

Greening Your Apartment/Condo

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Projects for your Apartment/Condo

- Water
- Electricity
- Heat
- Windows
- Waste Reduction
- Really Cool Things
- Commuting

Types of projects we will present

- Many things you can do on your own.
- Some projects you can do and your Property Manager may reimburse you for.
- Some projects you will need to convince your Property Manager or Condo Association to complete.

Ways to approach the Manager.

- Always get permission first before doing many of the major projects listed.
- Try to talk to the person face to face.
- Make informed recommendations with appropriate information on the benefits of the project, e.g. reduced utility bills, helps the environment, gives you more incentive to live there longer, etc.
- It may take a couple conversations to get the ball rolling on a project and have your neighbors talk to the manager too.

Water

- Notify maintenance staff about toilet, sink, and shower leaks (test toilet with food dye).
- Recommend to the owner/landlord to install low flow devices on your shower and sinks.
- Recommend that they replace the toilet if it is over 20 years old.
- Ask the owner/landlord about installing a rain barrel to water the gardens.

Water – Savings

Device	Old	New	Use	Savings/Year*
Tank toilet	5-7 gallons/flush	1.6 gallons/flush	3 flushes/day	\$22.34
Shower	Up to 12 gallons/minute	2.5 gallons/minute	5 minutes/day	\$104.03
Kitchen and Lavatory Faucets	Up to 5 gallons/minute	1.5 gallons/minute	10 minutes/day	\$76.65
Automatic clothes washer	27-54 gallons/load	16-20 gallons/load	2 loads/week	\$14.04
Automatic Dishwasher	7.5-16 gallons/load	7.5 gallons/load	4 loads/week	\$3.98

Based on information from:

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb0732/eb0732.pdf>

and that 1 Gallon in Saint Paul costs \$0.006

*Does not include cost to heat water.

Electricity

- Turn lights off when you are not home or sleeping!
- Add compact fluorescent bulbs to your fixtures.
- Use power strips for TVs, stereos, and computers so that they aren't accidentally left on. This also prevents them from drawing electricity in sleep modes.
- In common areas where light is needed 24 hours recommend to the owner to install energy efficient fixtures.
- On outdoor fixtures ask the owner to install photocells to turn the lights on at night only.

Electricity Savings

- CFLs save approximately \$30 over their life in electricity (<http://www.energystar.gov>)
- A 75 watt light bulb costs approximately 1 cent per hour in electricity.
 - So if you have an outdoor light on only 12 hours versus 24 hours you'll save \$44 in electricity over a year
 - Plus you won't have to replace the bulb as often

Heat

- Remove A/C's in the Fall
- Keep windows closed in the winter
- Do not place furniture in front of radiators
- If you can control your heat keep it down when you are not home or sleeping
- If you cannot control your heat let the Manager know if it gets too hot in your apartment (don't open windows!) so they can make adjustments
- Get an Energy Audit – NEC (Saint Paul), Excel (has online audit software), CenterPoint

Heat Savings

- A therm of heat costs approximately \$1.10. A rough estimate of therms used to heat one apartment on a cold January day is: 2.5 to 4 therms. So if you can reduce heat use by 10-20% you'd save \$8.50-\$30 per month per apartment.

Windows

- Repair any areas where there are air leaks
- Use plastic to add an extra seal in the winter
- Seal and lock windows in cold weather
- If in really bad shape recommend to the owner that they be repaired or replaced. This may cost \$200-\$400 per window.

The road to zero waste....





Reduce Waste

- Talk to the owner and/or your bank about setting up electronic payment of your monthly rent (and do your bills too)
- Stop the deluge! Get your name removed from Junk Mail lists! (see handout)
- Consider packaging when you make purchases. Avoid single servings and one-time use items.
- Set up a 'hard to recycle area' in your building. Or post information about how to recycle electronics, plastic bags, etc.

Reuse

Your 'trash' may be someone else's treasure!

