



# POLLUTION PREVENTION VIEW

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 3 NEWSLETTER FROM THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SUMMER 2010

## In Any Event, Recycle

We're not trying to rush summer, but before you know it, we'll be thinking about fairs, fall sports and other seasonal events. Whether the occasion is a large or small gathering, one thing is certain — there will be plenty of trash to clean up afterwards.



Recycling, composting and trash containers at Mansfield Festival on the Green

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If you are an event organizer, you will want to start thinking early in the planning stages about how you will manage garbage and recycling. It's not the most glamorous of tasks. When the party's over and the site is clean and all the things that can be recycled have been, you'll be the one who will be getting the (green) ribbon for all your hard work. But there are more reasons to recycle at your event.

First of all, recycling is the law. Recent legislation passed adding new materials to the existing law, such as #1 and #2 plastic containers and more types of paper. It also strengthened the current recycling law by specifically calling out that at all "common gathering venues," recycling and trash receptacles must be provided at the same location.

Secondly, people who are diligent about recycling at home and work expect to be able to recycle away from home and are frustrated when they have to put items that they would normally recycle into the trash.

And thirdly, you have an opportunity for a "teaching moment" — to get the recycling message out to those that don't recycle by providing the example at your event.

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# In Any Event, Recycle

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**Mansfield Festival requires vendors to use compostable plates, cups and utensils.**

So, now that you're excited about your trashy task, where do you begin?

- Make sure everyone who needs to be “on board” is. Tell them about the law and get their cooperation and support. This is key.
- Use pre-event advertising as an opportunity to let people know that there will be recycling containers available. If your event has other green features (e.g., a ban on polystyrene, carbon offset credits), plug those, too!
- Know what kind of waste and recyclables you will generate at your event. A wine tasting may produce lots of glass while a road race may have plenty of water bottles. Will there be flyers or programs or cardboard generated? You may need to have containers available for those items, too.
- Learn about the kinds of recycling containers that would be best for your event. There are some very inexpensive systems that work very well.
- Placement of trash and recycling containers is very important. They should be convenient and located together; the recycling container should look different than the trash container (different color or style).
- Signage about recycling should be prominently displayed, so event-goers know how, what, where and why (the “teaching moment”). Consider the audience — should the signage be in other languages?
- Recruit volunteers who can supervise the trash and recycling areas and answer questions. This will reduce the contamination and can be a great community service project for high school students or the scouts.
- Consider collecting the bottles and cans with the nickel deposit as a fundraiser for your group or the volunteers.
- Celebrate your success! Let others know how much you recycled and equate it to terms that people may be interested in (e.g., green house gas emissions reduced, trees saved).

**Want more help to get started?  
Check out these websites:**

CT DEP, Event Recycling —  
<http://www.ct.gov/dep/recycle>

U. S. EPA, Recycle on the Go —  
[www.epa.gov/wastes/conserve/rrrr/rogo/venues/events.htm](http://www.epa.gov/wastes/conserve/rrrr/rogo/venues/events.htm)

# Chemical Jeopardy

## What is Bisphenol A?



**Bisphenol A (BPA) is a form of synthetic estrogen used to strengthen plastics, such as disposable plastic water bottles and baby bottles. BPA is also found in the lining of canned foods, in some older plastic reusable water bottles and on some cash register receipts. It is used in cans to prevent rusting and on receipts so they can be printed without using any ink.**

BPA is widely considered to be harmful because it is an endocrine disruptor. The chemical can act like hormones, which are the body's chemical messengers that let different parts of the body "talk" to each other. Endocrine disruptors can interfere with this messaging system, which throws systems reliant on hormonal messages (such as reproduction and development) out of balance and can produce harmful effects. Since hormones are released in very small quantities, even a small exposure to an endocrine disruptor (as little as 50 parts per billion per day) can have a detrimental effect on humans.

Connecticut is the first state to ban BPA from being used in certain products. Starting July 1, 2011 baby bottles, baby food and infant formula can only be sold in containers that have no BPA in the contact area of the jar. As of October 1, 2014 no infant products sold can contain any BPA whatsoever.

### How can I avoid BPA?

- Avoid buying or storing food in plastics made of polyvinyl chloride (#3 PVC), polycarbonate (#7 OTHER) and polystyrene (#6 PS).
- Use reusable water or baby bottles labeled as BPA-free. If you do drink from plastic bottles that may contain BPA, avoid drinking from them after the bottle has been heated (even in a hot car), as that lets more of the chemicals leach out of the plastic.
- Wash your hands after handling cash register receipts printed on shiny thermal paper (used at most stores and restaurants). These receipts can be particularly high in BPA and readily expose you to the chemical.



- Choose fresh food whenever possible. The next best choices are foods that are frozen, dried, or packed in glass jars, aseptic containers or BPA-free cans.

