

Living Green Quarterly

December 2023



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.

“According to the EPA, landfills in the US are the third largest source of methane emissions.”

Green VS. Green

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

The US DoA estimates that \$161 billion worth of food is dumped into landfills each year.

SOURCE: NYTIMES

In Ayurveda, an ancient holistic approach to medicine, the color green is soothing, and has the faculty to drive away sadness.

Composting: A More Sustainable Life

By Kayla Noll

New York City (NYC) has officially announced the re-implementation of their curbside composting program, laying out a roadmap to a cleaner and more sustainable city. While this program has been around for the last decade, it served only 40% of the city. With this go around, city officials are committed to 100% coverage by the end of 2024. The goal is to drastically reduce the amount of food materials being sent to landfills, reducing the city's greenhouse gas emissions, as NYC is one of many cities across the US that have sent their food waste to out-of-state landfills for decades. When organic material is sent to landfills it's compacted under mounds of garbage and decomposes without oxygen, creating harmful methane emissions, which are 28-36 times more effective than carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere. According to the EPA, landfills in the US are the third largest source of methane emissions. Composting at home is a way for everyone to cut down on these emissions and have a meaningful impact on the environment.

What is Composting: Composting is the process of turning organic materials such as food waste, plant scraps and paper into fertilizer that enriches soil. This process relies on microorganisms, which require oxygen.

Compostable Materials: A compost pile is a mixture of “green” and “brown” materials. Greens are food and plant materials that provide moisture such as fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells, herbs and spices, houseplant trimmings, etc. Browns are drier materials that add structure to the compost such as shredded newspaper, shredded office paper, torn brown paper bags, nutshells, used coffee filters, etc.



How-to: First, gather the right container. There are ready-to-buy compost bins available, but you can make your own with items at home. Use any container with a sealing top like plastic storage bins and coffee cans. After cleaning your container, drill a few holes into the sides to allow airflow, line the inside with a paper or plastic bag and start filling! Include an equal mixture of greens and browns to keep enough moisture.

Using The Compost: Once the bin is filled and the contents have broken down, evaluate your options. If the city has a compost initiative, put the compost out on the designated pickup day or drop-off location; consider adding compost to your garden or potted plants, which will add nutrients and life to the soil, or donate compost to a community garden, local farm or a neighbor who loves to garden!

Whether your city has implemented a composting program, or you are looking to start living a more sustainable life, composting is a great way to impact the environment right from home.



Employee Spotlight

By Karen O'Brien



Sheila Kostares

Manager at Egret's Landing
Palm Harbor, FL

What does sustainability mean to you?

Consuming less of everything!

In your opinion, what is the most pressing environmental issue currently?

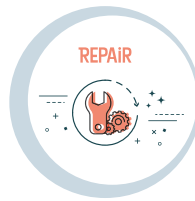
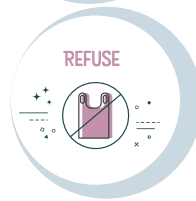
Our water quality is the most important to me. Currently, we are experiencing a severe red tide that is caused by excess levels of nitrogen, such as fertilizers, going into our waterways. These nutrients can cause blooms and severe and chronic respiratory issues in humans along with major fish kills. The county that we live in restricts usage of these nutrients during the heavy rain season helping to reduce the spread of the blooms.

What made you decide to become a more environmentally conscious individual?

I have a nine-year-old granddaughter who has become very aware of our environment and voices her concerns; her goal is to save the turtles by keeping our world clean. Together we have been working at cleaning up the canals in our neighborhood of all debris and we also pick up trash and dispose of it properly. We are working to save the turtles, one piece of trash at a time!

How are you measuring progress in your sustainability efforts?

We look at the increase in recycling versus the trash dumping. We also monitor the reduction in electricity costs by offering more efficiency-rated HVAC unit installs, using LED bulbs everywhere in the community, using timers and sensors for lighting and sprinklers and monitoring HVAC units in common areas with timed thermostats.



The Six Rs of Sustainability

By Carrie Sitterley

As we try to lower our carbon footprint to do better for ourselves, our children, our neighbors and the planet, we can find practical ways to achieve this by looking at the six Rs of Practical Action in Sustainability and how these small adaptations make a big difference!

