



How Did You Get to Work Today?

DEEP Commissioner Dan Esty rode his bike to work from Cheshire to Hartford on a Friday in May as part of National Bike Month. It was a long haul, but he wanted to set an example and show that it's possible to leave the car behind and travel pollution-free and healthfully. Along the way, he was joined by fifty or so other cyclists. Sandy Fry was one of them. She relies on her bike to get to her job at the Capitol Region Council of Governments, "Because it's the best way to start my day — a way to arrive at work energized and ready to go!"

Choosing to commute to work by bike rather than car is a good way to help make Connecticut's air quality better and to reduce your impact on the environment — it

is non-polluting! Biking to work reduces energy use since no fossil fuels are burned (and it saves you money at the gas pump). About 40% of Connecticut's greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation. So biking eases traffic congestion, which in turn reduces harmful air emissions. This is especially important during the summer months when the temperature rises and ground-level ozone impacts our air quality.

And, there is the obvious health benefits associated with biking and physical exercise.

On most days, however, the majority of people in Connecticut travel to work by car. So how can our state extend the joy of biking to more of the stressed-out car commuters sitting on the highway?

Bike/Walk CT is a non-profit organization working to make
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"I get to know people and places as I bike to work through the neighborhoods" — Kevin Sullivan

How Did You Get to Work Today?

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Connecticut a bike- and walk-friendly state by advocating for changes in our transportation culture. Bike/Walk CT's vice president, Mary Ellen Thibodeau, points out that, "Things like bike lanes, allowing bikes on buses and trains, and secure parking are needed, to name a few."

Connecticut businesses and employers can also encourage biking to work by providing information and support, flexibility, financial incentives, and basic infrastructure. Anne Hayes, Director of Parking and Mass Transit at the Travelers Companies, encourages all new employees to consider bicycling, walking, or using mass transit rather than driving, and points out the lack of parking as a disincentive to driving. Bike racks and showers are also essential; employees need a safe place to store their bikes during working hours and a way to freshen up after their morning ride. Employers could also offer their employees other incentives such as discounted fitness center memberships, or classes that encourage smart and safe biking.

So how are we doing? Connecticut is making progress in being more bike-friendly. We've recently gone from being in 40th place to 21st place on the League of Bicyclists annual state rating, based primarily on improved legislation and education. Connecticut also has a company, Whitcraft LLC in Eastford and a community, the Town of Simsbury, that each received national designation as being bike friendly, and it's likely that other Connecticut businesses and towns would qualify if they were to apply. So, grease up those gears, talk to your human resources department about incentives, and help Connecticut reduce fossil fuel use and clear the air!

Resources to Get Started

Bike to Walk Info: www.bikewalkct.org

CT State Bicycle Map:
<http://ctbikemap.org/issue.html>

State of CT Bicycle Plan:
www.ctbikepedplan.org/

Bike Friendly Companies and Towns:
www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/businessscorecard/

Employers Commuting Guide:
<http://www.sfbike.org/?employers>

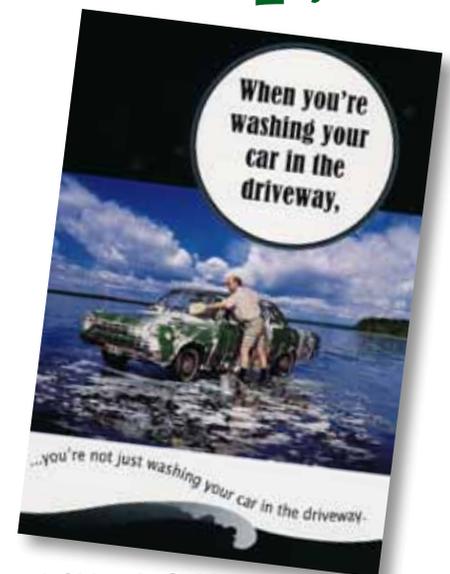
Earn Rewards for Biking: www.nuride.com

Car Washing – the Green Way, not the Driveway

Picture this — it's a warm, sunny day, your car is parked strategically in the driveway, your sleeves are rolled up and out come the hoses and buckets of soapy water. Hold onto that sponge for a moment! Did you know that while your car may be getting clean, you may be polluting our water?

