlestonwehotels.com, 41 rms

We recently chose to upgrade our linens, and succeeded by choosing Harbor Linens’ (a Bed, Bath & Beyond company) 60%-40% blended cotton linens that are stain resistant, which means water and cleaning products needs are reduced. They also reduce dryer time required, lowering electricity requirements.

Our Gilcrest & Soames very green Beekind™ hotel guestroom amenities including 2 bar soaps, shampoo, conditioner, lotion and a sewing kit are very appreciated by guests. The amenity containers are recyclable.

Best of all, because of big-time money savings, but also because of a major feel-good factor, is our changing out 621 incandescent light bulbs to 534 LEDs and 87 CFL 3-way bulbs. The project was managed by Joel Caplan (C 803/530-3321, joe@elite-lighting.com) and cost the property $9,351.70 while we received a $7,354 rebate from South Carolina’s Duke Energy. Our expected return-on-investment is only one year, and the bulbs carry a 5-year warranty. Elite Lighting works in FL, GA, NC and SC.

Many of the LEDs are called non-discrete LEDs which means that there are non-measurable clusters comparable to hundreds of LEDs unseen within the bulbs on a chip. A major improvement in the ambiance of the public areas resulted.

Guestroom vanity lighting went from 60 watt incandescent to
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Barbara Napier, Host, very wisely used 9 beautiful spring nature photographs of her property with the text above to encourage visitors to come to snughollow.com in Irvine, Kentucky, in a February e-mail broadcast!

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TVA RECORDS 44% ENERGY SAVINGS
TN Project Confirms Prior Reports, Excites State Officials

A recent demonstration project at Pickwick Landing State Park Resort has created excitement throughout the state’s park system about reducing energy usage and costs. The 4-week study, a joint effort of TVA, Pickwick Electric Co-op, and the TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation, produced eye-popping results—44% savings in the hotel rooms and 64% in the cabins—and all without negatively impacting guest comfort or convenience, according to park personnel.

The study evaluated GHA ALLY MEMBER Energy Technologies Group’s S3E guestroom energy management system—which had consistently shown 40%+ savings in other parts of the country. Based on these results, plans are underway to install the S3E system throughout the state’s park lodging network, which would generate estimated savings of $350,000 annually when fully implemented. Reducing and controlling energy use and demand are important to all the project participants.

Reducing operating costs for the parks is an obvious interest, but the environmental impact is also a big interest for TDEC. And, reducing and leveling demand is important to TVA (a US government corporation) and its distributors like PEC, so they have a significant interest as well. While the marketplace abounds with systems designed for this purpose, US Dept. of Energy studies have shown that rarely have such systems’ performance met expectations. As a result, hotel operators—and these study participants as well—have understandably grown skeptical of manufacturers’ savings claims.

This extensive study separates ETG’s system from the rest of the field, by confirming and validating ETG’s previous results from millions of hours of tests and live operations around the country, providing hope that a system that actually pays off does exist! ETG’s S3E system uses unique and patented operating methodology to do what no other system can—achieving DOUBLE the energy and cost-saving impact of competing systems (according to federal government studies). ETG is based in the Pittsburg, PA area. For more information, contact ETG at etgllc@verizon.net, energytechgroup.com, 877/400-0003 or 412/264-0700.

SUSTAINABILITY IS THE KEYWORD
Key trends emerging in the hospitality industry

Increasing awareness and changing industry norms have made eco-friendly choices a standard rather than a brand-building exercise. With 5 billion feet of hospitality space that consumes around $4 billion in energy in the US alone, the need for green practices and sustainability standards is imperative.

The good news is that 62% of users now expect hotels to be environmentally responsible and have solid environmental programs in place. These programs have to make deep-seated impact to lessen their carbon footprints and not just make cosmetic changes to impress the crowd. One must remember that the consumer is aware and informed these days, and only the best efforts will bring in results.

Cornell Study: Sustainability Certification Boosts Hotel Performance

Hotels that achieve certified sustainability requirements on average outperform in terms of rates and revenue per available room those that do not, according to a recent study from Cornell University.

