

Living Green Quarterly

December 2022



Sentinel believes that sustainability – or living “green” – is at the heart of protecting our future. Working together we can find the fun in being Green.

Green VS. Green

Which fun fact will you show off at the next dinner party?

American currency was made green on one side as an anti-counterfeiting measure in the 1860s

SOURCE:
<https://www.history.com/news/why-is-american-currency-green>

Up to 90% of the energy used during a washing machine's cleaning cycle goes into heating the water, so consider using the cold setting.

SOURCE:
<https://sustainability.georgetown.edu/50-facts-for-50-years/#:~:text=The%20US%20makes%20up%20only,encircle%20the%20Earth%205%20times!&text=On%20average%2C%20ONE%20supermarket%20goes,Bring%20a%20reusable%20bag%20instead!&text=A%20modern%20glass%20bottle%20takes%204000%20years%20or%20more%20to%20decompose.>

Sentinel's Element 27:

Australia's First Carbon Neutral Apartment Building

By Amber Grell



In 2021, Element 27, Sentinel's flagship Build to Rent apartment building located in Subiaco, Western Australia, officially achieved its status as the first Carbon Neutral Certified apartment building in Australia under the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Buildings. Sentinel has worked closely with the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA), Climate Active and Stantec's Sustainability team to pioneer a certification methodology for the Build to Rent model that acknowledges the sector's unique potential for ongoing energy leadership in the residential sector.

Recently, it achieved carbon neutral recertification by maintaining numerous sustainable operations throughout the past year, targeting enhanced water and energy conservation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and utilizing Australian-based carbon credits.

Key sustainability features at Element 27 include electric car charging stations, a 30kW photovoltaic system for common area energy

use, a rainwater and grey-water recycling system, specialty waste streams, access to a centralized geothermal system, energy efficient appliances, occupancy sensors, an embedded metering network and a leading average 8-star NatHERS rating.

"It's great to see Sentinel's commitment to smart housing choices, and we'd love to see more developers taking up greener solutions in the future," said Western Australia's Hon. Reece Whitby MLA, Minister for Environment; Climate Action.

As Sentinel expands its portfolio across Australia, Keith Lucas, Managing Director responsible for Sentinel's Australian Development Management team, is determined to stay committed to "pursuing industry-leading sustainability targets and helping set new benchmarks for energy performance in the housing sector." Sentinel currently has more than 1,300 Build to Rent units under various stages of development throughout Australia.

Sustainability Spotlight

By Karen O'Brien



Amy Brien

*Manager at Element 27
Subiaco, Western Australia*

How are you engaging your staff in your sustainability efforts?

When a resident first moves into Element 27, we have a small session with the resident on how the building functions and one of those items is integration to our waste services, and how they can use their apartments with the energy efficient appliances.

What made you decide to get more involved with your community's sustainability efforts?

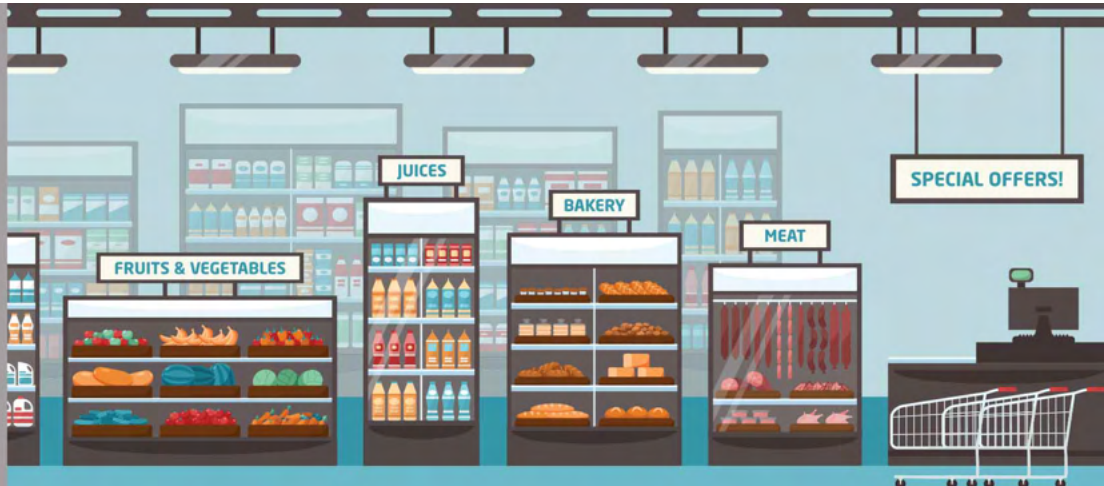
At Element 27 the largest challenge we have faced is a simple one – cardboard. We have found that with deliveries, and with the increase of parcel delivery from the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the disposal of cardboard. We have encouraged our residents through signage and initiatives to recycle and reuse where possible.