When you wash your car on a nonporous surface (like asphalt), the dirt, grease, grime and suds wash off your car, flow down the driveway, then along the street and eventually find their way into the nearest storm drain. From there, the dirty water and cleaning chemicals can empty directly into our lakes, streams, rivers, and eventually Long Island Sound. This polluted water has an environmental impact not only on water bodies, but can also affect plant and aquatic life. And it's not too good for those of us who like to swim or fish in these waters!

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A Citizen's Guide to Curbing Stormwater Pollution: Long Island Sound Study

DEP is now DEEP

You may have noticed we are now referring to DEP as DEEP — it's not a typo! We are now the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) — which is charged with the dual responsibilities of creating a new energy future for the state and protecting Connecticut's environment and natural resources. To accomplish this, the new agency brings together the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Public Utility Control (DPUC), and an energy policy group that had been based at the Office of Policy and Management. To find out more, go to www.ct.gov/deep.



Car Washing – the Green Way, not the Driveway

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Here are some simple steps that you can take to make washing your car greener and cleaner:

First things first — remove all the trash and loose dirt that you can before you begin washing, and dispose of it properly.

Choose the right location — wash your car on a grassy area instead of on a nonporous surface like your paved driveway or the road. This will allow the wastewater to seep into the soil and break down pollutants rather than having it run directly into a storm drain.

The *Greenwich Avenue Car Wash* in Stamford, Connecticut has found a way to clean grease and grime more effectively. While most car washes use only cold water, this facility recently installed a solar thermal system to heat its water, as warm water cleans better and faster. The system uses 12 solar collectors, or panels, mounted on the roof, and a tank for storing the heated water. It essentially heats the water for free, using the sun's energy. The **Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA)**, formerly CT Clean Energy Fund, provided American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding to offset approximately 75% of the system's cost.

Car washing is also frequently used as a fundraising event. With many cars being washed at one time with soapy water — this can have a sizable impact on Connecticut's water bodies. **For tips on holding environmentally-friendly car wash fundraiser**, go to www.ct.gov/dep (**Disposal of Vehicle Wash Water**) or check out the guidance on the **Windsor** and **Waterford** town websites.

Bring it inside, not in the street — empty your bucket of soapy water down a sink drain so that it ends up in a septic system or the sanitary sewer where it is treated before being discharged.

Shut off water — to prevent water from being used when it's not really needed, turn off the faucet, use a spray nozzle or kink the hose to stop the flow.

Use safer soap — use only soaps and cleaners that are non-toxic, phosphate-free or biodegradable and avoid any acid-based wheel cleaners. These are better for your health and for the environment.

AND ... better yet, go to a pro! — Using a local commercial car wash is the better environmental choice. These businesses use approximately 60% less water than an average car owner uses, and they are regulated by DEEP so the wastewater doesn't end up down the storm drain — it is recycled or collected, treated and sent to a sewage treatment facility.

Shoppers Beware – Greenwashing



Wow! A trip down an aisle of almost any store can be both an exciting and confusing experience for anyone who is interested in protecting our environment: exciting, because companies are responding to consumer demands for products that have less impact on the earth *and* confusing because there are just so many of these products claiming to be “green.”

There are currently nearly 5,000 consumer products available that make some type of green claim – compared with just over 2,000 products in 2009. The increase in volume of products available has made it even more important that we understand what the green buzz words mean and what we’re paying for when we buy them.

As we shop for products and services that have less environmental impact and contain safer ingredients, we need to be aware of greenwashing. According to TerraChoice, www.terrachoice.com (a science-based marketing firm), greenwashing means misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service. Manufacturers can greenwash by putting misleading information on labels, websites, and in their advertising. You may see or hear terms like “all natural ingredients,” “recyclable,” “biodegradable,” or even “green,” describing the company itself.

So, how do you tell the good, the bad and just plain ugly products for the environment?

