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1. Fitchburg Green Thursday Films

Thursday, Dec. 4, 6:30-8:00 p.m., Fitchburg Public Library – Room A/B

December's Green Thursday film, *Unwasted: The Future of Business on Earth*, details the impacts of business waste, discusses zero waste as a key element of the sustainable business model, and covers ideas for sustainable business practices.



2. UW-Madison Sustainability Presentations

Thursday, December 4

**3:00 p.m. – Green Infrastructure, Groundwater and the Sustainable City
1025 Engineer Centers Building, 1025 Engineering Drive**

Join Larry Band, Geography Professor and Director of the Institute for the Environment at the University of North Carolina, for a discussion on the need for an “urban critical zone,” the development and adaptation of new modeling approaches to understand and plan green infrastructure based on surface water/groundwater/ecosystem interactions, and implications for the restoration and new design of cities.



Office of Sustainability
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**4:00 p.m. – Think Local First: A Discussion of Economic, Environmental and Social Sustainability
1106 Mechanical Engineering, 1513 University Avenue**



The Weston Sustainability Roundtable presents a panel discussion by Dane Buy Local. The panel discussion is comprised of members from SERRV, Slow Food UW, Cascade Asset Management, Ian's Pizza, and Summit Credit Union. Learn how these independent businesses contribute to a vital local economy through purchasing policies, sustainability goals, and technology. Find out how the “think local first” message makes a difference in our community.

3. Fitchburg Library's Alternative Gifts Info Fair

Saturday, December 6th at 11:00 a.m.

Skip the mall and consider something more meaningful as a holiday gift! Come learn about alternative gifts, such as sponsoring endangered animals, a library system in Uganda, or farmers living in areas with poverty.



4. Celebrate the Holidays with a Green Twist

The holiday season is a magical time of year to celebrate, give thanks, decorate, feast and exchange gifts with family and friends. In the process, the average American typically increases their household solid waste by 25 percent between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency!



Involve your family to plan your holidays using less. There are easy ways to go green this holiday season that can save money, lower your stress, and reduce your eco-footprint! Here are a few easy tips to be even greener this holiday season:

Buying Gifts

- Buy items that can be reused or recycled. Buy used items and keep them in circulation.
- Buy local, support local businesses and remember to bring your own bag too!
- Give the gift of services or experiences: gift certificates to local restaurants, spas, kids' classes, tickets to theaters/concerts/movies, state park sticker/trail passes, health clubs, hair salons, etc.

Reducing Energy

- Invest in LED holiday lights. LED lights use up to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs.
- Turn off or unplug holiday lights during the day or use a timer, which saves energy and prolongs the life of your lights.

Reducing Waste

- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Wrap gifts in reused or recycled wrapping paper, newspaper or fabric.
- Make handmade tree decorations: baked dough ornaments, popcorn and cranberry garland.
- At parties, avoid paper, styrofoam and plastic or paper plates/cups/utensils. If you do use plastic items, wash and reuse them.

For more information on holiday recycling and what types of packing and wrapping materials are recyclable, visit Fitchburg's website: www.fitchburgwi.gov/solidwaste. For more green holiday tips, visit U.S. EPA's website at: www.epa.gov/students/holiday.html.

5. Recycle Old Holiday Lights at City Hall

If you find some dead strings of holiday lights while decorating for the holiday season, you can bring them to Fitchburg City Hall for recycling through January 30, 2015. A special cart is now available 24 hours/day in the City Hall Lobby, 5520 Lacy Road. Fitchburg residents can drop off non-working holiday light strings and extension cords for recycling. Residents must remove any bulbs larger than marble-size and recycle those separately at participating stores.



6. This Winter Consider a Low-Salt Diet for Your Sidewalks and Driveways



When snow and ice start to accumulate on Fitchburg roads, parking lots, and sidewalks, one of the most common strategies is to apply salt. While salt works well to melt ice and snow, unfortunately it contains chloride that dissolves in melt water and eventually washes into our lakes, rivers and streams. Once in the water, there's no way to remove the chloride, harming fish and plant life in our waters. Salt can also create costly repair bills when it corrodes steel on door jams or concrete.

Here are some ideas for businesses and homeowners to reduce salt use while still making sure sidewalks and driveways are safe:

- **Shovel.** The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the salt can work more effectively. Break up ice with an ice scraper and decide if application of a deicer or sand is even necessary to maintain traction.
- **More salt does not mean more melting.** You only need about 8 oz of salt (a paper cup's worth) per 150 square feet of pavement (about the size of a parking space).
- **15 degrees F is too cold for salt to work.** Most salts stop working around this temperature. Instead, use sand for traction.
- **Sweep up extra salt.** If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement, it is no longer doing any work and will be washed away.

- **Try alternative deicers.** There are environmentally and pet friendly alternatives on the market as well as sand, gravel, cinders or cat litter that can help create better traction on ice.

For more information, check out two videos on winter sidewalk and driveway maintenance, with tips on types of salt, when to use it and how much to use:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gc8Y-Nmfmo>
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=mBcPOqpnrCU

7. Stay Home, Slow Down and Drive Safely This Winter

During big snow events, consider staying off the roads during major snow events to let the plows safely clear roads, sidewalks and parking lots. If you need to be out on the roads, here are some winter driving tips:

- Ice and snow, take it slow – slower speed, slower acceleration, slower steering and slower braking.
- If you have anti-lock brakes, press the pedal down firmly and hold it. If you do not have ABS breaks, gently pump the pedal.
- Brake early, brake correctly and never slam on the brakes.
- Even if you drive a SUV or four-wheel drive vehicle, you may not be able to stop any faster or maintain control any better once you lose traction. Four-wheel drive may get you going faster, but it won't help you stop sooner.
- Look further ahead in traffic than you normally would. Actions by other vehicles will alert you to the problems more quickly and give you extra time to react safely.
- Accelerate gradually and avoid abrupt steering maneuvers.
- Merge slowly since sudden movements can cause your vehicle to slide.



Please contact [Erika Kluetmeier](mailto:erika.kluetmeier@fitchburgwi.gov), Sustainability Specialist, at erika.kluetmeier@fitchburgwi.gov or 270-4274 if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions on future Green E-News topics. Thank you!