

LIVING GREEN

Education for a Healthy Future

March 2015

VOL #2 ISSUE #3



DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE LIVING GREEN PROGRAM?

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Harnessing the Wind for Energy

In 2006, Washington became the second state in the nation to pass a renewable energy standard. The passage of I-937 calls for electric utility providers to obtain 15% of electricity from renewable resources by 2020. Utility providers must use eligible renewable resources or acquire renewable energy credits (REC's) or a combination of both to meet annual targets. Current eligible renewable resources are: water, wind, solar, geothermal, landfill gas, wave, ocean tidal power, sewage treatment gas, bio-diesel, bio mass, animal waste or solid organic fuels.

In this issue we are highlighting renewable energy captured from wind. At the end of 2014, Washington State has over 3,076 megawatts (MW) installed generation capacity making it one of the top ten in the nation. In 2011, 6,209 million kilowatt hours of electricity was generated and accounted for 5.3% of all electricity generated.

There are eight wind farms that have been in operation across Washington State with the capacity of 2,193.7 MW. The newest addition, Palouse Wind Farm is located halfway between Spokane and Pullman. Each of the 58 turbines produces 1.8 megawatts (MW), which when combined could provide energy to the city of Pullman. Sounds good, right? There are pros and cons to operating a wind farm.

The Palouse Environmental Sustainability Coalition is a local organization who promotes awareness of environmental concerns associated with this energy resource. Members ensure new sites have minimal effect on wildlife, especially birds. The site covers a total of 9,000 acres, so impact is of concern. Here are some pros and cons to wind farms:

PROS: Green Energy source, no pollution, space efficient and low operational costs.

CONS: Wind is not reliable to meet demands, heavy upfront costs, threat to wildlife habitat and noise pollution.

Homeowners can purchase and operate their own wind turbine to supplement grid demands. If you want to find out if one is right for you download http://en.openei.org/wiki/Washington/Wind_Resources

If that is not an option, check with your utility provider to see about renewable energy options.

LIVING GREEN Alternatives

Uses for EVERYDAY ITEMS

While on the topic of alternative approaches to waste reduction the following tips involve multiple uses for things you find in your household. These are just a few ideas, but the possibilities are endless. If you have more tips that you would like to share, contact Kim Kreber (509)744-3370 x 410 (kreber@snapwa.org):

Wax Paper

- Rub faucet chrome fixtures after cleaning to prevent water spots and finger smudges.
- Run a piece of wax paper through the gears of a handheld can opener to loosen dirt and coat them so they run smoothly.

Vinegar

- Clean a coffeemaker by filling the reservoir with 1 part white vinegar, 2 parts water, and brewing. Repeat every 3 weeks.
- Prevent colors from running soak them in 1 part vinegar, 1 part cold water for 15 minutes before washing.

Salt

- Remove dirt from greens like spinach, arugula and kale by swirling them around in a bowl of salt water.
- Keep windows frost-free by rubbing the inside of windows with a sponge dipped in salt water, and frost won't collect.

Coffee Filters

- Clean mirrors and windows by putting your hand inside like a mitt and wipe. Filters are lint-free and leave no streaks.
- Line flower pots by putting a filter inside the pot to stop soil from leaking through the drainage holes on the bottom.

Cornstarch

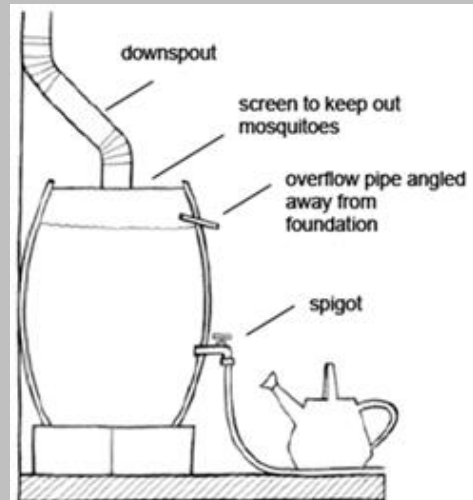
- Shake a bit into socks to absorb moisture and help prevent blisters.
- Get cooking grease off a wall by putting on a cloth and rub the spot until the mark is gone.