- Eureka Recycling operates the materials exchange website:
www.twincitiesfreemarket.org
- OR use www.craigslist.org
- Reuse items. Talk to the owner about having a bulletin board for residents to post items they want to get rid of or sell.
- Donate items to local charities
www.eurekarecycling.org/reuse.cfm
- Get stuff from local antique and second hand stores





Recycling

5 simple ways to help make recycling successful at your building

- 1. Monitor your carts and keep them free of trash – trash encourages more trash! It really does.**
- 2. Make sure residents (and the hauler) can access your carts. Be sure they are not blocked by snow or parked cars.**
- 3. Let your hauler know if the labels on your carts need replacing or if your carts are damaged and need replacing.**
- 4. Set-up convenient collection points inside your building like a small bin by the mail boxes.**
- 5. Recruit someone at your building to be the recycling monitor for your carts! Call your hauler for help- they may provide free education materials. Be creative. Refer to the toolkit for job descriptions for recycling monitors.**



Composting

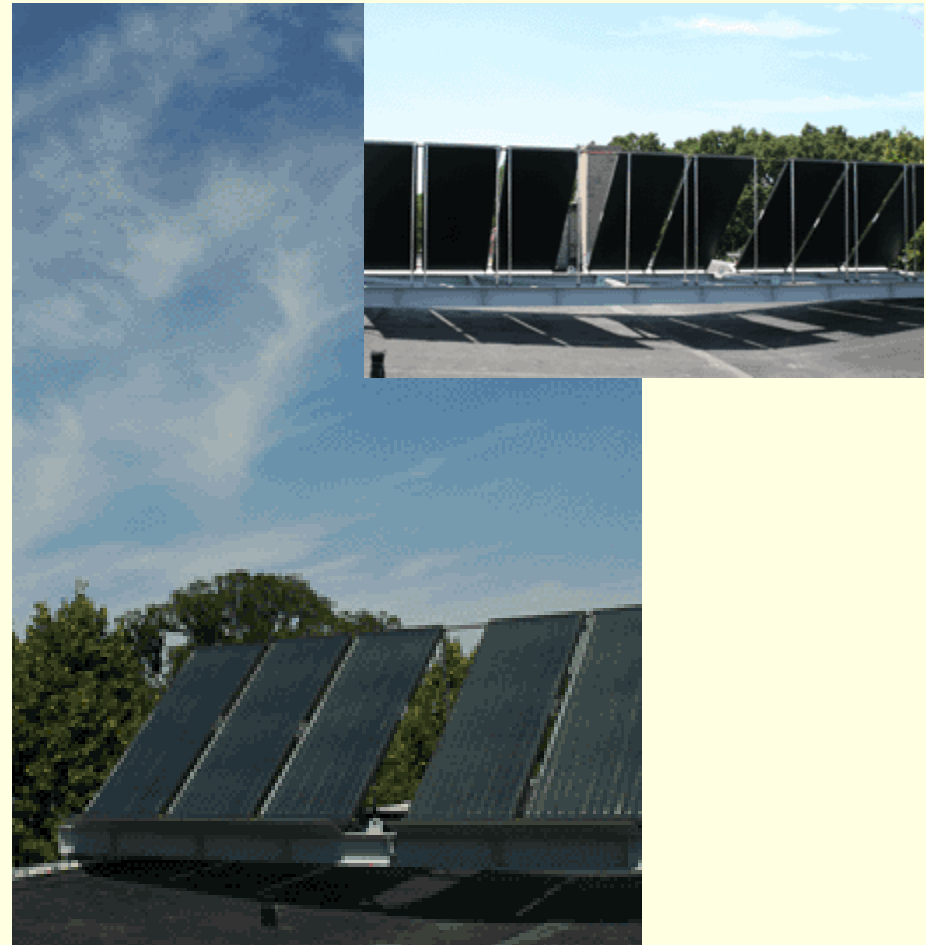
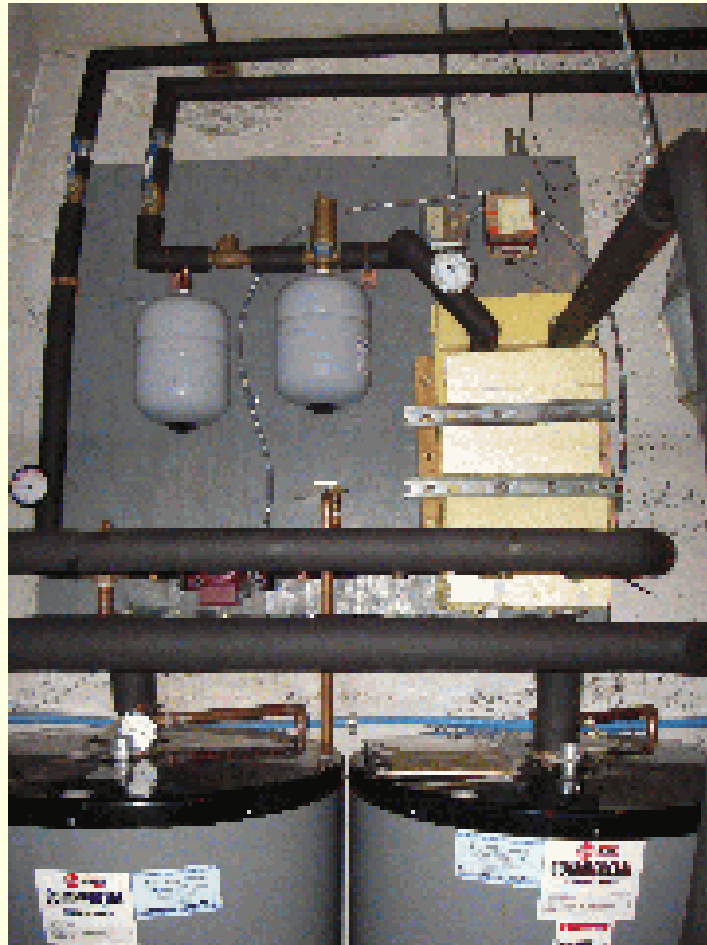
- Compost! Inquire about adding a compost bin in the building yard for leaves and food scraps. This does require a commitment from whoever is using it to maintain it and use the finished compost for trees or plants on-site.
- Worm bins make a great composting alternative to backyard bins in apartments! Worm castings make amazing food for house plants!



