



NJHEPS

October 2007

From the Executive Director:

One of the great perks of being Executive Director of NJHEPS is the wonderful people I get to meet as I travel around the state, region and country on behalf of NJHEPS. What really amazes me is the “synchronicity” that exists among all those people that I meet. If you are not familiar with the concept of synchronicity, it is the concept I first heard about a few years ago from a dear friend that certain events were meant to happen, and will happen, if we just open up and reach out to each other. It is when two or more seemingly ‘pure chance’ events coincide to form a connection that has a special meaning for you.

For example, I was invited to attend the launch of the 2007 results of the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) at the headquarters of Merrill Lynch in NYC on this past Monday. This CDP group is a consortium of 315 institutional investors representing over \$41 trillion of assets (about a third of the total financial investments professionally managed in the world) who write a letter each year to CEO’s of major global companies and survey them about their climate change risks/opportunities, and what are they doing about them. Amazingly, they get a 80% percent response rate to their survey (maybe because the letter signatories own, on average, about 15% of the stock of these large companies!), and the CDP posts the responses on their www.cdproject.net website and summarizes them in an annual report (also available on their website).

Certainly I thought, if climate change is an interest to these large institutional investors, it should be to colleges and universities. So off I go to this meeting, hoping to learn something so that I can get the endowments of New Jersey’s higher education institutions (and the NJ state pension plan) to start to look at the climate change risks and opportunities of their investments, which they have not done to date.

About the second person I meet there is the VP of sustainability and environmental affairs at a major corporation, whom I had not seen in several years.

Synchronicity strikes, and it turns out she is very interested in NJHEPS and its activities, and she is going to try to find a way to support us, either through her corporate foundation or as a corporate supplier. A few minutes later, we settle down to hear the keynote speaker, President Bill Clinton, who proceeds to talk for 45 minutes about the need for the inventory and full disclosure of carbon emissions by all business corporations, and how his Clinton Global Initiative is working to help companies and cities in both the emerging and developed worlds address climate change, including the arrangement of \$5 billion of financing mechanisms to help cities around the world make their buildings (public and private) more energy-efficient. I made a mental note to find out more about their programs.

Fast forward to Thursday of this same week, and I get an email from an associate saying that the Clinton Climate Initiative has just announced that it has committed to arranging a minimum of \$100 million of financing for energy-efficiency projects for US higher education institutions. This program is designed to achieve reductions in energy use of 20-50% with no capital investment or net additional operating budget required, as the loans and fees are paid for by energy savings generated by the retrofits. However, the financing is ONLY available for those higher education institutions whose president has signed their campus up for the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), of which there are six signatories in New Jersey. Now, the NJ college presidents who have said they may not be able to find funding to take their campuses climate-neutral, have no excuse- sign up! Synchronicity hits twice in one week.

In the area of news, I would also like to report that NJHEPS has scheduled several more meetings for the Fall season. The next meeting is the NJHEPS Fall Climate Change Workshop, designed for faculty, administrators, facilities/operations, and students who might be on a campus sustainability, Presidents Climate Commitment or climate change

committee, or are otherwise responsible for planning how to measure & reduce their campus Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. This meeting will be held on 17 October, at NJIT. The next NJHEPS meeting will then be the 24th of October, when we will hold our NJHEPS Fall Green Design Workshop at Georgian Court University, with many interesting topics of concern to architects, planners and engineers working on campuses. After that meeting, on 2 November, we will have our NJHEPS Fall Sustainable Education Workshop, followed immediately by our annual meeting of the NJHEPS Steering Committee, both at Princeton University. The Sustainable Education meeting will feature the subject of “Tools for Teaching about Climate Change”, and the NJHEPS Annual Meeting will have a review of the past year’s activities of NJHEPS, an opportunity for feedback from our NJHEPS Steering Committee members, and our usual votes for NJHEPS Executive Committee officers and some needed by-law changes. Finally we have scheduled our NJHEPS Fall Energy Workshop for 28 November, at Rowan University. Watch the NJHEPS website for further details and to register for these meetings.