The study compared 93 US hotels certified by the US Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) ratings system—which takes into consideration such factors as water efficiency, energy use and indoor environmental quality—against 514 comparable hotels without the certification. Hotels in the study largely were upscale or luxury properties in urban and suburban locations.

Prior to certification, the LEED-certified hotels had an average daily rate that was $10 higher than the non-certified hotels. In the two years following the certification, that average premium jumped to $20, according to the study.

Occupancy trended lower at LEED-certified hotels, though the study noted that figure was skewed by new hotels in the sample or those that had been undergoing renovation related to the certification.

"Considering those challenges, it is remarkable that LEED-certified hotels match competitors’ occupancy levels within a year of certification,” the study reported. “The LEED hotels quickly made up the occupancy deficit recorded in the year prior to certification, and they outperformed competitors for two years following certification.”

The report indicated such research, including future research over a longer performance period, is necessary as there
Restaurants recycle shells for Galveston oyster reef

Tourists won’t see it, but Texas Parks and Wildlife Department officials hope a new oyster reef only a few feet from the Kemah boardwalk will have a large impact. Approximately 250 cubic yards—about 200 tons—of recycled oyster shell was dumped in about 8 feet of water just east of the Kemah Boardwalk.

"While this reef will never be harvested, it will provide ecological services and habitat for a variety of sea creatures," said Bryan Legare, a natural resource specialist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The reef, along with its accompanying signs and pamphlets, will teach visitors about a "more sustainable approach to the fishery." The local oystermen sell oysters to local restaurants. Restaurants can then work with the Galveston Bay Foundation to recycle the shells. Those shells are then used in restoration projects that provide habitat for oysters and other creatures. The alternative is that the shells can end up as construction material or in chicken feed.

For this project, the Misho Oyster Co. in San Leon provided the shells as well as the boat and labor. The shells were sprayed into the water with two water cannons. It’s such an active and high profile area that it’s a great opportunity to teach the masses about oyster reefs and their importance. Three restaurants on the Boardwalk have joined the oyster shell recycling program.

After being cured, the shell is used in the foundation’s oyster gardening program. The foundation works with waterfront property owners in Seabrook, Kemah, Bacliff and San Leon to suspend bags of oyster shells in the water. Young oysters can attach to the shells and grow. At the end of summer, the new oysters growing in the bags will be placed over the new reef by the Boardwalk. Since the reef won’t be harvested, it will help produce more young oysters, or spat, that can spread to other areas of the bay. Oysters and their reefs provide important ecological services. They filter water, protect the shoreline and control erosion. The reef will also provide important habitat not just for oysters, which need a hard substrate to attach to, but also for crabs and shrimp. That will eventually attract larger fish.

"There are all kinds of fishermen around here, and they are going to end up loving this," added Bryan.


Energy Star-qualified LED lighting uses at least 75% less energy and lasts 35 to 50% longer than incandescent lighting. With new advancements, prices have also dropped. "The cost efficiency coupled with sustainable energy means that people will have no choice but to embrace LED," says Studio Lux Founder Christopher Thompson. As such, many hotels are incorporating LED technology into most of their lighting designs, says Jeff Wierzba, VP of Troy Lighting Contract Hospitality. "While many of our products offer LED technologies, we have often switched out bulbs in our contract projects for the energy-efficient LED option, which is also dimmable to set the mood in an environment or space."

LOOK TO THE BRIGHT SIDE
8 Trends Driving Hotel Lighting in 2014

Hotels are big business, literally. In the United States alone, hotels comprise more than 5 billion square feet of space according to the US Green Building Council® (USGBC) and spend in excess of $7.5 billion on energy each year as cited by the US EPA. This translates to an average spend of nearly $2,200 per available room each year on energy by the more than 47,000 hotels and motels in America, which in turn accounts for around 6% of all domestic hotel operating costs.

