



POLLUTION PREVENTION VIEW

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SUMMER 2009

CT Green Lodging Keeps You “Green” on Vacation

Have a **Connecticut Staycation** planned for this summer? Do you expect the same environmental awareness that you have at home to be present at the lodging facility where you stay? For example, do you prefer to not have your bedding and towels changed every day? Would you prefer that the place use less toxic cleaners and limit use of pesticide and fertilizers?

If so, you will be pleased to learn Governor Rell recently announced a new program that awards a Green Lodging certification to Connecticut hotels, motels and other lodging facilities for implementing business practices that have less impact on the environment such as conserving energy and water, reducing waste and using less toxic cleaning products.

The Green Lodging certification not only benefits the environment and the bottom line; it’s a great marketing tool. It lets the customer know that the facility is making an effort to tread more lightly on the planet while giving them a greener and healthier experience.

Becoming a certified facility enables the owners to use the CT Green Lodging logo on any website or ads — and also provides a designation in the *Connecticut Vacation Guide 2010* and on www.CTvisit.com that they are a green facility. The program, which started in late May, is co-sponsored by the CT Department of Environmental Protection and the CT Commission on Culture & Tourism.



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Thank You Gina

Gina McCarthy will long be remembered as someone who left a major impact on the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

In just over five years as Commissioner, she modernized and reinvigorated the agency and focused DEP on the major environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Gina was appointed Commissioner by Governor Rell in December, 2004. She left DEP this June after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate as EPA's Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation.

Two of her biggest passions were addressing the issue of climate change and reconnecting children to the outdoors. When it came to **climate change** she was focused on both reducing emissions and preparing adaptation strategies to deal with the impact of emissions already in the atmosphere. As for reconnecting children to nature, her concern for the health and welfare of young people — and the future of the environmental movement — gave birth to the nationally recognized initiative she cleverly dubbed, "**No Child Left Inside.**"

On policy issues, Gina was also instrumental in:

- Launching DEP's **Landscape Stewardship** initiative and linking it to Governor Rell's "Responsible Growth" campaign to reduce sprawl and end inefficient development patterns.
- Making certain DEP amended and updated its **Solid Waste Management Plan** — which includes the audacious goal of doubling the state's recycling rate from 30 to 58%.
- Helping shepherd through Connecticut's historic **e-waste legislation**, which provides for recycling of obsolete electronic equipment and contains a healthy dose of "producer responsibility" by requiring manufacturers to contribute to the costs of running the program.
- Promoting the creation of a **Grassland Habitat strategy** to protect endangered grasslands birds, strengthened the agency's open space program and put a real focus on rebuilding the state park system.

While the list of her accomplishments on policy issues could go on and on, it is also important to note what she did to help rebuild DEP. She created an Office of Information Management to bring the agency's technology into the 21st century and make certain staff had the tools they need to do their jobs. She organized a strong Office of the Commissioner to bring consistency, certainty and timeliness into decision making.

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Thank You Gina *Continued from page 2*

She took steps to strengthen the agency's enforcement efforts. And she launched the "LEAN" program to look at how the DEP does business and eliminate unnecessary and inefficient processes.

Gina was an inspirational and highly regarded figure, not only within the agency but also with important constituencies such as legislators, other state commissioners and environmental organizations. As a result of her efforts to build support for a strong environmental agenda, her schedule was always packed with appearances before groups and organizations all across the state.

Washington's gain is Connecticut's loss.

We wish her well in her new assignment ... but make no mistake about it. Gina will be missed.



Every Drip Counts

How many gallons of water did you use today while showering? How many for washing dishes and dirty clothes? How many for drinking? And, how many for watering your lawn? When you add it all up, each of us uses about 100 gallons of water per day, with a family of four easily going through 400 gallons. Picture a one-gallon container and then think of what 100 one-gallon containers would look like if they were all lined up — that's an astonishing amount of water!



Large amounts of water are used in the laundry room, kitchen and bathroom for showering, toilet flushing, clothes and dish washing — the obvious things. But, significant amounts are also wasted as a result of leaks — a small faucet drip can add up to 25 gallons per day. The flow through a garden hose can be as much as 10 gallons per minute.

In Connecticut, water is fairly inexpensive (about a quarter of the cost of cable TV), and good quality water simply flows through the tap. So it's easy to use much more than necessary and to put off fixing that leaky faucet. However, the demand for water has **tripled** over the past 50 years, and this puts a strain on our public water supply, private wells and septic systems, and impacts human health and the environment.

Even though Connecticut most likely will not experience a water shortage this year with all the rain we received, we've seen many years when public water supplies were slow to recharge and a number of private wells ran dry. Conserving water is not just for droughts, but to protect a shared natural resource year-round.