Rethink – In this age of fast-paced consumerism, we are used to tossing something and quickly shifting to the next. However, before hitting the buy button or swiping that credit card on the next shopping spree, think about what you already have that might be hidden in the back of your closet that already meets the criteria. If there is an item that you need, be mindful of what you purchase, looking for quality over quantity. If you have something that will last, you won't have to repeatedly buy the same thing, costing you time and money. This will decrease the pollution you would personally contribute over time, especially in terms of fast fashion.

Refuse – The second R of Sustainability happens to be the most proactive step in quelling waste at the start. Refuse means saying no, but at a more basic level, it means refusing all things you don't need. For example, say no to plastic bags when shopping, plastic straws at restaurants or bars and to-go containers (bring your own Tupperware to a restaurant). You can also say no to packaged veggies by going to your local farmers market or saying no to single-use cups by using a refillable bottle or hot drink cup at your favorite barista.

Reduce – Think about what you could decrease in your daily life to make a difference. Reduce your gas by walking or biking to work (saving money on gas/transportation and staying healthy!). Bring down your electricity bill and your carbon footprint by keeping your temperature system on a moderate setting, turning off the lights when natural light is sufficient and when you leave the room and by switching to CFL light bulbs, which reduces energy consumption by 75% compared to incandescent bulbs – and last up to 10 times longer.

Reuse – Evaluate what items you use every day that can be repurposed into something else or up-cycle old items into something new. For example, reuse hand and dish soap containers by refilling them, re-stain or repaint old furniture for an updated look, utilize old jars or bins that can be cleaned and redesigned for storage, turn old t-shirts and socks into cleaning rags and paper bags make perfect wrapping paper for packages! Additionally, plan a swap party: invite your friend(s) over to swap clothes and goods you were ready to toss

or donate old books to local schools, libraries and used bookstores to give new life to your older treasures!

Repair – Assess what is fixable before tossing it. Consider sewing or patching up ripped clothes and loose buttons and research why that coffee pot isn't working quite right anymore (it may be as easy as replacing an inexpensive part instead of replacing an entire appliance). Repair your favorite lamp by exploring YouTube self-help videos and deep clean your pillows, furniture and rugs before buying new!

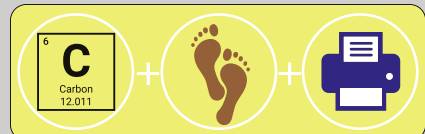
Recycle – Recycling is a method of turning used and waste materials into new products. Since recycling rules vary, the best thing to do is to find your state and local guidelines, then sort your recyclables appropriately.

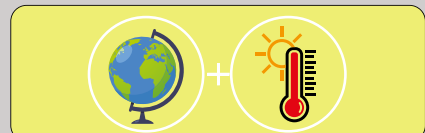
REBUS PUZZLES

EXAMPLE



RADIOACTIVE WASTE







Drift at Town Center East Apartments

Community Building Party

By David Rodriguez

DRIFT
TOWN CENTER EAST
APARTMENTS

The residents at Drift at Town Center East Apartments took part in a community succulent building party. The property management staff provided pots, soil, rocks, care cards and snacks as residents got creative and built a green friend they could bring home. The staff joined in on the fun, allowing tenants to get to know each other and the property staff they see every day!



Gift Giving Goes Green

By Carrie Sitterley

The winter months don't only bring forth the cold and shorter days, they also bestow on us some of the most festive holidays where families of all cultures and creeds get together to enjoy each other. Whether celebrating Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, Soyl, Lunar New Year, Valentine's Day, Boxing Day or anything in between, it's a good time to consider some environmentally-friendly gift giving options for all holiday seasons.

Handmade Gifts: There are always thoughtful DIY gift givers and, as it turns out, there are some easy gifts that less-than-crafty people can excel at making while being sustainable. For example, if you love to bake and have a specialty, put all the secret dry ingredients in a jar with a note of additional wet ingredients to add! There are also DIY body scrubs, bath bombs and cocoa bombs that can be whipped up quickly and are a fun gift to receive.