Rainwater Collection System

Saving water from storms with rain barrels or cisterns is a great way to further reduce your water consumption. Simply diverting your downspout into a covered barrel is an easy, low-cost approach. Check with your state's water resource agency before implementing a rainwater collection system.

Step-by-step online tutorial to build your own system:

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Need-Free-Water%3F--Build-a-Rain-Barrel/>



Uses for Everyday Things Continued

Dryer Sheets

- Tuck a dryer sheet into smelly shoes overnight to eliminate odors.
- Place a fresh sheet in a pan with baked on food and fill with water. Let sit for a few hours and the food will be easy to wipe away.

Petroleum Jelly

- If your cat's or dog's paw pads are cracked and dry, rub a little on them to soothe the discomfort.
- Dirt and dust can cause outdoor bulbs to stick. Rub a little petroleum jelly on the threads of the bulb before you screw it in and it won't stick in the future.

LIVING GREEN Alternatives



LOW WATER LANDSCAPING

This is the time of year that many residents start prepping their lawns, gardens and landscape areas for growth. While planning these areas keep in mind water usage. The *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)* offers many tips through their "Water Sense" program to help everyone keep a healthy yard while using less water. Here are some of their tips:

- Know how much water your landscape actually needs before you set your sprinkler.
- Look for the label. WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers use local weather data to water only when needed.
- Go native or choose plants that need less water. Once established, native and low water-using plants require little water beyond normal rainfall. Group plants according to their water needs.
- Use mulch. Incorporate mulch around shrubs and garden plants to help reduce evaporation, inhibit weed growth, moderate soil temperature, and prevent erosion. Replace mulch around shrubs and garden plants at least once per year, and remove weeds and thatch as necessary.

WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy in his address to Congress raised the issue of consumer rights. Kennedy stated that, *'Consumers by definition includes us all. They are the largest economic group, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. Yet they are the only important group... whose views are often not heard.'* President Kennedy viewed consumer rights as:

- 1) The right to satisfaction of basic needs
- 2) The right to be informed
- 3) The right to choose
- 4) The right to be heard
- 5) The right to redress
- 6) The right to consumer education
- 7) The right to a healthy environment

The U.S. Congress declared World Consumer Rights Day (March 15th) to celebrate the rights of citizens around the world. This day is an opportunity to promote the basic rights of all consumers, for demanding that those rights are respected and protected, and for protesting the market abuses and social injustices which undermine them. The Consumer International (CI) group coordinates this event annually around the world by helping consumer organizations get the word out through curricular materials around topics related to financial services and communications. Even though yearly themes center on financial and communication services around the world, they also advocate sustainability.

The World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) 2015 theme is Healthy Diets, but check out previous year's themes here:

<http://www.consumersinternational.org/our-work/wcrd/>

Do-It-Yourself Home Repairs

"What to Know about Hiring a Contractor"

Sometimes you may find that what you thought was a minor home repair actually calls for a professional to perform. Before you begin the process of locating, hiring and paying for a contractor here are some things to be aware of:

- 1) **Identify the Right One for the Job:** The best contractors don't have to advertise. Consult friends and neighbors who have had similar work done and ask for a referral. Another source is the National Association for Home Builders www.nahb.org.
- 2) **Get at Least Three Quotes:** This way you can compare costs, methods and materials. In addition, while providing project details you can also get a sense of how they communicate.
- 3) **Look at References:** Call the Better Business Bureau, local consumer affairs agency and industry licensing & insurance.
- 4) **There may be More Than One in Charge:** If you hire a general contractor, they may hire several sub-contractors to do the job at your home. Find out what sub-contractors they will need to hire and who is in charge.
- 5) **Payment:** When you sign a contract you are usually expected to pay a deposit. This should be just to get everything started and doesn't include initial material or set-up costs. Your payment plan should be based on a defined amount of work being completed. Find out if you can purchase materials they will need at the job site yourself, you could save 10-20% of overall cost.

Article Resources:

Homelogic.com and Consumer Reports Online



*This publication is funded in part by grants
from the
Washington State Department of Ecology.*

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