

THE Eco MOSQUITO

SUSTAINABILITY NEWS AND EVENTS AT HSPH AND BEYOND

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All but the most tenacious leaves have adopted their autumn colors by now, and we are even seeing the first bare trees of the season. As the days get shorter and colder, warm your insides with good food and thankful thoughts!

Solar Enlightenment

By November, it may feel like the sun has largely abandoned us. But we assure you that it's ever useful—even on short winter days. Guest contributor and MS student Annajane Yolken has the scoop on solar.



Solar energy harnesses the power of the sun for clean and sustainable energy. Unlike most common forms of energy, solar energy is not dependent on fossil fuels. Thus, it is good for the health of the planet, as well as the health of people. There are two common ways to capture solar energy: Photovoltaic systems (see left) use panels to collect and convert the sun's energy into electricity, and solar water heating systems use the sun's energy to heat water. Solar is a rapidly growing field in environmental and economic investment and is approaching cost parity with other forms of energy.

There are many state and federal incentives for solar energy systems that help decrease the upfront cost of installation. By decreasing dependence on the grid and reducing one's energy bill, solar energy is a good long-term investment; annual returns based on MA state incentives vary from 25% for commercial applications to 15% in the residential sector—much better than most stock-market and investment options! Many different companies install solar panels in the greater Boston area and most will do free evaluations to tell you if your property is a good space for solar energy. One such company is Sol Power Cooperative, a worker-owned and operated company that performs solar energy installations in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Visit solpowersolar.com for more information.

DON'T MISS THIS!

Public health and sustainability are so intertwined. Come hear Aaron Bernstein outline the "Health Benefits of Reducing Your Carbon Footprint" at the next **Eco-Opportunity Seminar Series** on Tuesday, **November 12** at 12:30pm in FXB G11.

As part of the **Season of Giving** campaign, the Harvard Longwood Campus will be holding a canned food drive for Rosie's Place from **November 15-26**. At HSPH, well-marked boxes will be located in the lobbies of Kresge and 90 Smith Street. Hopefully, this will be an easy way for you to be generous this holiday season.

The **Green Team** always has great snacks at our meetings, but this November we are taking it up a notch. Join us on Wednesday, **November 20** from 11-12pm in Kresge 907 for a delicious potluck featuring our favorite fall dishes.



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DID YOU KNOW?

Labs use more than half the energy on Harvard's campus, though they are less than a quarter of the space. Each day, a single -80C freezer uses the energy equivalent of a single family home!



Taking care of freezers by cleaning coils, vacuuming filters, and maintaining gaskets can significantly reduce the amount of energy used, improve performance, and prolong life of freezers. It can also prolong sample integrity by reducing temperature fluctuations through faster cooling times and better sample management practices. The Office for Sustainability and Facilities & Operations at HSPH are providing free freezer kits to labs wanting to maintain their -80C freezers and reduce environmental, research, and financial impacts. Request kits by emailing Alicia_Murchie@harvard.edu and specifying contact name, location for delivery, and number of kits needed. Happy scraping!

Go Cold Turkey With Us

Since 2002, about 1,000 Harvard students each year pledge to "Go Cold Turkey" over Thanksgiving break. Instead of merely eating cold turkey (almost as good as hot turkey),



these students have saved vast quantities of energy by turning off lights and computers and shutting down their dorms and work spaces before the long weekend. By 2007, the whole Harvard community got on board with the expanded Harvard Sustainability Pledge and it really paid off. That year, for each staff, student, or faculty who pledged, Harvard put \$1.50 toward renewable energy. The money was used for an on-site renewable project (2 solar thermal panels on 3 Sacramento Street). This year, we are warming up to giving thanks and asking you to Go Cold Turkey with EcoOpportunity! Start the goodwill early and demonstrate thanks to our planet by taking some easy steps to reduce the burden on our resources. Together we aim to reduce Harvard's greenhouse gas emission by 30% from 2006 levels by the year 2016. Take the Cold Turkey Pledge on our website: hsph.harvard.edu/ecoopportunity/cold-turkey/

Have an idea for an article? Contact us at ecoop@hsph.harvard.edu

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