There are many, easy ways to reduce water use. For instance, not using your toilet as a wastebasket; sweeping steps, driveways and sidewalks with a broom rather than a hose; not watering your lawn when it's supposed to go dormant during the hot, dry summer; replacing your toilet and clothes washer with more efficient models; and fixing leaks.

Take a look at some of the common water uses and amounts used and do the math for yourself. By making just a few small changes to your daily routine you can save a significant amount of water, save money, and help preserve water supplies for future generations.

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Every Drip Counts *Continued from page 3*

Average Household Water Use in Gallons

Top loading washing machine	40 gallons /load; perma-press cycle = 60 gals/load
Front loading washing machine	25 gallons/load (plus, 50% less energy!)
Showering (conventional showerhead)	4 to 5 gallons/minute (10 minutes = 40 to 50 gals)
Showering (low-flow showerhead)	2.5 gallon/minute (10 minutes = 25 gals)
Tub bath	36 gallons
Toilet flush (conventional toilet)	3 to 7 gallons, depending on age of toilet
Toilet flush (ultra low-flow toilet)	1.6 gallons
Hand washing, brushing teeth (conventional faucet)	3 to 4 gallons/minute each (with tap running)
Hand washing, brushing teeth (low- flow faucet)	2.5 gallons each minute (turning off the tap)
Dishwashing by hand	20 gallons
Automatic dishwashing (full load)	10 gallons

Resources to Help You Get Started

- How much water do you use? Take the Water Conservation Audit:
http://gaprojectwet.org/dragonfly%20gazette/past_issues/Fall2004_StudentCopy.pdf
- Water saving recommendations for all parts of your home, indoors and out from the CT Dept. of Public Health: http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/drinking_water/pdf/wat_eff_mea.pdf
- Identify EPA Water Sense products like shower heads, toilets, and irrigations systems that use about 20% less water, making it easy to choose water-efficient products <http://www.epa.gov/watersense>
- Ways to reduce water use and manage water quality in your home landscape, including xeriscaping and rain gardens: www.sustainability.uconn.edu

CT Green Lodging Keeps You “Green”

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CT Green Lodging is based on a similar program in Maine that allows lodging facilities to self-certify using a workbook that is available online. To become certified, lodging owners complete a workbook where they check off practices that they have implemented while earning points at the same time. The workbook is filled with ideas and has about 400 possible points. Only 100 points are needed to certify. The certification lasts for two years and owners will need to then re-certify at a higher level. This encourages continuous improvement and keeps these practices in good stead.

Areas where facilities can earn points include: energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy (generated onsite or purchased), reduction of toxics by switching to green cleaners, landscaping with minimal use of fertilizer and pesticides, capturing waste heat, conducting green meetings and conferences, and many more.

So bring your environmental practice on vacation this year. Encourage any lodging facility that you patronize to consider becoming part of the CT Green Lodging program.

If you would like to learn more about the program or look at the CT Green Lodging workbook, go to www.ct.gov/dep/greenlodging or contact Kim Trella at kim.trella@ct.gov.

Recycling Rundup

Recycler on the Roof



Photo courtesy of New England Metal Roof at www.newenglandmetalroof.com

It's summer and while you are enjoying the warmer weather, you may also be thinking about one of many outside projects that need attention. While you're contemplating those jobs over a cool drink, remember green alternatives to traditional building materials have never been better or more available. In the next few issues of the **P2 View**, we will look at some green building materials. In this issue we will feature metal roofs.

There are many types of roofing materials, asphalt shingles, wood shakes, ceramic tiles, slate, fiber cement, metal sheets, and even some made from recycled plastic (see side bar). On residential buildings in New England, the most common material is the asphalt shingle but metal roofs are gaining in popularity.

Metal roofs can be made from steel, aluminum, zinc, copper and titanium, but the most common material is steel. Steel roofs can be finished in different textures and colors and are a far cry from the old style roof that people see on some barns and farmhouses. Steel is environmentally preferable over other metals such as zinc and copper, which may leach into stormwater and have toxic effects on aquatic life in streams or other water bodies. Here are frequently asked questions about metal roofs:

What are some advantages of a metal roof?

They seal out water, wind and shed snow and are fire proof and provide a good surface for catching rain water. Some have 25% to 95% recycled content and unlike many other roofing materials, they can be recycled over and over again. However, recycling that metal roof is not likely because they can last a very long time — 50 years or longer!

Is a metal roof heavy?