Experience Gifts: There is something to be said for a gift that stays with you forever. Take your loved one to the theater, concert or a sporting event. Enjoy a weekend trip, a spa day or a day at a vineyard. Take creatives to a craft class, including a candle making class, pottery class, cooking class, classic and creative cocktail class, soap making class or a DIY perfume bar experience.

Sustainable Gifts: In general, people have grown to be more conscientious about being eco-friendly and companies have really started to take note, making sustainable gift giving easier with many companies either producing a more sustainable and earth-friendly product or by making contributions that support green efforts, such as carbon footprint reduction or other humanitarian efforts. As the gift giver, you can take it a step further! Help your friends and family reduce plastic waste by gifting them with

things like lasting sweaters, bamboo products, clean-burning beeswax or soy candles with cotton wicks, clean beauty products, sustainable gift sets and planet-friendly personal care items such as reusable "forever eye masks," plastic-free shampoo and conditioner bars and reusable make-up removal cloths.

Wrapping Paper: In a previous Winter newsletter, we have touched on wrapping gifts in a more sustainable way, including furoshiki wrapping and using children's artwork collected over the year as an extra special touch to your wrapped present. However, there is a fun addition to the list, which is a plantable wrapping paper! Made with post-consumer and post-industrial recycled paper and paper waste, it's formed into an eco-friendly roll of paper that is embedded with seeds. After it's done its job, the paper decomposes and the seeds are left behind to grow wildflowers, plants or even herbs. The wrapping paper wouldn't be a gift itself, but when thinking about the perfect sustainable gift to give, don't forget that there are creative ways to wrap!

ANSWER HERE!



CARBON FOOTPRINT



GLOBAL WARMING



GREENHOUSE GAS

Winter Vegetable Quinoa Bowl

Ingredients

SALAD:

- ½ cup quinoa cooked as you prefer
- 1 medium carrot cut into chunks
- ½ cup halved brussels sprouts
- ½ yellow onion cut lengthwise in ½ inch slices
- ½ cup squash of choice
- 1 small red beet cooked whole then peeled and cut into chunks
- ½ cup olive oil, divided 5 times to coat each vegetable
- 1 small avocado
- salt and pepper to taste

DRESSING:

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbs stone ground mustard
- ½ tbs balsamic glaze
- ½ tbs honey or maple syrup
- salt and pepper to taste



Local and Seasonal Eating

By Skye Randazzo

Today, supermarkets provide a diverse array of food at any time of the 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 from overseas.

To help lower our carbon footprint, support your nearest farmers markets that offer fresh, local and seasonal produce. Our Winter Vegetable Quinoa Bowl recipe showcases a way to create a dish with many ingredients found at your local green market; carrots, brussels sprouts, yellow onions, squash, beets, honey and maple syrup are just a portion of winter's amazingly delicious flavor profile.

Directions

- 1) In a small bowl, whisk the dressing ingredients together and set aside.
- 2) Set the oven to 400°.
- 3) Place the carrots in a medium-sized bowl and coat with ⅓ portion of the olive oil. Add salt and pepper to taste and toss together until properly coated. Add the carrots to a large, lined baking sheet, spreading out so there is little touching – this helps the vegetable to roast properly.
- 4) Repeat the process with brussels sprouts, onions and squash. The carrots, brussels sprouts, onions and squash should all fit on 1 large baking sheet.
- 5) Wrap the small beet with olive oil, salt and pepper in foil and cook simultaneously on a heat-proof dish (to prevent leaks).
- 6) Cook all ingredients simultaneously for 25 minutes.
- 7) Ensure the beets are cooked through by piercing with a knife, then peel and dice into bite-sized pieces.
- 8) In 2 bowls, separate the quinoa equally. Add, in separate sections, ½ of the carrots, brussels sprouts, onions, squash and beets on top. Then add the other half to the second bowl.
- 9) Cut the avocado in half and slice it, adding the slices to the top of the bowls.
- 10) Add desired amount of dressing to the veggies, ensuring that it reaches the quinoa as well. Do not overdress.

Source: Skye Randazzo