



News You Can Use

Exposing “Green” Myths



There plenty of ways to help the planet go green. Are you doing your part? Could you do more?

Here are some common green myths that people encourage daily. Get the facts to learn how you can make the least impact to your local and global environments.

Myth: Paper grocery bags are better for the environment than plastic ones.

- Fact:** Both paper and plastic bags have their pros and cons. While paper bags are made from a renewable, sustainable resource and are easily recycled, they require 40 percent more energy to manufacture, cause more air and water pollution in the process, and because they are bulkier than plastic bags, use more energy to transport. Plastic bags, on the other hand, are made from fossil fuels and are not biodegradable. However, they are lightweight, waterproof, reusable and recyclable. So which one is the best choice? Neither. Reusable fabric shopping bags are the most ecologically-friendly way to transport your groceries.

Myth: New energy-efficient light bulbs contain a toxic material that can be hazardous if the bulb is broken.

- Fact:** Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), which can last up to 10 times longer and use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs, contain a small amount of mercury. If a bulb breaks in your home, the EPA recommends following a 12-step cleanup and disposal process to safely remove the mercury, which can cause severe health problems if breathed as a vapor or ingested. When CFLs burn out, they should not be thrown in the trash, but taken to a hazardous waste disposal site or recycled, where available. Home Depot, the nation's second-largest retailer, now takes back old CFLs in all of its stores in the United States.

Myth: If an appliance or electronic device is turned off, it's not using any power.

- Fact:** Up to 10 percent of your electricity bill comes from powering appliances and home electronics that are turned off. Known as “phantom load” or “vampire power” it is the power used to keep your TV, stereo and other remote-control-operated devices in standby mode; run the digital clock on your microwave; and illuminate the little LED light on your cell-phone charger. One way to reduce vampire power is to plug these items into a power strip that can be switched off when they're not in use.

Myth: Bottled water is bad for the environment.

- Fact:** Despite having the safest tap water in the world, the average American consumes more than 28 gallons of bottled water a year. While bottled water is a convenience, it is not any better for you than what comes out of the kitchen faucet. In fact, the two top-selling brands of bottled water are nothing more than purified municipal tap water.

The price of this convenience is much higher than the dollar or two you pay at the store. The growing global bottled water market has resulted in billions of plastic bottles clogging landfills and littering the landscape all over the world—particularly in areas where recycling is not an option. Not to mention the amount of energy used to manufacture the bottles and to filter, bottle and transport the water. Instead of wasting money on bottled water, try filtering your tap water at home and carrying it in a reusable sports or camping bottle.

Myth: Hybrid vehicles get better gas mileage than conventional gas-powered cars.

- Fact:** While some models of hybrid cars, such as the Toyota Prius and the Honda Insight, get significantly better gas mileage and produce far less emissions than conventional vehicles, many of the hybrid SUVs and trucks don't fare much better than their conventional counterparts. A standard fuel-efficient economy car (such as a Honda Civic) still gets better gas mileage than a hybrid SUV.

Manufacturing cars – hybrid or otherwise – uses a lot of energy, so unless you are driving a gas-guzzler, you are better off waiting until you really need a new car before trading in your current set of wheels for a shiny new hybrid.

Source: Discovery Channel website.

Reminders

Holiday Leave

University leadership has approved a one time option that permits staff and principals to use accrued sick leave, in addition to vacation leave or floating holidays, for Friday, December 26, 2008 and January 2, 2009. For more information, go to www.hr.emory.edu.

Power Break for Your Office

Here are some practical ways to give your office some rest over the holidays.

- Talk with your IT support staff to determine what equipment can be turned off over the break. If possible, turn off computers, monitors, printers and copy machines. Keep in mind, any equipment that turns on instantly requires standby electricity.
- Turn off all lights, including bathroom lights, desk lights, display case lights and overhead lights.
- Close blinds to help retain heat in the building.
- Close exterior doors completely.
- Unplug coffee pots before leaving the office for the holiday break. It's not only a smart energy-saving tip but also a wise safety practice.

Get Your W-2 Online

You can receive your W-2 online by calling 877-325-9239 or visiting www.w2express.com. You will need to enter “Employer Code” 11332 as well as your Social Security number and PIN (Personal Identification Number). For more information, go to www.hr.emory.edu or call Payroll at 404-727-6100.