As a property manager, what sustainability challenges have you had to face?

All staff are getting very creative with events and offering promotional items that are sustainable. Once employees begin to see the positive impact they helped to create and that they all have a role to play, then ideas start to flow and they begin to believe they are making a difference.

What steps have you taken to ensure that sustainability concerns, such as environmental impact, are considered in new projects?

Communication to the Project Development team about what initiatives were successful. Suggestions for the longevity of the environment have also been offered to the team for consideration.



Sustainable and Healthy Grocery Shopping

By Eirene Tsakales

The US throws away approximately 40% of purchased food, which is a drain on natural resources and money. Heightening the efficiency in shopping and storing food can be a change that helps the food economy and helps consumers spend less at the market. Here are a few tips on how below.

Organize the Fridge: An easy way to preserve groceries is to maintain and organize your refrigerator. Put things in practical locations, such as condiments and dressings in the door; dairy products, eggs and spreads on the slightly warmer top shelf; meats and milk on the lower, cooler shelves; and separating fruits and vegetables in the crisper drawers. By putting things in their proper place, food will last longer and you will be able to find things with ease while opening the door less and saving energy. A pro tip for keeping your fridge tidy is to clean the fridge before a grocery run. Discarding spoiled items will allow you to eliminate items you don't use as often, as well as help recognize needed replacements.

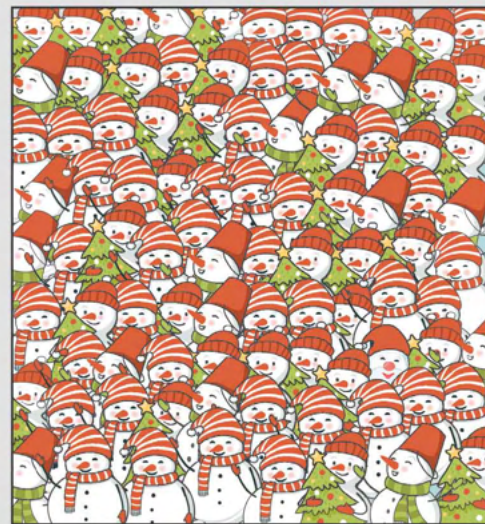
Have a Healthy Snack Before Shopping: Studies show that 30% of grocery products are purchased impulsively. There are several reasons why shoppers hastily buy at the markets, but the main reason for those last-minute purchases are hungry tummies. When we are famished our stomach tells our brain "I want food," and that is interpreted as hoard as much food as possible even if it has nothing to do with satisfying the hunger. Unfortunately, this also means people who go to the supermarket hungry tend to choose more products that are highly processed and have higher empty calories. In general, we make unhealthy food choices when shopping while hungry. Another way to avoid the extra purchases is to make a list and stick to it.

Shop Deliberately: You cannot always predict your week in advance; sometimes there are last-minute dinner plans made with family or friends or maybe you decide to just order in. Keeping this in mind, shop with intention when purchasing food for the week. Limit the groceries, especially fruits and vegetables, that decompose quickly to what you know you need. If you are buying for the week, items that have an extended shelf life, such as oranges, apricots, pears, cabbage, carrots, brussels sprouts and sweet potatoes, will keep longer in your fridge.