Finally, I would also like to announce that (finally) our revised NJHEPS website should soon be up and running, which should make our NJHEPS information gatekeeper role easier. It will feature a “members-only” section for our 45+ member institutions, as well as a “chat section” where all our members, friends and associates can talk on-line about key sustainability issues. The graphics have already been partially improved, with more changes coming soon to make the site friendlier for users. So it is a busy time of year, with a lot of things going on- watch our NJHEPS web site for other exciting news as we move along the path to sustainability together.

Rutgers Caps Carbon Emissions

In hopes of reducing carbon emissions from the New Brunswick campus to zero by 2030, the Rutgers Energy Institute is sponsoring a contest to get undergraduate students involved in devising a plan.

The institute is offering four awards per year of up to \$2,500 to students whose submissions are judged by a panel of faculty and students, who are chosen by the institute advisory board. Individual or teams of undergraduate students in any program on the New Brunswick campus can participate.

Based on how much oil and gas the University purchased last year and the number of vehicles driven around campus, it is estimated that approximately 300,000 tons of carbon emissions are from the New Brunswick campus, said REI Assistant Director Clinton Andrews, an associate professor at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. "It is important to lower carbon emissions because humans have put the carbon cycle of the earth out of balance, which has helped create global warming," Andrews said.

The institute would like to see carbon emissions of the campus reduced by 10 percent each year. One way to do that would be for the University to produce its own power using alternative, environmentally safe means, said REI Director Paul Falkowski, a Board of Governors professor of geological sciences. He also added that addition to contests involving undergraduate students, the University community could lower carbon emissions by running fewer buses. Also, fewer students idling in parking lots on campus and commuting in private cars would help cut down on air pollution, he said. One suggested solution is for the University to purchase 3,000 Bicycles, developing a bicycle center on each campus. "Every time one gallon of gasoline is used, 23 pounds of carbon dioxide goes into the atmosphere," Falkowski said.

The New Jersey Public Interest Research Group Student Chapters worked with REI last semester to adopt a policy to reduce the University's pollution up to 90 percent by the year 2050. NJPIRG members are working with REI on the carbon emissions project, said Board Chair Sarah Clader, a Rutgers College senior. "Rutgers has to lead the way and set the bar for what the rest of the country should be doing about global warming," Clader said.

From the Daily Targum



The Deadliest Item at Your Grocery Store?

Somewhere in the northern Pacific floats a non-biodegradable blob of petrochemicals that's twice the size of Texas. Much of this deadly mess originated when someone innocently took home their shopping in a plastic bag.

In the U.S. alone, we throw away 100 billion plastic bags each year, the equivalent of 12 million barrels of oil. Yikes!



<http://sierraclub.typepad.com/insider/2007/09/the-deadliest-i.html>

Events

Food Waste Recycling Forum Introduces Money Saving and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Alternatives

October 10th, 8:30 am to 1 pm, Middlesex County Fire Academy, Sayreville, New Jersey

Until recently, only New Jersey supermarkets could recycle their food waste—now, restaurants, corporate and school cafeterias, hospitals and universities can recycle not only kitchen prep waste – such as cucumber peels and potato skins, but also plate waste and leftover food from the buffet.

Forum participants will learn how to use a federal environmental branding program, the United States Environmental Protection Agency “WasteWise” program. Users of WasteWise gain recognition as environmental leaders, receive free analyses of greenhouse gas reductions and of natural resources saved, as well as free consulting help in improving their food waste and other recycling programs to generate even more savings. Albert Fralinger, Manager, Materials Resource Recovery for Public Service Enterprise Group, will describe how he has saved his company thousands of dollars through his waste reduction, reuse, and recycling programs—and gained PSEG national recognition through the program. Michael Manna of Recycling Resources will speak about his experiences as a food waste recycler. The forum’s all-star expert panel also includes John Connolly, who has more than 20 years of experience in corporate expense management. Rounding out the expert panel will be Steve Mojo, the executive director of the international Biodegradable Products Institute, and one of the architects of a new “Compostable Logo” for plates, cups, cutlery, and bags that identifies such products as something other than just plastic.

