



Energizing EPA



Tell Us Your Story

Have you taken EPA's mission to heart in your personal or professional life? Did you help start a recycling program in your community? Or initiate an innovative car pool program at your office? Would you like to tell your EPA colleagues about it? Well, now you can. The Office of Administration and Resources Management at EPA Headquarters in Washington, DC, would like to invite you to submit your stories for the *Energizing EPA* quarterly newsletter.

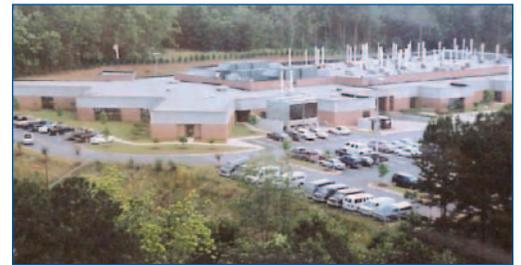
Please send your story ideas, along with contact information, including email and phone number, to Marjorie Buchanan at <buchanan.marjorie@epa.gov>.



Electrifying Facilities With Green Power

With the addition of two new facilities purchasing renewable energy since March 2004, EPA green power procurement has reached new heights. This growth raises the Agency's renewable energy commitments to 122 million kilowatt hours (kWh) annually, or 44 percent of EPA's nationwide electricity use, solidifying the Agency's role as a powerful contributor to clean energy development.

On March 1, 2004, EPA's Region 4 office in Atlanta, Georgia, and its Science and Ecosystem Support Division Laboratory in Athens, Georgia, began receiving a total of 11.15 million kWh annually worth of renewable energy certificates (RECs, or "green tags") under a three-year contract procured through the Defense Energy Support Center. The tags, which represent 100 percent of the electricity used by those two facilities, were purchased from 3 Phases Energy Services of San Francisco, California, to support the



EPA's Science and Ecosystem Support Division Laboratory in Athens, Georgia, began green power procurements this spring.

production of electricity from landfill gas facilities in North Carolina and Kentucky.

Landfill gas is widely recognized as a valuable green power resource—it is already included in more than 35 utility green pricing programs and 12 states' renewable portfolio standards. Created when organic waste in a landfill naturally decomposes, landfill gas con-

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Tag! You're It

Wondering how you can help support green power development? Just as EPA purchases renewable energy to offset the emissions associated with its facilities' electricity consumption, individuals can buy green power for their households. Check with your local electric utility company to see if it offers a green power product. For a slight premium on your monthly bill, you can ensure that the energy you consume comes from low-emission, renewable sources.

If your local utility does not offer a green power product, you can still support clean energy development through the purchase of green tags. Numerous organizations in the United States sell certificates representing the environmental benefits of green power produced outside your regional electric grid at wind, solar, landfill gas, and biomass facilities. While the electricity does not enter your regional grid or your household, you are still helping support the growth and development of the green power industry. For more information on green tags, visit <www.epa.gov/greeningepa/content/energy/pdf/greentags.pdf>.



EMS Success at the Environmental Science Center

As EPA facilities across the country seek to reduce their environmental footprint, they look to the Fort Meade, Maryland, laboratory. The Environmental Science Center in Fort Meade was the first EPA facility to complete an Environmental Management System (EMS). The center was also the first EPA facility to meet the requirements of ISO 14001, the international EMS standard. As Executive Order 13148 challenges federal agencies to establish an EMS at all appropriate agency facilities by December 31, 2005, many EPA facilities are studying Fort Meade's innovative approach to EMS implementation and gleaning insights from the center's EMS team. In fact, more than 30 EPA facilities are applying lessons learned at Fort Meade to develop their own EMSs.

In preparation for the EMS certification process, Fort Meade's EMS team identified environmental impacts of the lab's operations and established goals to address them. The goals target areas such as ener-

gy consumption, waste generation, and chemical management. The team recognized that employees would have to work together to meet these goals and launched an employee education program to generate excitement about the EMS. After all, individual actions—such as recycling an aluminum can—contribute to EMS success. According to team member Robin Costas: "We needed to show our coworkers what the EMS was really about. We wanted to demonstrate how they could make a difference."