### Want to learn more about BPA? Check out these websites:

CT DPH's Plastics Primer:

[www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/environmental\\_health/eoha/pdf/plastics\\_primer\\_final.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/environmental_health/eoha/pdf/plastics_primer_final.pdf)

U.S. EPA's BPA Action Plan:

[www.epa.gov/oppt/existingchemicals/pubs/actionplans/bpa.html](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/existingchemicals/pubs/actionplans/bpa.html)

Environmental Working Group –

[www.ewg.org/reports/bisphenola](http://www.ewg.org/reports/bisphenola)



# One Student's Trash is Another Person's Treasure



**Yale's "Spring Salvage"**

Did you know that the average college student produces about 640 pounds of trash each year? Since Connecticut is home to dozens of colleges and universities, that adds up to a lot of trash!

At the end of the semester, thousands of students move out and mountains of unwanted stuff — shoes, clothes, furniture, books, you-name-it, are left behind. Two Connecticut campuses have created innovative programs to prevent usable items from getting thrown away.

Yale's *Spring Salvage*, a collaboration of Yale Recycling, the Office of Sustainability, Custodial Services, and Grounds Maintenance, has

become an annual campus-wide effort; each year it's gotten bigger and better. Last year, *Spring Salvage* collected almost 50 tons of furniture, books, clothing, appliances, and other items — worth an estimated value of \$100,000. These items were donated to more than 50 non-profits in the New Haven area.

Over the move-out period in May, students are informed of drop-off locations around campus and are encouraged to leave items that can be re-used. All items are inventoried and like items are grouped together. Local organizations are then invited for Community Donation Days and can take the items they need for free. Items that cannot be re-used, including broken electronics, CFLs and scrap metal are recycled.

UConn's *Give and Go* program is in its second year. Several campus offices including Environmental Policy, Community Outreach, Residential Life, the Green Grads and EcoHusky Student Groups help organize the effort, along with the Town of Mansfield, Willimantic Waste and U-HAUL. This campus-wide event takes place over the course of a week and has grown to 15 drop-off locations. Over 14,000 pounds of items were collected this year saving the University money on trash disposal fees and helping out those in need.

UConn uses volunteers to staff collection points. Anything that can be reused is given to organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, churches, food banks and soup kitchens, homeless shelters and youth services groups.

Both universities report that students are pleased that their items go to a good cause and that there is an alternative to throwing those items out. The programs reduce waste and demonstrate the Universities' commitment to sustainability.

**UConn's "Give and Go"**



For more information, visit —

[www.ecohusky.uconn.edu/studentresources.html](http://www.ecohusky.uconn.edu/studentresources.html)

[www.yale.edu/opa/arc-ybc/ybc\\_sustainability/story6.html](http://www.yale.edu/opa/arc-ybc/ybc_sustainability/story6.html)

<http://www.ct.gov/DEP/recycle>  
(school and institution recycling)

# Siemon Company Pursues Environmental Stewardship



**Installation of Siemon's solar power system.**

**How much of an environmental steward can a company be? Siemon Company tries to cover everything from energy to recycling as well as reducing hazardous substances and climate emissions at their worldwide corporate headquarters and manufacturing center in Watertown, Connecticut.**

Siemon is a world leader in the innovation and manufacture of network cabling solutions for IT (information technology). They have demonstrated a commitment to being green in their own offices and factories as well as educating their clients about green options in IT.

Siemon was awarded the DEP Green Circle Award three times between 2000 and 2004 for achieving ISO 14000, the international environmental management standard, as well as a number of energy and recycling efficiencies, the company recently announced it had achieved carbon negative and almost zero-landfill status in its operations.

**Getting to Carbon Negative** — Siemon installed a 15,600 square-foot solar power system at their corporate headquarters and manufacturing center. This system generated over 216,000 kWh of clean energy in 2009, reducing their carbon dioxide emissions by over 373,000 lbs. Using EPA estimates, this CO<sub>2</sub> reduction is equivalent to the yearly output of 22 homes or 19,031 gallons of gasoline. Siemon further reduced their carbon footprint by establishing Branch Hill Farms, a 3,000-acre tree farm, as well as recycling 900 metric tons of waste in 2009. These reductions bring Siemon's total U.S. and Canada carbon footprint figures to negative 11,450 metric tons — a carbon reduction over 3.3 times larger than the company's actual carbon output.

**Reducing toxics in electronic products** — Siemon has pledged to reduce hazardous substances in its products by committing to meet the European Union (EU) standards for hazardous substances and electronics waste recycling. Specifically, the EU's Restrictions on Hazardous Substances requires that producers of new electrical and electronic equipment must demonstrate that their products do not contain more than the maximum permitted levels of lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE).