A metal roof is also lighter than you might think. Asphalt shingles average 2 to 2.5 pounds per square foot; steel roofing panels weigh 0.7 to 1.3 pounds per square foot. In most re-roofings, metal can be installed over existing roofing materials, saving labor and disposal costs.

Are they loud when it rains?

Some people may enjoy the pitter-patter of raindrops, others will want to muffle the sound by installing the roof over existing shingles or by putting in a layer of sound-proofing or plywood between the roof and the metal.

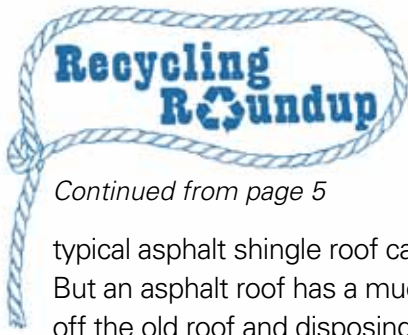
Will my house be hotter in the summer?

Surprise! Metal roofs can be "cool" roofs. They dissipate heat quickly when it is cloudy or the sun sets. They reflect the sun's radiant heat resulting in less heat transfer to inside the house. Some finishes can reflect up to 70% or more of the sun's rays. A "cool" roof can save between 7-15% of the total cooling cost. A white

Metal roofs not your style? Do you prefer the more traditional look of cedar shakes, tile or slate? Then composite roofing may be for you. Made out of recycled plastic, composite roofs have many of the same properties as metal roofs.

<http://www.greenyour.com/home/home-improvement/roof/tips/choose-recycled-roofing-materials>

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finish will be more reflective, but there are also colored materials that have reflective properties. (Source: www.coolroofs.org).

So, how about cost?

A metal roof has many environmental and technical qualities that make it seem like a great choice. But the bottom line for most people is the cost. The typical asphalt shingle roof can cost about \$50 to \$150 or more per square (ten foot by ten foot area). But an asphalt roof has a much shorter life span than other materials and there is an additional cost for tearing off the old roof and disposing of it. Metal sheeting costs can start at \$100 per square to more than \$600 a square. Ceramic, clay and slate are considerably more — from about \$300 per square to \$1000 per square.

I'm convinced. Is there anything else I should consider?

Yes! The installation of a painted or coated ENERGY STAR labeled metal roof, may be eligible for a tax credit worth 30% of the material costs, up to \$1,500 per home. The roof must be installed between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2010.

Resources:

Tax Credits: <http://www.energystar.gov> (select "tax credits for energy efficiency")

Metal Roof Buying Guide: <http://www.hometips.com/buying-guides/metal-roofing.html>

ENERGY STAR reflective roofing: <http://www.energystar.gov> (select "home improvement" and look under "roof products")

What's **NEW** in P2?

DEP Earns NuRide Awards

On June 30th at the State Capitol, winners of the Earth Day Commuter Challenge received their awards. DEP was among the winners and took home two awards:

- 1st place for highest percentage rate of employees who participated
- 3rd place for new enrollments in the NuRide program

The 2009 Earth Day Commuter Challenge was held to encourage commuters to take greener forms of commuting through Earth Day. The Challenge tracked all forms of 'green' commuting including carpooling, vanpooling, telecommuting, biking, walking and taking public transportation.

Since participating in the NuRide program, DEP commuters have taken 5,005 fewer car trips resulting in over 114, 000 miles off of the roads, and prevented approximately 50 tons of CO2 emissions. In Connecticut, all NuRide commuters took 146,454 fewer car trips, taking 4,085,130 miles off the roads and prevented 1,797 tons of emissions.

To see for yourself and find out how you can participate, visit www.earthdaycommuterchallenge.com

Connie Mendolia from the DEP Green Team accepts the agency's Commuter Challenge Awards from Deputy Commissioner Albert A. Martin of the CT Department of Transportation



Ask Eartha

Dear Eartha:

Hey, thank you for all your issues. Can you tell me what to use for clogged drains while saving the environment and my pipes?

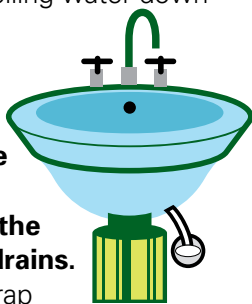
Danette S., New London, CT

Drains seem to clog at the most inconvenient time — like just before your house guests are due to arrive. Many people reach for commercial drain cleaners which contain ingredients such as lye, bleach, and sulfuric or hydrochloric acid. If splashed on your skin or in your eyes, these caustic chemicals can burn or blind you. They can even cause explosions or toxic gases to form as they react to the materials trapped in your drain. You can avoid these dangers as well as damage to your pipes and the environment by using manual methods along with preventative maintenance to clear your drains.

