

Living Green is making choices in our day-to-day lives that reduce our impact on the environment and move us in the direction of a sustainable lifestyle – one that is healthy, ecologically sound, economically viable and socially just.

THE CLEAN ENERGY BILL

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The House of Representatives recently passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES), also known as the Waxman-Markey Bill. Some called it controversial and it stirred intense debates in Capitol Hill. Here are some of the key components of this enormous bill.

1. A National Renewable Energy Standard

The bill would implement a renewable energy standard for the US that would "require electric utilities to meet 20% of their electricity demand through renewable energy sources and energy efficiency by 2020."

2. Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

It will "reduce carbon emissions from major U.S. sources by 17% by 2020 and over 80% by 2050 compared to 2005 levels." This means a cap and

trade system will be implemented, which sets a 'cap' on the amount of greenhouse gas emissions a company can emit, and forces polluting companies to have permits for each ton of pollution they create. Most of the permits will initially be given away for free, but by 2015, they will be \$13, and by 2030, \$26 per ton.

3. Clean Energy Investments

The bill will direct a lot of funding to renewable energy, and so-called "clean coal" technology, or carbon capture and sequestration. It will also invest in "electric and other advanced technology vehicles".

4. Bring on the Energy Efficiency

Through a slew of measures, the bill will "Mandate new energy-saving standards for buildings and appliances, and promote energy efficiency in industry."

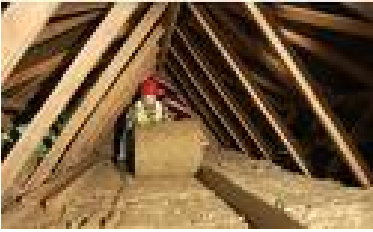


Protection of Consumers. ACES establishes five programs to protect consumers from energy price increases:

- o one for electricity price increases;
- o one for natural gas price increases;
- o one for heating oil price increases;
- o one to protect low- and moderate-income families;
- o and one to provide tax dividends to consumers.

EPA has estimated that ACES would cost the average household \$80 to \$111 per year, less than a postage stamp per day. According to EPA, families would actually spend less on utility bills in 2020 than they would in the absence of legislation because of the energy efficiency provisions in ACES. *From the official summary from Congressional Budget Office.*

SNAP'S WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM



This photo is from a similar weatherization program. SNAP's program uses blown-in cellulose made from recycled newspaper.

As part of the economic stimulus package, President Obama and Congress just pumped \$5 billion into the Weatherization Assistance Program, which is a 30 year old Department of Energy program that weatherizes homes of low-income families. In comparison, last year's allocation was just \$227.2 million. Obama calls for the weatherization of 1 million homes by 2011. SNAP's Housing Improvements Program has been weatherizing homes since the early eighties, and has added personnel and equipment to increase the number of homes to be weatherized.

According to the Energy Information Ad-

ministration, houses consume about 21% of energy used nationwide. Weatherization typically means adding insulation, controlling air infiltration, repairing heating systems, and sometimes replacing windows. A typical weatherized home saves an average of \$413 per year on energy costs. This is a great help to low income families which spend about 17% of their income on energy while higher income families spend only about 4%.

President Obama's decision to make weatherization one of the first priorities of his energy plan addresses global warming with the resources and technology that is already available.

Weatherization is one of the most cost-effective ways to invest in energy efficiency. According to the DOE Weatherization Program, \$1 invested returns \$1.65 in energy-related benefits, and at the same time leverages \$1.54 in other resources from private funding, utilities, state funds, and other federal funds. As Amory Lovins once said "It is cheaper to save electricity than it is to make it."

If you think you may qualify for weatherization of your home, contact the Housing Improvements Program at SNAP, 509-744-3370. Our current waiting time is 4 to 6 months, but the list is growing fast so check it out soon.

SMART GRID IN BOULDER

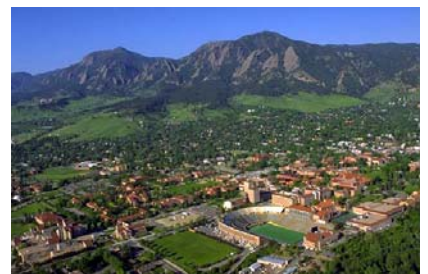
In his inaugural speech, President Obama touted the virtues of a smart grid, saying it would save money, protect power sources from blackout or attack and deliver clean energy nationwide. The \$819 billion economic stimulus bill included up to \$32 billion to upgrade the country's electric grid.

Last year Xcel Energy announced that it wants to make Boulder, Colorado, the first fully integrated Smart Grid City in the US. 100,000 residents will become part of the smart grid project.

Smart Grid means the electric grid system is essentially being digitized, with many features that allow con-

sumers to personalize their usage. The program being used by Xcel has many parts, such as smart meters that help two-way communication between the grid and homes, and automation equipment for transformers. Such two-way communication between homes

continued on p. 3



Boulder, CO

EWG's '09 Sunscreen Guide Available



According to a press release by the Environmental Working Group, "70 percent of sunscreens offered for the 2009 beach season contain strong UVA filters, compared to just 29 percent last year." The brands that improved performance from 2008 include: Solbar, Zia Natural Skincare, Nivea, L'Oreal, and Hawaiian Tropic.

