



# Get YOUR Green On

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## Welcome to Get YOUR Green On

### Save YOUR Greenbacks

When you shop for a new appliance, look for the Energy Star label—your assurance that the product saves energy and cash.



On average, you can buy a compact fluorescent bulb (CFL) for \$1 more. These spiral bulbs use 75% less energy and last 8 to 10 years longer.

It takes only 17 days to earn your \$1 back? The potential annual electricity savings is \$22 per bulb!

### Green Facts

- Every ton of recycled paper saves almost 400 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space and seventeen trees.
- Americans consume six times more energy than the world average.

This is the first edition of "Get YOUR Green On," our goal for this newsletter is to accomplish four things:

First, each month, we will describe the projects the city is undertaking to meet the goals set by the City Council and the US Conference of Mayors. There were 12 goals adopted in the US Mayor's Climate Protection Plan.

Second, we want to provide tips on how YOU can help sustain the place where you live and work. It really is not hard to do! Change a few habits and you will be on the way to Getting YOUR Green On!

Third, every month we hope to provide some "green " humor. While moving towards creating a greener environment is

a serious matter, a little laughter is good for the soul.

Fourth and lastly, we want to focus on the big picture, most of us want to preserve and improve the world we live in; if not for ourselves then for our children and the generations to come.

It seems working on becoming green is something everyone can be a part of. There is a wide variety of things you can do personally to assist in protecting the environment in which you live.

In the coming months we hope this newsletter will serve to inform you of the city's actions as well as provide some practical ideas you can use.

Hope you enjoy.

### Flush the Toilet and Turn On a Light

The Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) processes all the waste water we create, everything from flushing our toilets to washing our clothes. The forward thinking staff at the WRF have developed a way to turn all those flushes into electrical energy. It is called cogene-

ration and it has made it possible for the facility to supply up to 48 percent of its own electricity needs. The cogeneration process, also called combined heat and power (CHP), uses biogas (created from the cleaning process of raw sewage) to generate power and heat for the WRF buildings and other

energy needs within the facility. Cogeneration has been utilized at the facility since 1992, and has allowed the facility to save a substantial amount of money on energy costs and save precious natural resources.

The WRF receives between 25 million gallons per day (MGD) to 210 MGD of municipal wastewater.

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## Flush the Toilet ... (continued)

ter and serves a population of over 500,000 in central Iowa. This flow creates enormous amounts of biogas, sometimes in excess of what can be used. The WRF must burn off (or flare) excess gas. Almost 63 million cubic feet of gas is burned off annually, with an estimated market value of over \$156,000.

In April 2006 the WRF began to sell biogas that was previously burned off to the Cargill plant across the street on Vandalia Road. This pipeline installation that transfers excess biogas to Cargill saves money and non-renewable resources. Biogas is cheaper than natural gas and fuel oil, which Cargill uses to generate

steam. Before the pipeline was completed, the WRF was forced to burn off 20%-50% of the gas that was produced.

Using renewable biogas instead of natural gas means that less natural gas is pumped out of the ground. Methane, the main component of biogas, has 25 times more of an impact on temperature than carbon dioxide; therefore using it instead of releasing it into the atmosphere can be a major benefit to the environment.

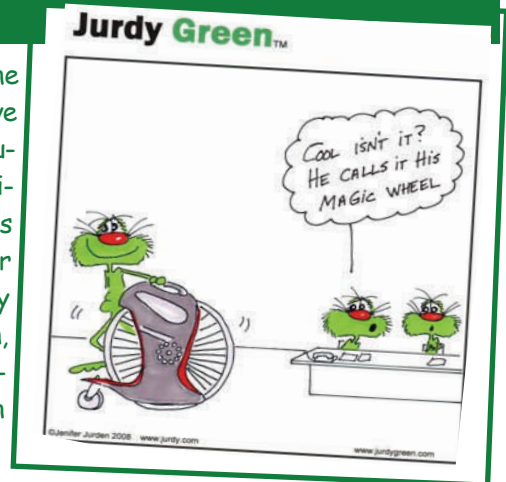


Photo Caption

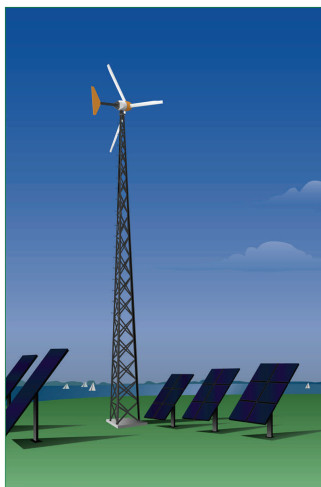
**Cogeneration has made it possible for WRF to supply up to 48% of its own electricity needs.**

## GREEN TEAM

Mayor Frank Cownie and the City Council have set a goal of making the City of Des Moines a more environmentally efficient organization. They have adopted policies to encourage the construction of "green" buildings in our community and aspire to high standards such as L.E.E.D. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings. The city has purchased hybrids vehicles for the fleet and installed energy efficient lighting in its buildings. To further the efforts, City Manager Rick Clark has named Randy Wetmore, Assistant City Manager as the Sustainability Coordinator for Des Moines. In this position, Wetmore will focus on efforts to make municipal government a greener organization and make city staff aware of sustainable methods and processes that can assist in becoming more environmentally friendly.



## Green Things YOUR Department Is Doing



On a daily basis your department is doing something green. It can be big or small, such as constructing a building with green features or using green cleaners. Most of these activities go unnoticed. Here is a chance for you to tell what green sustainable actions YOUR department has already implemented. Even if you don't work for the City of Des Moines, we would like to hear your ideas on the green sustainability activities you have been involved with and how they may help the city become more sustainable. Sharing information and ideas will help us all to become better stewards of the environment.

## Contact

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