Learn what those eco-labels and symbols mean. Check out TerraChoice’s “Sins of Greenwashing Pocket Guide,” <http://sinsofgreenwashing.org/take-action/wallet-card>, a quick reference to the definitions of labels and symbols and how they stack up to other similar terms for categories like food and energy, or *Mother Jones’* labeling guide, <http://motherjones.com/files/Mother-Jones-ecolabel-guide.pdf>

Read the ingredients label and understand what is acceptable for you. Memorize the chemicals that may be a concern for your lifestyle and do not buy items containing them. For example, if the product says “natural ingredients,” but you want to limit parabens (the chemical preservative found in many personal care products), you may decide to not buy it if one of the other ingredients listed is methylparaben. For help, check out Seventh Generation’s Label Reading Guide, www.seventhgeneration.com/files/7thGen_Ingredient_List011409.pdf or download their phone app.

Many everyday decisions about purchasing are made easier by doing a little research and considering for yourself whether the features touted as “green” are actually helpful to you. And, if you find that a company has greenwashed a product or service, let the company know that you are unhappy.

There are many websites with information on the chemicals present in products and the health and other effects of using them:

National Institutes of Health Household Products Database, <http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov>

Green Seal www.greenseal.org and EPA’s Design for the Environment (DfE) www.epa.gov/df

Women’s Voices for the Earth at www.womenandenvironment.org/campaignsandprograms/SafeCleaning/HazardsReport.pdf

Environmental Working Group and Skin Deep Database, www.ewg.org



Put a Cork in it

After you finish that last glass of wine, you can now recycle more than the bottle. If the stopper is made from natural cork, you can bring it (along with others that you have collected) to a restaurant or wine retailer participating in a cork recycling program.

Natural cork is the bark of the cork oak tree – a renewable, sustainable resource. Once harvested, it is made into various products, including wine stoppers. Used corks can be recycled into flooring tiles, bulletin boards, building insulation, automotive gaskets, craft materials, footwear components, and sports equipment – and even used as a soil amendment in compost.

ReCORK and Cork ReHarvest are recycling programs whose goals include partnering with companies that use recycled cork in their products, and educating people about the importance of cork forests. They are also working with grocery stores, restaurants, wine and bottle shops and winery tasting rooms to increase the number of cork collection locations.



At **Sunset Vineyards** in Goshen, Connecticut, corks are collected at regular wine tasting events and customers are encouraged to bring in corks for recycling. This year, co-owner Judy Motel received a surprise phone call from a designer looking for corks for a window display at fashion retailer Anthropologie in NYC. Judy said that she is excited that her corks are being used a few times before they are ultimately recycled. We say “Cheers” to that!

For locations to recycle your wine stoppers (natural cork only – not plastic or metal): visit <http://recork.org> or www.corkforest.org.



Putting Mattress Disposal to Bed

Your lumpy 20-year-old mattress had to go. So, you bought a new one and as part of the deal, the store even took your old one “away.” You may now be having sweet dreams, but disposing of your old mattress and millions more like it, is a nightmare for stores and your town.

According to the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI), 40 million mattresses and box springs are sold nationally each year with only a small percentage being recycled. According to a DEEP survey, Connecticut residents disposed of roughly 100,000 mattresses last year and virtually none of them was recycled. Your old mattress most likely ended up at one of our resource recovery facilities where our trash is burned or was sent to an out-of-state landfill.

Mattresses represent a problem at some resource recovery facilities because they need to be shredded before they can be incinerated which becomes an added cost. Municipalities are paying \$15–\$20 or more to dispose of each mattress. Most municipalities rely on property taxes or a charge to residents to cover the cost of disposal. The City of Hartford, for example, is projected to spend more than \$400,000 this year to dispose of old mattresses.



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Photo courtesy of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, WA

Rest assured — Connecticut is now looking at mattresses as the next candidate for a producer-responsibility solution. The concept of producer responsibility holds the manufacturer primarily responsible for managing its products at the end of their life. (Connecticut has already passed product stewardship legislation for an electronic waste recycling program and passed paint legislation this past session.)