Confirmation Statements

Confirmation Statements were mailed to home addresses the first week of December. Please carefully review this information to ensure that your selections are correct for the coming year. If you have any questions please contact the Benefits Department at 404-727-7613.

Emory Community Giving

You have until December 31, 2008 to make a tax-deductible contribution to one of 446 worthy non-profit groups. To learn more or make a contribution, go to www.communitygiving.emory.edu.



News You Can Use

Sparkfly Discount Program



New enhanced website - www.sparkfly.com. Go [here](#) to register your new Sparkfly card.

By now you should have received your new Sparkfly card. Here a few facts to further explain the program.

Your new Sparkfly card gives you access to the ‘*Sneak Peak*’ of our enhanced website, www.sparkfly.com. Along with the new website, you still have access to your regular website www.sparkfly.emory.edu.

What is the difference? The new website is a peak at things to come. As we develop www.sparkfly.com further, we are coordinating with participating merchants to accept the new Sparkfly card at point of purchase. With our new technology, we will be rewarding you with loyalty points (SparkBucks) on purchases. Eventually, these points can be redeemed to buy items in the SparkBucks store. As more of our existing merchants have our new Sparkfly card technology in place, the new www.sparkfly.com website will eventually evolve into a new version of www.sparkfly.emory.edu. When activating your card at www.sparkfly.com, be sure to register for your new login.

In the meantime, remember to use your current login at www.sparkfly.emory.edu to access all of our current discounts.

- Bonus for Sparkfly cardholders.** The new enhanced site is designed with new merchants, special holiday shopping days and exclusive holiday experiences such as:
- *Nights of Lights at Lake Lanier Islands through December 22*
 - *Snow Mountain at Stone Mountain on January 5*
 - *Sparkfly Night at the Georgia Aquarium on January 11*

Remember: Register your new Sparkfly card at www.sparkfly.com and check out all the great new holiday experiences.

Financial Assistance

Facing a financial issue? Need assistance in figuring out how to get everything paid? The Faculty Staff Assistance Program (**FSAP**) offers individual counseling, career counseling, basic budgeting and emotional support. For more information, call **404-727- WELL**.

In addition to the FSAP there are many local resources available to community members, including:

Organization	Contact Information
Emory Alliance Credit Union - “Member Express” emergency hardship loan up to \$750	404-329-6415 www.emoryacu.com
Jewish Family & Career Services	770-677-9300 404-873-1345
Buckhead Christian Ministries - Faith-based, nonprofit organization that provides compassionate, emergency assistance to individuals and families in the Atlanta area.	404-239-0058 www.buckheadchristianministry.org
Christian Ministry Center USA – Operation Blessing – provides limited financial assistance for rent or mortgage payments, emergency needs in situations of catastrophic loss, and utility bills.	678-986-2041 email cmc-usa@juno.com
Resource Service Ministries, Inc – a subsidiary of the Salvation Army, they provide assistance to families in need.	404-728-1341
United Way - provides the tools and skills necessary to maximize income, build savings and gain assets.	404-527-7200, dial “211”
The Sullivan Center – provides education and assistance for rent, utilities, employment, etc.	404-753-0531 www.thesullivancenter.org
Midtown Assistance Center - financial assistance to the working poor of downtown and Midtown Atlanta	404-681-0470 www.midtownassistancectr.org
St Vincent de Paul Society - provides financial, material, educational and spiritual support to those in need regardless of background or faith.	770-458-5415 www.svdpatl.org
Angel Food Ministries - provides food for those who are struggling financially.	770-267-7015, 888-819-3745 or www.angelfoodministries.org
The Homeownership Preservation Foundation - free counseling when you’re facing foreclosure	800-995-HOPE (4673)
Avvo – Ask a real lawyer about foreclosure, credit or bankruptcy issues.	www.avvo.com
HUD - valuable information on steps related to avoiding foreclosure	www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/econ/econ.cfm#1 www.hud.gov/foreclosure/ www.hud.gov/local/ga/homeownership/foreclosure.cfm
Consumer Credit Counseling Service – call to get help stopping the phone calls, preventing foreclosures, reducing interest rates, and lowering monthly payments	800-251-2227; www.cccsatl.org
Care One Credit Counseling - helping people get out of debt the smart way.	www.careonecredit.com
National Foundation of Credit Counseling – Immediate assistance for homeowners who want to avoid foreclosure or are concerned about their ability to make their mortgage payments.	www.nfcc.org/