"But a new EWG investigation of 1,572 sunscreens and other sun-blocking products currently on the market found that 3 of 5 sunscreens either don't protect skin from sun damage or contain hazardous chemicals — or both."

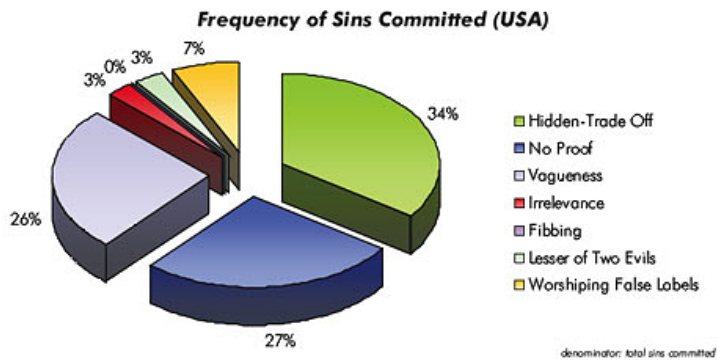
EWG conducts its own yearly comprehensive analysis of leading products that claim to protect consumers from the sun. Find the Sunscreen Guide, at www.ewg.org/cosmetics/report/sunscreen09. It ranks sunscreens, moisturizers with SPF claims and lip balms from best to worse.

GREEN PRODUCTS OR GREENWASHED?

You have undoubtedly heard of white-washing, defined as an attempt to hide the facts, especially in a political context. Greenwashing is the same thing. A company may tout their greenness of a product or practice yet that may be only a very small portion of what they do, which overall may not be very green at all.

An example might be a car company hyping the gas mileage of their vehicles in one ad, yet the majority of their sales are big gas users - large trucks and SUV's. Or here in the northwest where timber companies advertise their work to protect water quality when in fact they are following the state's forest practice regulations — regulations that they frequently challenge.

An environmental



marketing firm, TerraChoice www.terrachoice.com, offers a list of what it calls the "seven sins of greenwashing" — simple signs that should tip off consumers that a company is more interested in selling rather than protecting the environment.

One is the Sin of Irrelevance, in which, for example, a product proclaims the fact that it is



"chlorofluorocarbon free" even though

those ozone-destroying chemicals known as CFC's, have been banned for 30 years. This would tell the consumer that the company praises itself for just following the law. Another is the Sin of the Hidden Trade-Off, such as paper towels that come from a sustainably harvested forest but they may not try to reduce air or water emissions or use safer bleaching methods.

The 2009 report from TerraChoice researched products in the United States and *continued on p. 4*

Smart Grid cont'd

and the grid could drastically improve the way electricity is distributed, saving hundreds of millions of dollars by decreasing the need to build new power plants.

Xcel already has installed more than 15,000 smart meters and plans to place 10,000 more in the coming months. It has laid more than 100 miles of fiber optic cables and 1,800 monitoring devices on

the poles where transformers are located to monitor and record the energy usage.

UPCOMING EVENTS

7/11, 18, 25 Conservation Northwest Summer Hike Series

Hikes at Grassy Top, Hoodoo Canyon, Ambercrombie Mountain to Hooknose Mountain.

8/1, 8, 15 Hikes at Hall Mountain, Columbia Mountain, Wapaloosie Mountain. Pre-register at www.conservationnw.org/hikes09

7/14, Green Drinks

Celebrating the 5 edition of the Go Green Directory at Eco Depot, 1326 E Sprague. 5:30

7/16, 30 & 8/20

Greening the Ghetto film series at The Porch, 1804 W Broadway. Thursdays, 7pm. "Good Morning Beautiful Business", "Think Local First: Nurturing Local Business Ownership & Networks",

& "These Kids Mean Business: The Role of Youth Entrepreneurship"

7/18 Perry St Fair At Grant Park, Perry St between 10th and 11th. 10-5.

7/27 Saranac LEED Platinum Presentation

Celebrate the first building in WA to receive Platinum certification. 25 W Main, 5:30-7:30.

8/14 Green Drinks

8/13 Cob Oven Cook-out with Slow Foods at Riverfront Farm's Eco House, 2605 W Boone.

8/27 Summer Green Collar Jobs The Youth Corps graduation at Riverfront Farm's Eco House, 2605 W Boone. 6pm.

Summer Markets

Community Roots Market at Fresh Abundance, 2015 N Division. Sunday from 11-4.

Cheney Farmer's Market at 1st St and College Ave. Every Fri 10-3.

Liberty Lake Farmer's Market Liberty Square, 1421 N Meadowwood Lane. Sat 9-1.

Millwood Farmer's Market Millwood Community Presbyterian Church, 3223 N Marguerite St. Wed 3-7.

NE Community Center 4001 N Cook. Tues 2-4, Free, no income requirements.

S. Perry Farmer's Market Christ Community Church, 1317 E 12th. Thurs 3-7.

Spokane Farmer's Market at 2nd and Division. Wed and Sat 8-1.

The Friday Market 1717 W 6th Ave. Fri 8-2.

West Central Farmer's Market Salem Lutheran Church, 1414 W Broadway. Tues and Thurs 11:30-1:30

GreenWashed cont'd

Canada, and found 2,219 products making 4,996 green claims. The results of this research showed that 98 percent of the products committed at least one of its sins of

greenwashing. The website helps consumers evaluate claims and to know if their purchase is environmentally friendly or just greenwashed.

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