**Getting to Zero Waste** — Siemon's innovative waste management program recently helped them achieve what they describe as Zero-Landfill status. Siemon recycles or repurposes over 900 tons of waste, (99% of their total waste), further reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 3,000 tons. Non-recyclable waste is processed into electricity at the waste-to-energy plant.

## **Who Hid My Wastebasket?**

One of Siemon's creative waste reduction strategies was to replace over 200 plastic wastebaskets with a variety of recycling bins, including ones for food waste.

In a similar effort, DEP's Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division at 79 Elm Street has also repurposed over 80 individual wastebaskets, replacing them with a "mini-bin" system of desktop trash, recycling and food waste containers.

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## Siemon Company Pursues Environmental Stewardship

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Carl Siemon, the company's President and CEO, points out the employees' role in the zero-landfill achievement. "This is a team effort all the way," he explained. "To make it work, everyone at Siemon has truly stepped up their recycling efforts. While that has paid great dividends here, we also hope it encourages more recycling at home and beyond."

For more information on Siemon's efforts, visit [www.siemon.com/us/company/environment/](http://www.siemon.com/us/company/environment/) or DEP's Green Circle Awards, <http://www.ct.gov/dep/greencircle>



## What's **NEW** in P2?

### New and Improved Recycling Law

#### Recent changes to Connecticut's recycling law:

- As of October 1, 2011, #1 and #2 plastics, boxboard (e.g., cereal and tissue boxes), magazines, and other paper are included in the list of items that everyone must recycle.
- Recycling receptacles must be provided in the same location as trash receptacles at all common gathering venues.
- Trash and recyclables cannot be mixed.
- Municipal annual reporting of solid waste and recycling has been simplified.

Collectors of solid waste and recycling have additional reporting requirements to the municipalities and DEP.

For more details on the recycling legislation, go to Public Act 10-87, Section (6) (a) at [www.cga.ct.gov/2010/ACT/PA/2010PA-00087-R00HB-05120-PA.htm](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2010/ACT/PA/2010PA-00087-R00HB-05120-PA.htm)

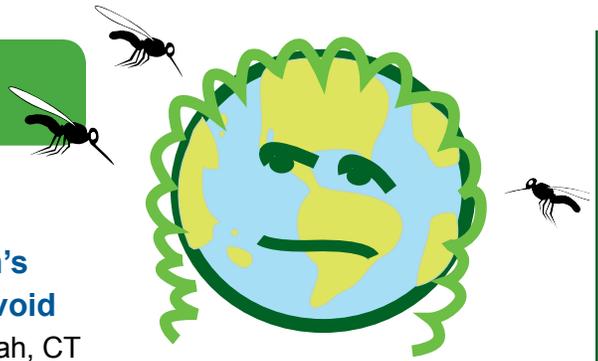
## Fairfield University Wins National Award

Fairfield University is one of three colleges in the nation to have earned an Energy Star award from EPA for its efficient, high-energy, combined heat and power (CHP) system. CHP is the simultaneous production of electricity and heat from a single fuel source, such as natural gas, biomass, biogas, coal, waste heat or oil. CHP is not a single technology, but an integrated energy system that can be modified depending upon the needs of the energy user.

Fairfield University joined the ranks of institutes of higher learning that produce their own heat and power because of mounting concerns over rising energy costs and a congested utility grid. In December 2007, the University began operating a CHP system that generates nearly 95 percent of the power needed by the campus and produces up to 66 percent of the school's high temperature hot water heating and cooling supply. The recovery and utilization of otherwise wasted heat from the 4.6 MW Solar Turbine has led to estimated annual savings of \$2.2 million.

With an operating efficiency of approximately 55 percent, the CHP system requires about 22% less fuel than typical onsite thermal generation and purchased electricity. The CHP system reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an estimated 7,400 tons per year — equivalent to the annual emissions from 1,200 passenger vehicles.

# Ask Eartha



**My family has been getting mosquito bites when we're out on the deck or in the yard. I don't like to use insect repellents with DEET, especially directly on my children's skin. Can you clue me in on more natural methods to avoid getting bit?**

John S., Bozrah, CT

To avoid getting bitten by those annoying (and potentially disease-carrying) pests, it's best to take an integrated approach. First, minimize the number of mosquitoes around your home by eliminating any standing water in which they may lay their eggs. Mosquitoes need at least 7–10 days in water to fully develop.

You can further reduce your chance of getting bit by wearing light-colored clothing (long sleeves, pants, socks and a hat) and staying indoors at sunrise, sunset and early in the evening when mosquitoes are the most active.

If you do need to use an insect repellent, there is wide variety of products that contain different types of active ingredients. A U.S. EPA registration number on the label means the product has been evaluated to ensure that it will not pose unreasonable adverse effects on humans and the environment. EPA has a guide to the different types of ingredients and their effectiveness — including conventional chemical repellents such as DEET and those derived from natural materials such as citronella and eucalyptus.