As part of the education and outreach effort, the Environmental Science Center created an EMS mascot, the golden groundhog, and held an open house, creating exhibits on recycling and other EMS elements for the event. During the open house, the EMS team showed a presentation that included images of staff members closing hoods, turning off lights, and performing other activities that conserve resources. The team also presented golden groundhog certificates to employees that



Fort Meade's EMS outreach program taught employees the importance of closing fume hoods.

made significant contributions to the EMS program.

The Environmental Science Center's outreach strategy worked. In 2003, employees:

- Reduced paper copies by 24 percent.
- Reduced electricity consumption by 17 percent.
- Reduced water consumption by 37 percent.
- Reduced the quantity of chemicals stored onsite.

Fort Meade's EMS team is committed to helping other EPA facilities achieve the same level of success.

In an effort to convey lessons learned, the Fort Meade EMS coordinator created a four-module training program, sponsored by the Office of Administration and Resources Management's Office of Administrative Services, Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Division. Each module serves as a detailed EMS implementation support tool and includes a video, workbook, and CD-ROM. The CD contains electronic versions of the workbook content. The Environmental Science Center distributed the training videos to EPA facilities that are developing EMSs. Several facilities reported that the training modules significantly increased the speed of EMS implementation.

For information, contact Robin Costas, Fort Meade's EMS coordinator, at (410) 305-2659 or <costas.robin@epa.gov>.

Green Power

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sists primarily of methane (the main component of natural gas) and carbon dioxide, with trace amounts of nonmethane organic compounds. Given that all landfills generate methane, it makes sense to use the gas for the beneficial purpose of energy generation, rather than emitting it into the atmosphere.

Landfill gas electricity projects generally capture approximately 85 percent of the methane emitted from municipal solid waste landfills. The captured methane is destroyed when the gas is burned to produce electricity. The greenhouse gas reduction benefit of a typical five-Megawatt landfill gas project is equivalent to planting more than 80,000 acres of forest per year or removing the annual emissions from more than 60,000 cars.

In addition to these landfill gas purchases, EPA's Sustainable Facilities Prac-



Landfill gas electricity projects generally capture 85 percent of the methane emitted from landfills.

tices Branch is working to strengthen the Agency's commitment to renewable energy with additional green power procurements in several states. For more information on how your facility can buy green power, visit <www.epa.gov/greeningepa/greenpower.htm>. Contact Justin Spenillo at (202) 564-0639 or <spenillo.justin@epa.gov>.

Headquarters Recycling Program in Full Swing

Thanks to a revitalized program, recycling at EPA Headquarters is easier than ever. Designed to make recycling simple and convenient for employees and visitors, the “Bin There, Done That?” campaign was launched at EPA’s Federal Triangle complex in Washington, DC, last June. While data are not available for all Headquarters buildings, the recycling rate at Ariel Rios North and South (two of EPA’s larger buildings) shows an upwards trend since inception of the revamped program (see chart at right).

By spring 2004, rollout of the new program was completed throughout EPA Headquarters, including buildings at the Federal Triangle and Crystal City (in northern Virginia) complexes, 1310 L Street, as well as eight “satellite” offices (where EPA is a minority tenant) and two warehouses throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Featuring clearly labeled bins with lids and eye-catching posters, the new system is simplified and consistent. Now, employees and visitors know where to place their recyclables, regardless of which EPA Headquarters building they visit.



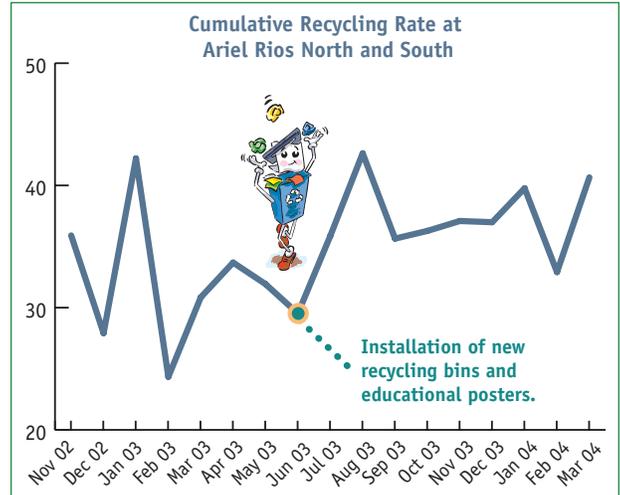
An EPA employee properly recycles her newspaper in a clearly marked bin.