In April, the CT Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA) Trash Museum in Hartford played host to a national stakeholder meeting on mattress recycling. The meeting, facilitated by PSI (www.productstewardship.us), was well attended with representatives from state and local governments, manufacturers and mattress recyclers participating. Pedro Segarra, Mayor of Hartford, and Amey Marrella, former DEP Commissioner, provided opening remarks highlighting the issue from their particular perspectives. The group agreed to continue to work towards a producer-responsibility solution through a series of follow-up discussions.

Is your mattress still usable?

Some organizations such as the Salvation Army will accept clean unstained mattresses in good condition. You may also try offering your old mattress on Craigslist or Freecycle. But don't get your hopes up — many people and non-profits may be leery about taking them because of the potential for bed bugs. Another suggestion is to see if your local fire department or fire training academy can use it for training.

What's

in P2?

Let nature do the work.
Maintain the pressure. Fix
water leaks. Share rides.
Recycle More.

These are among the 16 eco-messages that can be found on the new **Go Green postage stamps** from the U.S. Postal Service. The USPS has created a simple and fun way to get the environmental message out.

"These stamps demonstrate individual actions — from saving energy or water to reducing waste — that add up to a big difference for our health and our environment," said Lisa P. Jackson, U.S. EPA Administrator. So, next time you need to mail a letter, why not send an eco-message with it by using a Go Green stamp!

By the way, the USPS in Connecticut has been an environmental leader, receiving national and state recognition for its reduction of hazardous waste and vehicle emissions. Visit www.usps.com/green for more information on these efforts.

New and Improved DEEP Newsletters

DEEP has two new electronic newsletters — **Your Business and the Environment** provides news and information to help businesses comply with environmental laws and regulations and become environmentally sustainable, and **Your Local Environment (Municipalities)** offers municipal officials information to support a town or city's environmental practices, as well as news about grant and funding opportunities.

We have initiated a new subscription service that makes it easier for both new and existing subscribers to register to receive any or all DEEP publications. Try it out at www.ct.gov/dep/newslettersubscription — we think you'll like it!

Ask Eartha

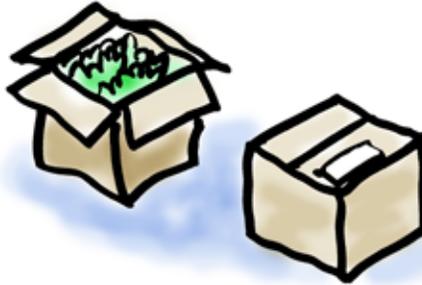
My family receives and sends lots of packages. What's the most eco-friendly packing material that we can use? What can we do with the packaging materials we get? Help us soon! We are up to our ears in Styrofoam peanuts and cardboard boxes!

Joe F., Mansfield, CT



For outgoing packages, reusing the boxes or cushioning materials is always the best option. Reuse extends the life of the materials and no new resources are used to create new ones. Boxes in good shape can be used again and again. (To store them without using a lot of space you can flatten them.) If the box is too damaged or a size you know you won't use again, make sure to recycle it through your town's recycling program. To reuse the box, cover or use a waterproof pen to disguise the previous shipping information. If that's not possible, dismantle, refold and re-tape the box to use the cleaner inside. If you must buy new, remember to look for boxes made with recycled content.

Now for those pesky "Styrofoam" peanuts! Technically speaking, they are polystyrene plastic. The color of the peanuts indicates the type: green peanuts can be 70% or more recycled polystyrene;



white is 70% or more virgin resin; and pink means anti-static has been applied. To store them for future use, rub your hands with a light coating of cooking oil (to prevent static) and transfer them by hand to a container with a large opening. If you don't think you will reuse them, recycle them by going to the Plastic Loose Fill Council (PLFC) website at www.loosefillpackaging.com to find drop-off locations in Connecticut, or call *The Peanut Hotline* at 800-828-2214.