Insect repellent products that are marketed as “natural” may not be required to have an EPA registration number. One example is oil of citronella, which comes from a dried grass. Citronella has a distinctive scent that masks the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that our bodies give off and has been used as a repellent for over 50 years. (Mosquitoes are attracted to the odor of CO<sub>2</sub>.) Some citronella-based repellents have registered with EPA. Just be aware

Mosquito Breeding Areas	What should I do?
Pails, buckets, paint cans, wheelbarrows or other containers	Turn pails and buckets upside down or cover containers. Dispose of or recycle trash that could hold rainwater.
Swimming and wading pools	Flush wading pools weekly. Drain or chlorinate unused swimming pools.
Birdbaths	Change the water at least weekly. Buy or make a contraction that slowly drips water in the birdbath to cause ripples, which attract birds but deter mosquitoes.
Plant saucers or pet bowls	Empty at least weekly.
Tarps or covers (protecting boats, pools or firewood, etc.)	Shake off tarps or covers to remove collected rainwater after storm or arrange them so that they drain properly.
Clogged roof gutters or rain barrels	Keep gutters clean and install screens in rain barrels to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs. One foot of clogged gutter can produce 1,000 mosquitoes once a week, every week during the summer.
Tires stored outdoors	Dispose of properly or stack and cover to prevent rainwater from entering.
Rot holes in trees or stumps	Fill with sand.
Ornamental pools or aquatic gardens	Install aerator or stock minnows, such as Gamusia, koi or guppies which eat mosquito larvae. (Note: In general, natural ponds and lakes are not mosquito breeding sources. It is illegal to stock them with these non-native fish.)
Storm sewers with standing water	Use mosquito dunks containing the Bti bacteria (sold in garden supply centers).

that if a product does not have an EPA registration number, EPA has not reviewed it for its safety and effectiveness.

Many individuals do find the natural products effective (e.g., those with citronella, eucalyptus, clove, or peppermint). This may be due to each of us having a unique body chemistry and metabolism.

**Note:** *Eartha notices that after eating foods with a lot of garlic, mosquitoes don't seem to like her as much!*

For EPA's guide to insect repellents: [www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/mosquitoes](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/mosquitoes)

For DEP's integrated approach to mosquito management: [www.ct.gov/mosquito](http://www.ct.gov/mosquito)

Eartha answers selected environmental questions. Email your question to [judith.prill@ct.gov](mailto:judith.prill@ct.gov) and watch future issues for your answer.

# P 2 C A L E N D A R

## A SELECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

**August 14-15, 2010**

### **Sharon Audubon Festival**

*Sharon Audubon Center, Sharon*

The 43rd annual Sharon Audubon Festival will feature two days of nature programs and hikes throughout the Audubon property, live animal presentations, musical performances, vendors, food and more. For more information, visit <http://sharon.audubon.org>

**August 18, 2010**

### **NOFA Organic Invasive Removal**

*Beardsley Zoo, Bridgeport*

Organic removal techniques will be demonstrated for invasive plants such as bittersweet, garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, Russian olive, and burning bush. Training will also cover identifying areas in need of invasive removal, site analysis, and creating an appropriate management plan. For more information, visit [www.organiclandcare.net](http://www.organiclandcare.net) or call 203-888-5146.

**August 28, 2010**

### **Green Renovation Home Tour**

*Westport*

Visit a 1910 farmhouse that recently became a state-of-the-art green home with features such as a "Synergy Roof," combining solar electricity, hot water and air heating technologies. For tickets, go to [www.pace-cleanenergy.org](http://www.pace-cleanenergy.org).

**September 11, 2010**

### **Discover Hartford Bicycling & Walking Tour**

*Bushnell Park, Hartford*

Tour starts and ends at Bushnell Park and "is an anti-sprawl, pro-fun, pro-sustainable city, anti-pollution, anti-couch potato, pro-bicycle, pro-pedestrian event." For more information, visit [www.hartfordbiketour.org](http://www.hartfordbiketour.org).

**September 25, 2010**

### **Hunting and Fishing Appreciation Day**

*Sessions Woods WMA, Burlington*

An open house with activities for children and adults, including fish casting, archery, animal track-making and educational presentations on wildlife and fishing. For more information, visit <http://fosw.org> or call 860-675-8130.

For a calendar of events sponsored by DEP, go to [www.ct.gov/dep](http://www.ct.gov/dep)



**Is Connecticut in a drought? For the answer and water conservation tips, go to [www.ct.gov/waterstatus](http://www.ct.gov/waterstatus)**



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Amey Marrella, Commissioner

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