The program includes collection of mixed office paper, newspaper, shredded paper, commingled bottles and cans (aluminum, steel, plastic, and glass), corrugated cardboard, and printer and copier toner cartridges. Several offices are also participating in a pilot project to recycle organic material via vermicomposting—feeding food waste to worms to make

compost. EPA is also working to incorporate batteries into its standardized recycling program as part of its newly implemented Blanket Purchase Agreement for recycled and environmentally preferable products with Corporate Express. In addition, the Agency has a pilot fluorescent lamp recycling and mercury recovery program at its Crystal Station

building in northern Virginia.

“Employees are now finding it much easier to do their part in helping EPA demonstrate leadership in recycling,” says Gail Wray, EPA’s recycling coordinator.



Source: U.S. General Services Administration. Recycling and waste data illustrated above are only provided for Ariel Rios North and South, two of EPA’s larger Headquarters buildings.

“Hopefully, the program inspires them to think about how their choices and actions affect the environment.”

Headquarters employees can find additional information and get answers to specific questions about the program by calling the Building Services Desk at (202) 564-2100 in Washington, DC, or (703) 308-8808 in Virginia. More information on the program, including building-specific recycling procedures, is also available on the EPA Headquarters Recycling Intranet at <http://intranet.epa.gov/HQrecycling>. For additional questions about EPA’s Headquarters recycling program, contact Gail Wray at wray.gail@epa.gov.

Reelin’ in the Reams

While EPA Headquarters employees may be eager to recycle all of their paper products, the truth is some things should NOT be recycled. For example, the majority of ream wrappers from copy paper cannot be recycled. This is because most wrappers include a moisture barrier or glue strip that impedes recycling.

“Over 90 percent of ream wrappers actually contaminate the recycling stream,” says Mark Sajbel of the U.S. General Services Administration. “These wrappers can cause entire loads of recyclables to be rejected by our recycling contractor and turned into waste.” Therefore, Headquarters employees are asked to leave ream wrappers out of the mixed office paper recycling bins. For more information, visit <http://intranet.epa.gov/HQrecycling>.



Colored paper and envelopes are fine, but Headquarters employees should keep ream wrappers out of the mixed office paper bin.



Meet Me in St. Louis

Labs21 Conference to Feature Student Designers

From October 5 to 7, 2004, laboratory professionals, engineers, and architects from around the world will convene in St. Louis, Missouri, for the Laboratories for the 21st Century (Labs21) 2004 Annual Conference. Through tours, presentations, and in-depth working sessions, the conference—sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy—will address issues of sustainable laboratory design, engineering, and maintenance.

More than 500 attendees from all over the world participated in last year's conference, and this year's event is expected to be just as successful. Conference participants will have the opportunity to attend technical sessions covering new strategies in sustainable laboratory design and management. Attendees can also engage in smaller, less formal working sessions with industry experts or witness some of the most innovative laboratory products on the market from the industry's top manufacturers during the Labs21 technology fair.

Internationally renowned urban designer, community planner, and architect Doug Kelbaugh will deliver the keynote address. Kelbaugh is Dean and

Professor of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan's College of Architecture and Urban Planning. He has edited and authored several books, and his designs have been published in more than 100 books and magazines.

Labs21 conferences are also known for their noteworthy site visits. This year, attendees will explore some of the region's most state-of-the-art research and development facilities, including the Nidus Center for Scientific Enterprise, and the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. These visits will focus on sustainable laboratory design and spotlight St. Louis as a global center for plant and life sciences research.

Online registration for the conference begins in early July. The fee is \$200 for early registration (on or before August 20) and \$225 after August 20. Additional information about the conference can be found on the Labs21 Web site at <www.labs21century.gov/conf/upcoming/2004/index.htm>.



LABS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Student Lab Design

New to this year's conference is the Labs21 Student Design Competition, which challenges architecture students and faculty from the United States and Canada to design a laboratory building that exemplifies high performance, low-energy design principles, in addition to meeting core architectural design considerations. Students were given the task of designing a chemistry and biology laboratory building on the campus of Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Co-sponsored by Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, the competition attracted more than 500 students. The winners of the competition will be announced at the opening plenary session and will have the opportunity to present their designs during the conference.

Contact Us

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