Read the Labels: Choose sustainable groceries and know what labels you are looking for. It's true that there are many misleading buzzwords displayed on a package that entice you to buy it as a "healthy item." Some of these deceptive words include "fresh," "all natural" or even "organic." However, there are labels that truly are there to help you be a more conscious shopper. A few examples are: Sustainably Sourced, USDA Certified Organic, Local, Biodynamic, Non-GMO Verified or Seasonal Produce. When you don't see these labels, be sure to look at the ingredients list. If you cannot pronounce the ingredients, chances are pretty good it's not as "all natural" as you think it is.

Buy Seasonal and Local: Your local green market is always the best place to find local produce, but if you don't have the opportunity to go to the farmers market, the grocery store will often have a section where you can find local produce. Buying local and in-season food is one of the best tasting ways to be sustainable!

WHERE IS THE SANTA?



Swift Creek Apartments

Swift Creek Commons Apartments Supports Dominion Energy Renewable Energy Program

By Stephanie Lane



Swift Creek Commons
APARTMENTS

There is a lot that individual apartment residents can do to further sustainability goals and lessen their environmental impact by being mindful of their energy usage. Now they can also elect to participate in renewable energy programs in many areas. Sentinel is proud to extend to our residents at Swift Creek Commons Apartments a way to choose an environmentally friendly option for their personal energy consumption.

Virginia is one of 26 states that have a deregulated electricity market, allowing consumers to choose from a competitive market of energy suppliers. Dominion Energy's voluntary Renewable Energy Program empowers consumers to choose either traditional sourcing of energy, or a 100% renewable energy source, reducing their carbon footprint in a whole new way.

Swift Creek Commons Apartments is excited to promote and support local Virginia energy provider Dominion Energy and their 100% Renewable Energy Program. For our part, Sentinel has committed to purchase 100% renewal energy for all common area electric needs at Swift Creek Commons. In addition, a promotional flyer was emailed to all Swift Creek Commons residents to raise awareness and provide information about the Dominion Energy Renewable Energy Program. We hope it will encourage residents to go green and sign up for the program. We also encourage new residents to sign up at move-in.

We believe that reducing the environmental impact of energy usage is an important goal, and we will continue to find ways to promote this goal and encourage our residents to support renewable programs wherever they become available.

Stay tuned for more announcements and ways to get involved!

Wrapping Gifts in Sustainability

By Heidi Adams

For so many, we are approaching the season of family and friends, decorations, homemade delicacies, spiced drinks and a lot of holiday cheer. Much of that cheer often comes in the form of gift giving and no matter the holiday you are celebrating during this winter season – from Hannukah to Valentine's Day – deciding what to wrap presents in can really get the season started in a sustainable way. Unfortunately, most of the beautiful, glittery and metallic wrapping paper we pick up from the stores end up in landfills. In fact, many rolls of paper are unable to be recycled due to the material make-up and can make all of the items in a recycling bin unrecyclable. To avoid the mountains of shimmering wrapping paper in your trash, we challenge all gift givers to be thoughtful and creative. Below are some inventive ways you can both save money and make Mother Earth happy by upcycling items around the house.

1. Brown Paper Bags Easily found in most homes, the humble brown paper bag just needs a few colorful additions to make it exciting, cheerful or beautifully rustic. Add some twine, yarn or recyclable ribbon then decorate with pinecones, sprigs of mistletoe, Christmas tree, holly, a small ornament, candy canes or a colorful gift tag. If you've got kiddos, have them help by coloring the wrapped gift or writing a special message to the loved one. To keep the paper recyclable, avoid paints, crayons and glitter glue.

2. Go with a Basket A unique DIY seasonal basket could be the personal touch that brings the most joy to your loved ones this season. There is a good chance that you or someone you know might have a hidden collection of baskets that you can use to create the masterpiece of your choosing. If you don't have a collection of baskets handy, get creative in what the "basket" is, and make it part of the gift. For a sangria starter kit, put the ingredients in a large jar the sangria can be made in. For a spiced cake recipe, place the recipe, ingredients, measuring cups, spoons and a whisk in a Bundt cake pan or loaf pan. Whatever you use to create your gift, be sure to add some personal and festive touches, such as a festive kitchen towel to drape around it or a pretty ribbon that captures your holiday spirit.

