

Green Tip Archives 2009

12-14-2009: Grease and Water Don't Mix

Read this [City of Austin flyer](#) shared by Sally Hoffman to learn about how pouring kitchen grease down drains affects our environment and our pocketbooks. Keep this information in mind during your holiday cooking.

11-23-2009: Salvaging for Home Building

Bethany Trombley shared this [New York Times article](#) about Dan Phillips in Huntsville who creates unique houses in which 80% of the materials are salvaged from other construction projects, hauled out of trash heaps or picked up from the side of the road. Check out the slideshow!

11-16-2009: Solar Powered Facilities

Visit the link that Shannon Hanney sent about the [solar "sunflowers"](#) at the Mueller Development. Austin was also approved for the country's largest [solar power facility](#). It's nice to see that we can utilize a sustainable resource like the sun for our energy needs.

11-02-2009: Solar-Powered Homes

Bryan Sloane shared this article: The National Mall was transformed into a futuristic commune for the past two weeks as 20 teams from four countries erected solar-powered homes. [Check out the winners!](#)

09-30-09: Transportation

Looks like it's time to spotlight transportation again and what better way than a challenge to reduce your CO₂. Please check out the forwarded information below from the **UT Share Program** of PTS.

Announcing the 2nd Annual Nationwide Fall Campus Commuter Challenge!

Join today and track your commute for the month of **October**. Every day you use any form of alternative transportation: carpool, bike, public transportation, etc. your CO₂ savings is automatically calculated and you earn points that make you *eligible to win prizes!*

Help your school be "top of the class" in reducing CO₂. The University of Texas will be competing against Oregon State University, University of Alaska, University of Kentucky, University of South Carolina, University of North Texas, and the University of Pittsburg. **This is our chance to show all the other universities that we are the leaders in using alternative transportation.**

The Fall Campus Challenge will have three awards that schools will be competing for: highest percentage of participation, highest percentage of alternative transportation used, most CO₂ saved.

At the end of the challenge a nationwide drawing will be conducted and 2 individuals will win iPod Nanos. Determination of individual winners will be made in early November. Last year, we had 2 staff members on our campus who won iPods! In addition to the grand prizes, 2 Fandango movie gift cards will given away each week.

[Sign up](#). When the Fall Campus applet appears, just select your school and you're on your way. It's fast easy and fun. *Please note, your browser must allow pop ups from this site.*

TRY A **CARPOOL**

Share the ride with at least one person and you qualify as a UT carpool. Carpools registered with PTS receive a parking permit discount and other benefits. [Find out more and register online](#).

TRY A **VANPOOL**

[Share a ride](#) with 5 or more commuters in a Capital Metro van and receive a campus parking space at no charge.

RIDE A [CAPITAL METRO MAINLINE BUS](#) OR [RIDE A UT SHUTTLE](#).

Find out what the buzz is about and join the 40,000 UT faculty, staff, and students who take transit to and from campus daily. If you need help finding the right route and schedule for your commute, try Capital Metro's new [Trip Planner Tool](#).

GET A WORKOUT BY **WALKING** OR **BIKING** TO CAMPUS

Enjoy the health benefits of walking or biking to campus and learn more about [UT bike services](#) at

UT Share Program

[Parking & Transportation Services](#)

The University of Texas at Austin

(512) 471-PARK (7275)

parking@www.utexas.edu

09-08-09: Carbon Footprint

Check out your individual carbon footprint! This [calculator link](#) came from Lisa Storer. And at the end of the results, check out the different ways you can **reduce** your footprint.

08-31-09

This week I would like to focus on one of our ultimate resources: **WATER**. This summer has been devastating for this increasingly precious liquid:

- Austin went into a [Stage 2 Water Use Restriction](#).
- [San Antonio sued Lower Colorado Authority](#) over diminished water-sharing.
- 8 of 12 fountains on campus shut down to point of complete evaporation.

So what can we do to help alleviate this problem? Plenty!

- Use drip irrigation for your lawn.
- Turn off the water while you brush your teeth.
- Run the laundry and/or dishwasher when it's completely full.
- Check air conditioning units and restroom fixtures for leaks and fix them.
- For more ways, visit the [Water Use It Wisely Web site](#).