Really Cool Things

- Use eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaning products
- Keep and maintain plants in your living space
- Big Projects:
 - New Roof (and insulation)
 - Green Roof
 - Insulate in rafters
 - Solar Panels to heat hot water or for electricity
 - Native plants for landscaping

Solar



Native Plants / Green Roof



Commuting

- One of the greatest benefits of renting is the ease of moving so the #1 thing you can do to be eco-friendly is: **Live near your job!**
- Use your bike. Keep a space in your apartment or storage unit for your bike. Talk to the Manager about installing a bike rack in or near the building.
www.bikewalktwincities.org
- Minneapolis has a cost share Program to install Bike racks: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles/bikeparking.asp>
- Live near a bus stop that goes to your work and essential places. www.metrotransit.org (Guaranteed Ride Home program)
- Use HourCar or Rideshare

Commuting Savings

- For every 10 miles closer to work you live you:
 - save \$10.10/day in gas and repairs
 - get an extra 20 to 40 minutes of time per day toward work, family, etc.

This adds up to:

- **\$2,525/year**
- **80 to 170 hours of extra free time per year**

Questions and Other Recommendations / Ideas from the Audience

Green Links

- <http://www.eurekarecycling.org/>
- <http://doitgreen.org/>
- <http://www.savingwater.com/>
- <http://www.greenlivingonline.com/>
- <http://livinggreen.org/>
- <http://www.greeninstitute.org/reuse/>
- <http://www.spnec.org/>