3. Cloth Packaging Another fun way to make the wrapping part of the actual gift is to use fabric that matches your theme. A tea towel to wrap a new kitchen appliance, a graphic tee with a musical artist on it to wrap a pair of tickets in or a lovely scarf that matches a new outfit. Use festive ribbons or pins to keep it fastened. If you are feeling adventurous, learn about furoshiki, the Japanese art of gift-wrapping, for an impressive touch.



4. Reusing Tote Bags Just add some colorful tissue paper and a festive bow, and you have a gift within a gift that keeps on giving.

5. Children's Artwork Whether the kiddos bring home their masterpieces from school, or love to create at home, parents are often left with a stack of artwork they may not know what to do with. Instead of tossing them in the trash, save them and use them to wrap around the presents of a loved one who can appreciate fine art.

6. Eco-Friendly Wrapping Paper Not all wrapping paper is nonrecyclable. If wrapping paper is metallic, has glitter on it or has a texture to it, it is not recyclable and has to be discarded. However, plain wrapping paper can be recycled and with a little bit of searching there are some eco-friendly wrapping papers that are compostable.

Receiving presents is always lovely, but the gift is usually in the giving. With these fun tips, a little creativity and a lot of holiday spirit, not only will you be wrapping gifts in love, but in sustainability as well. Happy Holidays!

FOUND SANTA!



Chef BoyarG's Potato Leek Soup

Ingredients

- 4-5 slices of thick cut bacon, cut into ½ inch strips
- 1 large leek – tender light green and white portion sliced (2 cups worth)
- 2 ribs of celery diced into small pieces
- 1 medium onion, diced (sweet onion if available)
- 8-10 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tbs of fresh thyme leaves, (1 tsp if using dried or ground version)
- 2 tbs of butter
- 3 oz block of cream cheese
- 2 lbs of yellow potatoes or red potatoes (or a mixture of both)
- 3 cups of chicken stock (homemade chicken stock is always best)
- 1 cup of milk
- parsley for garnish
- shredded cheese to top
- Optional: Cajun seasoning



Local and Seasonal Eating

By Skye Randazzo

Today, supermarkets provide a diverse array of food at any time of year. Unfortunately, sourcing food from all over the world that is neither local nor seasonal can have a negative environmental impact; transportation alone is a large contributor of pollution to our air and waterways and adds to our dependency on fossil fuels. The food provided has diminished nutritional value because it is picked prematurely and produced with chemicals to survive the long journey overseas.

To help lower our carbon footprint, support your nearest farmers markets that offer fresh, local and seasonal produce. Chef BoyarG's Potato and Leek Soup recipe showcases a wonderful meal comprised of delicious seasonal ingredients from your closest green market; leeks, celery, onions and a variety of herbs are just a portion of winter's very delicious flavor profile.

Directions

- 1) Place Dutch Oven, or heavy bottomed pot, on the stove and set the temperature to medium-high. Add sliced bacon and cook until the grease has been rendered and the bacon is golden brown. Remove the bacon from the pot with a slotted spoon, leaving the grease in the pot.
- 2) Return the pot to the stove and add butter carefully; the hot grease will start popping.
- 3) Once the butter is melted, add the onions and celery until they become translucent (about 7 minutes) then add the garlic and leeks. Sauté until scent fills the air.
- 4) Add salt and pepper to taste, along with Cajun seasoning if you choose. If you are using dried or powdered thyme, add it now and stir.
- 5) Add the potatoes and coat with the mixture, then add the chicken stock to the pot and bring to a boil. Keep the stock at a boil until the potatoes are tender.
- 6) Once the potatoes are tender, add the cream cheese and milk. Stir until the cream cheese is fully incorporated into the broth. Once incorporated, add the fresh thyme leaves if not using the dried or powdered version.
- 7) Reduce heat to a low simmer and let simmer for approximately 30 minutes. When coming up to the 30-minute mark, be sure to taste the broth and adjust your salt, pepper and Cajun spices. A little goes a long way at this point.
- 8) When making a bowl, add the crispy bacon to the bowl and top with chopped parsley.
- 9) ENJOY!

Source: Gilbert O'Leary's recipes