The main function of any cushioning material is to protect the contents, but you don't want to increase the weight of the package either by using heavy

material. Reuse any material that is appropriate for the contents — bubble wrap, air pillows or those pesky peanuts. If you don't have any of this material left, you can use crumpled newspaper or other used paper — which then can be easily recycled. Some people use sealed plastic bags of popped popcorn for their outgoing packages, especially when sending to service members overseas. If you must buy new, you can try biodegradable peanuts made from cornstarch or sorghum. They dissolve in water or can be composted. Or you can purchase packing material made from recycled paper, such as Papernuts.[®]

I'll wrap it up with a few tips on shipping:

- Ask for items to be grouped together and not sent in separate shipments.
- Use ground instead of air shipping.
- Support a shipping company that operates in an environmentally preferable way. Check out its website and see what actions it is taking to minimize its impact on the environment.
- Ask if the retailer you are purchasing from offers carbon offsets for shipping.

If your business wants to cut shipping costs, a good place to begin is by reading "How to Pack Lighter and Tighter for Eco-Smart Shipping" by Dan Esty and PJ Simmons.

www.greenbiz.com/blog/2011/05/17/how-pack-lighter-and-tighter-eco-smart-shipping#ixzz1McC0F9Pb

Eartha answers selected environmental questions. Email your question to 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

Connecticut's Farmers Markets are open for the summer season now.

For a list of certified farmers markets by town, visit www.ct.gov/doag

Thursday, July 21

Connecticut Farm Energy Fair

Eastern CT State University, Willimantic

Practical solutions with the latest technology to cut energy costs and reduce carbon emissions. See first-hand opportunities for diversification in energy crops, energy generation, and steps to take for energy efficiency on the farm. Keynote speaker, UConn Professor Richard Parnas, "How We Can Produce and Use Biofuels in Connecticut." More information: http://ctfarmenergy.org/Pdfs/2011FarmEnergyFair_Sponsor_Exhibit_Reg.pdf

Saturday, August 6

2nd Annual City Farm and Garden Tour

Various locations in New Haven

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT NOFA) is hosting this tour which will focus on the resourcefulness and creativity residents bring to growing and raising their own food, with stops at urban farms and community, school, restaurant and private gardens. More information: www.organiclandcare.net or call 203-888-5146.

Friday-Sunday, September 9-11

2011 Connecticut Folk Festival & Green Expo

Edgerton Park, New Haven

This annual event will feature a Free Green Expo made up fun activities and vendors that focus on real solutions for people to live better, healthier lives with less impact on the environment. The folk festival portion of the day is a mix of traditional and contemporary roots music. Tickets: www.ctfolk.com/ctff/index.html

Saturday & Sunday, September 17 & 18

Live Green CT!

Taylor Farm Park, Norwalk

Two-day festival for all ages featuring food, eco-shopping, music, environmental speakers and exhibits. Businesses will be showcasing their new technology and providing ideas that will save you money. More information: www.livegreent.com.

Tuesday, September 27

Greening Your Early Childhood Center

New Canaan Nature Center, New Canaan

Workshop by a nationally-recognized early childhood facilities architect to help child care centers understand how to make low-cost/no-cost green improvements. Sponsored by the Connecticut Children's Investment Partnership and the CCAC Accreditation Facilitation Project. Register at 860-525-4821 or email cdevine@lisc.org.

Sunday through Saturday, September 18-24

Farm-To-Chef Week

Various Connecticut Locations

Sample and savor the state's local flavor! During Farm-to-Chef week, a variety of restaurants and foodservice businesses create and offer a separate menu showcasing Connecticut Grown ingredients and wines. More information: 860-713-2558 or www.ct.gov/doag

Thursday in September

Green Lodging Training

(Location and Date to be announced)

Training on environmental practices for hotels, motels and B&Bs will be held in cooperation with Boston Green Tourism. Details: www.ct.gov/dep/greenlodging

How's the Air Quality Today? Find out at www.ct.gov/dep/ajq



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For a free subscription, please contact Judy Prill at 860-424-3694 or judith.prill@ct.gov. Save postage and paper by signing up to receive *P2 View* electronically at www.ct.gov/dep/p2view.

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Please consider the environment before printing out this newsletter.