1 LEEding a New Way
Between a majority of travelers who have signified that they often take the environment into account when making travel decisions and government regulations that are gradually becoming more stringent, the expectations being placed on hoteliers with regard to environmentally sensitive construction and operations are rising.

2 Hybrid Hospitality
Visionary hoteliers are developing multidimensional concepts that integrate elements from other building types, such as theaters, galleries or restaurants with more traditional hotel design. This means the traditional-grid and acoustical tile layout that is so commonplace in commercial lighting arrangements will no longer cut it for hotels.

3 A Farewell to Incandescent
A shift toward more efficient hotel lighting technologies is one way that many hoteliers are making subtle energy-saving changes, and light-emitting diode (LED) and compact fluorescent (CFL) lamps are playing a big role. While more expensive than incandescent bulbs, these lamps can often pay for themselves through energy and maintenance savings.

4 A Return to Simplicity
Clean, simple and elegant is in. Some hotel design experts have expressed a belief that guests want little in the way of trendy aesthetics and more value for their money. As a result, they expect there will be a shift toward simplified, yet seemingly sophisticated design that combines lighting and architecture as an art form.

5 Mobile Meetings

Currently is little "empirical evidence demonstrating a link between LEED certification and performance." The number of hotels earning LEED certification annually has declined since peaking in 2010 which the study attributes to the benefits of the certification not being clear to hotels.
Beyond providing free WiFi and electrical outlets in a lobby, hotels are beginning to offer conference rooms rentable by the hour which may come with interactive worktables, whiteboards, a lounge and more. This trend means that appropriate lighting design must take place to facilitate presentations, detail-oriented tasks and other business functions.

6 Balancing Generational Considerations

Millennials are more likely to seek out open working environments, such as lobbies and atriums, and they may seek out hotels with design flair. For these reasons, it is important to consider how both ambient and accent lighting design may attract the mobile Millennial. And as the Baby Boomer generation reaches senior citizenship, there will be an ongoing need for better lighting quality in general throughout hotel spaces.

7 Take Control, Wirelessly

One way to facilitate appropriate lighting for spaces, regardless of the hour, is to integrate lighting controls for daylight harvesting in tandem with occupancy sensors. These tools not only lower energy costs by supplying lighting for a space only when appropriate, but help to avoid overlighting as well. Wireless sensors make it simple to install these technologies without the time and costs associated with running wires behind walls and ceilings.

8 Systematic Saving

As part of the move toward more advanced energy-saving techniques, hoteliers are exploring comprehensive ways to integrate lighting into building systems. Some hotels now require a room keycard to be inserted into a switch that activates lighting, heating, air conditioning and even drapes, blinds, radio or TV controls. This simple change limits the amount of energy wasted when systems are activated, but rooms are unoccupied.

California Moves to Become First State to Ban Plastic Bags

Paper or plastic? In California, the latter may soon no longer be an option and the former may come at a cost.

Recently the state legislature passed a bill banning the use of plastic bags at California grocery stores, pharmacies, liquor stores and other businesses. If signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, the bill will institute the first statewide ban on plastic bags in the US. A spokesman for the governor said he hasn't taken a position on the issue.

Cities including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and Portland, OR, already have such bans in place, as do most counties in Hawaii. The California ban would prohibit the thin, commonly distributed plastic bags in grocery stores and pharmacies beginning July 1, 2015, and go into effect for convenience and liquor stores on that date a year later. Proponents say plastic bags are rarely recycled and commonly littered.

The final bill passed by the Senate, would allow reusable plastic bags to be sold at grocery stores, and would also allow paper bags to be sold to consumers for a minimum of 10 cents.

Most producers of plastic bags and paper bags oppose the law, saying it would kill jobs and serve as a tax on consumers. The statewide ban is supported by the California Grocers Association, which says it will eliminate a patchwork of local legislations.


Miners are borrowing cost-saving ideas from other industries. The Goonyella Riverside mine in Australia, shown, is using Formula One-style pit stops to improve truck refueling.


FINAL WORDS . . .

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."  
Mahatma Gandhi