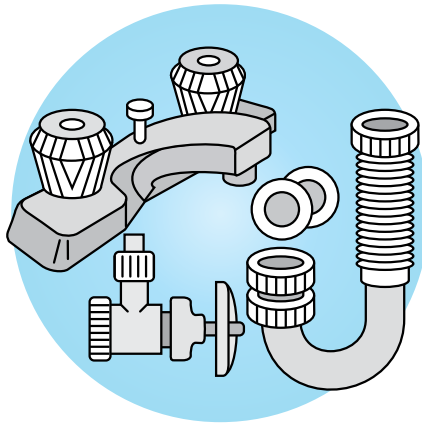
If your clogged drain is in the kitchen, the culprit is probably grease. To get it cleaned out, pour about ½ cup baking soda into the drain followed by 1 cup of white vinegar. Let the mixture bubble for about 15 minutes and then pour a teakettle full of boiling water down the drain.

Now bathroom sinks, tubs and shower stalls are a different story -- usually hair is the culprit in these drains.

If there is a sink trap in the drain, pull it out. Most likely you will find tightly wound hair with gunk on it that you will have to pull off the trap. (*I usually wear rubber gloves for this since it can be a very slimy operation!*) Follow



this cleaning with the baking soda/vinegar treatment to dissolve other gunk left in the drain. If you still have a slow running drain or a clog, you may have to pull out more hair and gunk with a coat hanger. (Use pliers to make a hook or loop at the end.)



Still have a clog? It may be further down in the drain pipe than you can reach or it may be something other than hair or grease. You may have to make a trip to the local hardware store to get a plunger. Before you start, make sure that you plug the overflow opening with a wet rag. Fill the drain area with enough water to get a good seal and push the plunger down and then up quickly at least 10 times. (If you have a toilet clog, there are plungers that are made just for this job that are inexpensive and work well.)

Another way is to use a plumber's snake, which you can also buy at the hardware store. To use this tool, you first remove any strainer or trap and unwind the metal "snake" into the drain. When you feel the clog,

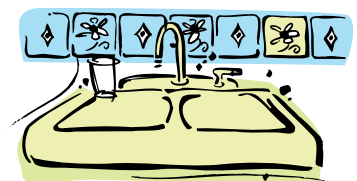


pull it out slowly. You never know what you might find — it could even be a washcloth or a favorite toy stuck in the pipe. Other unclogging devices include air pressure canisters or garden hose bladders.

Still no luck? If you are feeling handy, remove the elbow trap under the sink or toilet. Just make sure that you put a container underneath the pipe to catch the trapped water that will come gushing out. (*I did this when my kitchen sink was clogged and pulled out 6 wooden Popsicle sticks!*) Finally, if you still are stuck, it may be time to call a plumber – and remember to prevent that clog from now on.

How do I prevent clogs?

- Use the baking soda and vinegar treatment described above on a regular basis (about every 2 weeks) to keep your drains clear.
- Never pour any grease down the drain. Clean out greasy pans or containers with paper towels before washing them.
- Use a strainer in your sink, shower or tub drains to catch hair and other items that you don't want down the drain. These are much easier to clean out on a daily basis.
- Flush only toilet paper and human waste. Wipes, diapers, tampons and sanitary napkins should be thrown in the trash.



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

August 1, 2009

**Conservation Day 2009
Smart Living Center, Orange**

Free event for the whole family with interactive exhibits and workshops on energy efficiency, a rainforest reptile show, a farmers market and much more. For more information, contact the Smart Living Center at (203) 799-0460 or visit www.uinet.com.

August 15, 2009

**Dinosaur State Park Day
Dinosaur State Park, Rocky Hill**

Celebrate the 43rd anniversary of the discovery of the dinosaur tracks. Live entertainment, crafts, games with prizes, nature walks, live animal programs, track talks, films and face painting. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/dep/dinosaurstatepark

August 12, 2009

**Remodeling, Buying and Building a Greener Home
Smart Living Center, Orange**

Learn how you can save money by reducing your home's energy and maintenance costs and make your home healthier for you and your family. To register for this free seminar, contact the Smart Living Center at (203) 799-0460 or visit www.uinet.com.

August 20, 2009

**Organic Lawn and Turf Course
Manchester Community College, Manchester**

The CT Chapter of Northeast Organic Farming Association (CT NOFA) is sponsoring an intensive day-long course for land care professional and municipal employees on management of lawns and athletic turf using organic methods. For more information, visit www.organiclandcare.net or call (203) 888-5146.

Use Your Bicycle to Commute — <http://connbikes.org/bike-everywhere>



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