08-17-10

Ever wanted to spruce up your exterior brick walls? Lisa Storer found an interesting website that shows how to create small habitats and garden spaces to promote nature and artistry in these normally boring areas. Check out ideas for [suburban habitat restoration](#).

08-10-09

For those of you who missed the Phantom Load Webinar, I want to share the [PowerPoint presentation](#) with you. Phantom load refers to the electric power consumed by electronic appliances while they are switched *off* or in a standby mode. This seminar presented data and insight on how to save money on a university campus by reducing the use of "leaking" energy coming from all the different appliances, machines, and electronics that we use on a daily basis.

For more information about the group who held this webinar, visit the [EYP Web site](#).

08-03-09

I wanted to share some information from Bethany Trombley about Solatube Tubular Daylight Devices. Not only can buildings use a resource that Texas has tons of--good ol' natural sunlight--but occupants can physically feel better, too, since sunlight allows the body to produce vitamin D.

For more information, check out the [Solatube Web site](#).

07-27-09

I received an e-mail about plastic water bottles from David Kruse that I wanted to share with everyone:

"Most water bottles are composed of a plastic called polyethylene terephthalate (PET). Now, to make PET, you need crude oil. Specifically, 17 million barrels of oil are used in the production of PET water bottles every year, estimates University of Louisville scientists. No wonder the per-ounce cost of bottled water rivals that of gasoline. What's more, 86 percent of 30 billion PET water bottles sold annually are tossed in the trash instead of being recycled, according to data from the Container Recycling Institute. That's a lot of waste--waste that will outlive you, your children, and your children's children. You see, PET bottles take 400 to 1000 years to degrade. Which begs the question: If our current rate of consumption continues, where will we put all of this discarded plastic?"

There are a couple of easy fix-it options for this one:

- Reuse your plastic bottles
 - Recycle them (don't forget to take the lids off)
 - Invest in a reusable aluminum or stainless steel water bottle
- For more info, check out [what Wikipedia has to say about bottled water](#).

07-20-09: Sustainable Carpet

Sustainability is not something that should be walked all over, but carpet is! And there are many ecological-based reasons to think about what kinds of carpets you should purchase and also what happens to the carpet you are replacing.

- The chemicals that go into carpet and adhesives can affect the surrounding air quality, and not just during the installation period. Make sure to look into low-VOC options.
- Certain carpet materials can be recycled and/or reused. Check for any green labels and research companies disposal techniques so that you can eliminate the ones that will probably just chunk the old stuff in the closest landfill.
- See if the carpets can be solution-dyed. Not only does the color last longer, but it takes less water and energy resources to use this process.
- Tiled carpet is also a great eco-friendly option so that whole areas don't have to be ripped up and redone. This allows for less waste and saves a lot of the other kind of green = \$\$\$\$.

Remember, this tip is not just for your home, but also for our projects here on campus. We have a lot of square footage at UT, let's work to sustain it!

Helpful websites:

[Green Seal "Choose Green Report" on carpet](#)

[Carpet & Rug Institute](#)

07-13-09: Sustainable Food

After hearing that the Division of Housing & Food Services uses local farm produce for some of their dining locations and events, I thought I would share these helpful resources. DHFS gets fresh produce from [Sustainable Food Center's "Farm Direct" program](#). SFC also has a "Farm to Work" program where they could bring seasonal, fresh produce directly to FC1! If enough people are interested, this is something I would really like to bring to PMCS, so check out the website and let me know.

A national site that I was referred to by the online [ECOMII newsletter](#) is [Local Harvest](#). They have information on organic foods, events, photos, and blogs from across the states.

Finally, I wanted to share a fun [video that DHFS made](#) to educate the students on transitioning to a tray-free lifestyle here at UT.

07-06-09: Double-Sided Printing

Recently I was asked to reuse the double-siding tip. However I wanted to take it a step further and include a [pdf of the instructions](#) that can be posted by your local printer.

Also, don't forget that you can save paper by using print preview to avoid reprinting due to any editorial or layout mistakes.