Priscilla Hayes, director of the SWRRG, stated, “The forum will show businesses and schools how to make food waste recycling a win-win opportunity,” Hayes said. “By keeping food waste and other organic wastes out of landfills, we can avoid the major source of methane—62 times more potent than carbon dioxide—in our atmosphere. And we can do this in a way that not only saves money, but allow businesses and schools to show off their sustainability achievements.”

This forum will also offer participants the chance to meet companies interested in participating in recycling programs. Contact Priscilla Hayes, 732-932-9155, ext. 233 or at hayes@aesop.rutgers.edu for free registration or to help plan a forum in a location near you.

Greendrinks Comes to Hoboken, NJ!

October 25th, 7 pm to 10 pm: Oddfellows, 80 River Street, Hoboken, NJ
(Located directly across from the PATH) www.hobokengreendrinks.com



Every month, environmentally conscious people, from a variety of different backgrounds, meet up for a drink and to network with other like-minded people in a casual and informal setting. It’s a great chance to relax, meet new people, develop new ideas, find employment, make friends, catch up with old business contacts, develop new business contacts, and talk about environmental issues.

It’s an international concept. Read more on the website: www.greendrinks.org COST: Free !!!
To get onto the email circulation list or for more info. email Jim at: green@hobokengreendrinks.com.

Want to share progress towards sustainability on your campus? Please send news items to Terra Meierdierck (tmeierdierck@njheps.org) for inclusion in our newsletter.

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Happenings

NJHEPS Fall Climate Change Meeting

October 17th, 9am to 3pm

GITC, Room 3720, New Jersey Institute of Technology

This is the second meeting of the NJHEPS Climate Change Working Group.

Confirmed Speakers are as follows: * Joe Sullivan, NJBPU, "Update on State Energy Plan and CHP program" * Ed Mercer, NJ Dept of Treasury- Office of Energy Savings, "Implementing Executive Order #11" (invited) * Brian DiFulgo, LABREPCO Inc., "Energy Efficient, Low GHG Emission Laboratory Equipment" * Terry Whitehouse, MMA Renewable Ventures LLC, "Funding Alternatives for Renewable Energy Projects" * Bob Schecterson, Rentacrate Inc., "Reducing GHG Emissions through Use of Recyclable Storage/Transport Systems and Electronics Recycling" * Mike Fischette, Concord Engineering, "Why Heat Pumps Save Energy Costs and Reduce GHG Emissions" * John Cusack, NJHEPS, "The American College & University Presidents Climate Challenge- Higher Education Goes Carbon Neutral"

Registration:

<http://www.acteva.com/booking.cfm?bevaaid=142703>

Methods to Help Teach Climate Change

Sustainability Solutions: Global Warming and Beyond

November 2, 2007, 8:30 - 4:00, Frist Student Center, Princeton University

- * Opening Plenary on Campus Climate Solutions [Stephen W. Pacala as Keynote, with Patrick Hossay, Daniela Shebitz following, 8:30am-10am]
- * Distinct tracks for administrators, faculty, campus organizers and students [Dr. Roberta Hotinski on Wedges Game, NSF Webquest tools for teaching climate change, renewable energy & others, Use of National Initiatives, 10:15am - 12:30pm]
- * Lunch 12:30pm-1:30pm
- * NJHEPS Steering Committee Meeting [3pm-4:00pm]
- * Best Practices at Princeton: food, energy, landscaping, green design
- * NSF Webquest Teaching Tools: The use of NJHEPS/NSF Webquest seminars for teaching students about Campus Global Warming Solutions (new) and Renewable Energy (revised)
- * Using National Initiatives to Teach Climate Change Issues - short presentations on the Presidents Climate Commitment, Focus the Nation, etc.
- * A final agenda will be posted on the NJHEPS website and distributed to Faculty in NJHEPS schools in the coming weeks.