06-22-09: Sustainable Future

This week I wanted to let everyone know about a great opportunity to get involved with the City Council and Austin's sustainable future. There will be an "Eco-Change Exchange" Forum this **Thursday, June 25th** from **5:30 – 9:00 pm** at **Austin City Hall** at 301 W. Second (between Guadalupe and Lavaca). The evening's schedule is as follows:

- 5:30 – 6:30 Sustainable Future Fair and Reception with new City Council Members.
- 6:30 – 7:00 Opening Presentations: Building a Sustainable Future in Austin
- 7:00 – 8:00 Eco-Priorities Sessions: Breakout on Key Issue Areas
- 8:00 – 9:00 Charting Our Future, including reflections from participating City Council Members.

To check out more on this forum or other future events like the [Austin Farmers' Market](#) or the [Austin Pecan Street Project](#), go to the [Austin EcoNetwork Web site](#).

06-15-09: Building Green

Susan Patino shared a video called "[Greening of the American Hard Hat](#)" that we can use to help educate our construction workers about building green. We all know how much projects can cost, but what about the price of knowledge? I think this quote sums it up: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." ~Derek Bok

06-08-09: Eco Signatures

This week I would like to share two new PMCS e-mail signature logos that were created by one of our brilliant interns, Erin Tilley. The attached logos provide an eco-friendly yet simple way to identify our organization with a green mindset. Directions to create your e-mail signature:

- Save logo to the desktop (by right clicking on the one you like and choosing *Save As...*)
- In Outlook Mail, go to the *Tools* Menu and select *Options* at the bottom of the drop-down menu
- Select the 3rd tab called *Mail Format*
- Click on the *Signature* button
- Click the *New* button and name the signature
- Enter in any information you want to provide: name, phone #, e-mail, etc
- Click on the *Picture* (mountain/sun) icon to *Insert* the logo (from the Desktop)
- To choose when this signature is used, select the signature name within the drop-down menus for *New messages* and/or *Replies/forwards*
- Click *OK* to save

Other ways to add the logo are within a new e-mail message or by copy/pasting out of Word. Please let me know if you need any help.

[PMCS Eco Logo #1](#)

[PMCS Eco Logo #2](#)

06-01-09: Recycling on Campus

Facilities Services has its own recycling guidelines and I wanted to share these with everyone so that we can all be more efficient and effective recyclers while at work. Here is the list for our paper bins:

- White copy paper
- Colored paper
- Newsprint
- Post-It Notes
- Magazines
- Glossy paper
- Hardback and paperback books
- Spiral notebooks
- Envelopes and folders
- Cardboard
- *Paper Recycling Tip: We basically recycle anything that tears, as long as it has not been used for food or hygiene purposes (e.g., candy wrappers, tissues, or disposable plates and cups).

Also [The Campus Environmental Center \(CEC\)](#) handles recycling of aluminum cans and #1 and #2 plastics. They can only accept plastic bottles without lids. Please rinse out any of these items before placing them in any designated bins.

04-20-09: Turn Off Lights

Please don't forget to turn off your lights and desk lamps before you go home every day. This is a very easy and quick way to cut down our electricity costs and reduce the impact we have on our environment.

04-17-09: Trash to Treasure

Today's tip will focus on the **reusing** part of Reduce-Reuse-Recycle. Every year, the Campus Environmental Center (CEC) hosts a **Trash to Treasure Drive** on campus, which is basically a massive garage sale. There are **3** ways you can get involved in this event:

1. Donate any unwanted furniture, electronics, clothing, bikes, house wares, and anything else reusable; however, no broken items, carpets, mattresses, open food, chemicals, and magazines. The donation drive will be held from **May 13th – 24th** in a few different locations on campus, the closest to us in the LBJ Library parking lot 38. Important: *They cannot accept UT property, as it belongs to the State of Texas!*
2. Volunteer to help in this event. According to the CEC, for each shift you work, you help raise \$50 for the environment and keep 75 pounds of stuff out of the landfill!
3. Attend the garage sale on Sunday, **August 23rd** from 8am – 4pm at UT Rec Sports Center.

Check out the [website](#) for details or to volunteer: