

# The Greener Sewall

Volume 1, Issue 1

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## Welcome

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Welcome to the first issue of *The Greener Sewall*, a once-quarterly communication from the Old Town office's Green Team. Within this newsletter, we hope to convey useful hints, tips, and inspirations to help you reduce your environmental impacts both in and out of the office.

The Green Team was formed in July '08 by a group of Old

Town staff interested in finding ways to save Sewall money, help make Sewall a more environmentally responsible company and at the same time a better place to work.

We've formed several committees, including Energy Conservation and Alternative Transportation, which you will read more about in this issue. Other teams include Solid

Waste Reduction and Green Team Organizing. All committee recommendations are brought to Sewall's Executive Team for approval prior to implementation by the Green Team.

If you'd like to get involved in this effort, please see the box on Page 3.

## Pitch In! Ways you can make a difference

This month's focus is on energy conservation. Many of the Energy Conservation Team's recommendations listed below are common sense ideas, basically what your parents told you growing up. They were smarter than we thought.

**Turn off the lights when you leave the room.** (Think copier, conference and bath rooms.) If you have a private office and go to a meeting elsewhere, turn off the lights. If you have a desk lamp and go away from your desk, turn it off. This is especially true when you leave for the night or weekend.

**Turn off computers when you go home at night,** or for

the weekend. (If you are unsure, please check with IT to see if your computer runs as a server or otherwise needs to be left on.)

**If your computer will allow, put it in "sleep mode" when not in use.** If you know how to do this, and your computer will allow it, this is an easy way to contribute. The EC team may be able to help if you have questions.

**Switch monitor(s) off when you will not be using it.** Older style CRT monitors are one of the most power-hungry components of a computer. LCD (commonly called "flat panel") displays generally consume about half as much

energy as CRT monitors (and generate less heat). Note that using a screen saver generally results in no power savings.

**Turn off personal heaters and other electrical devices when you are away from your work area.**

Other energy savings ideas that will be implemented include buying compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) to replace all incandescent bulbs in the Old Town building, a move that save more than \$30/month and weather-stripping the loading dock doors.



## Energy Conservation Team Activities

The Energy Conservation (EC) Team is working to reduce the energy use of Sewall through low-impact solutions.

A lot of our electrical use is unavoidable; we all run computers and need lights to work. Blowers are needed to circulate air and keep it fresh. But we can use less electricity without impacting how much work we accomplish, or our basic level of comfort (see suggestions on page 1.

We've often heard that fluorescent lights take more power to start than old-fashioned incandescent lights. They do, but the breakeven

time is 20 SECONDS. So if you're out of the office for more than a minute you're saving electricity by turning off the lights.

Switching your computer or monitor off also saves power indirectly: The computer equipment generates a considerable amount of heat. The climate control system has to work harder to compensate. Especially in the summer, cooling costs can increase significantly.

The Energy Conservation Team is looking at other ideas such as replacing "EXIT" sign lights with LED fixtures as the

existing lights burn out or installing motion sensors in conference rooms. The EC Team always welcomes other ideas or participation, please email Jeff Allen (jallen@sewall.com).

A lot of these suggestions can be implemented at home too in order to save further energy and money. As Ben Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny earned."

There are some other great ideas at:

<http://planetgreen.discovery.com/go-green/green-work/green-work-tips.html>



## Alternative Transportation Team Activities

Single-occupant vehicle travel is very costly – in terms of fuel prices, vehicle expenses, and noxious emissions that foul the air and contribute to global climate change. The Alternative Transportation (AT) Committee hopes to reduce Sewall's cumulative environmental impacts by making it easier for employees to choose more environmentally friendly (and less expensive) transportation modes.

Thus far we have met with Terri Elder and Diane Tucker in Human Resources (HR) to discuss preliminary recommendations for corporate actions that would encourage employees to bicycle, walk, carpool, or use public transit for some or all of their daily commutes. Sewall is already planning to increase the Old Town office's participation in

Commute Another Way Week in May 2009, a Maine-wide event that encourages employees to try out alternative transportation modes.

The AT Committee is in the very early stages of researching and quantifying the savings that Sewall could realize through videoconferencing. Lori Austin, Sewall's Corporate Controller, believes that state-of-the-art videoconferencing technology has the potential to significantly reduce the volume and frequency of business travel (with all of its associated expenses) to and from Sewall's Old Town corporate headquarters.

We have also forwarded information to HR regarding the ZipCar short-term vehicle rental service. ZipCar provides the convenience of a shared-use company car, minus all of

the accounting hassles and high carrying costs associated with a leased or purchased vehicle. This service could encourage many more employees to "go green" and save money by taking full advantage of alternative commuting modes, with the assurance that they would still have access to an energy-efficient vehicle during the workday for external business trips.

The AT Committee has developed a brief employee survey that will allow us to establish a baseline of current commuting practices and preferences. The survey will be distributed electronically to all Old Town employees. Once we understand the baseline conditions, we will develop a plan with recommendations to increase *(continued on the next page)*



## Alternative Transportation Team Activities (Cont.)

the share for each alternative transportation mode. We will follow up with annual benchmarking surveys to evaluate whether Sewall's educational messages and incentive programs are yielding results by encouraging more employees to choose alternative transportation.

If anyone is interested in working on a similar program for any of the Sewall branch offices, we welcome additional participation in the AT Committee via teleconference at our committee meetings, and via e-mail on our round-robin discussions; please e-mail me at [sduchesne@jws.com](mailto:sduchesne@jws.com), to be added to the AT e-mail distribution list. We also welcome feedback on alternative transportation choices and related topics from any Sewall employee at any time. Those of us on the AT Committee hope that all Sewall

employees will take some time to **think globally and act locally** to help reduce our cumulative carbon footprint, both at work and at home. Switching to a less costly commuting pattern, even if it's just for one day each week (or even one day each month!) would be an excellent place to start.

Here are some useful weblinks if you would like to learn more about alternative commuting. The first two links are provided specifically for Old Town employees, the others contain information that can be applied to any Sewall office location.

[www.gomaine.org](http://www.gomaine.org) : Maine's FREE statewide clearinghouse for ALL alternative commuters, and the primary sponsor of Commute Another Way Week. Register in the GoMaine database anytime to qualify for a Free Ride Home if you are

ever stranded at work due to your alternative commute, for instance if you ever have to work late or pick up a sick child at school on a day when you didn't drive yourself to work. This service is available even if you only occasionally use alternative transportation, so it makes sense to sign up in case you ever need the Free Ride Home.

[http://www.bangormaine.gov/cs\\_publictransit.php](http://www.bangormaine.gov/cs_publictransit.php) :

Downloadable routes, schedules, and fare information for the BAT Community Connector regional transit service. At \$40 per month for unlimited rides on buses fueled by clean-burning propane, you'll soon find better ways to use all that money you used to pour down the gas tank to fuel your daily commute -- and the BAT is by far the greenest choice for commuters who live too far from work to walk or bicycle.

<http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/tdm9.htm> The [Travel Demand Management Encyclopedia](#) from the Victoria Transport Policy Institute provides a comprehensive online education in alternative transportation concepts and terminology. [http://www.commuterchoice.com/cc\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.commuterchoice.com/cc_brochure.pdf) The US government offers a tax incentive program that allows participating employers to reimburse a portion of their employees' alternative transportation costs with favorable tax treatment. Modes covered include transit, vanpooling (but not carpooling), and most recently bicycling. <http://www.zipcar.com/z2b/biz/driving/> Z2B is ZipCar's convenient, low-cost, short-term vehicle rental program for the business sector, offering consolidated monthly billing statements and special reduced rates for weekday trips.

## Future Activities

The Green Team Committees are meeting regularly and working on issues including:

### Energy Conservation

Ballast replacements / retrofits to permit reducing lighting where not needed, exit sign replacement to LED and weatherizing loading dock doors.

### Alternative Transportation

Bike storage, incentive programs to encourage carpooling and transit use, ZipCars for alternative commuters to use for site and client visits during the workday and calculation of the

companies carbon footprint associated with business and commuting transportation.

### Solid Waste Reduction

Photocopy methodology (e.g., double-sided copying, re-use of single sided copies), recycling program (e.g., paper, toner cartridges, office furniture) and water conservation program.

### Organizing

Company environmental policy, outreach to all Sewall offices with lessons learned, calculating carbon footprint of Sewall overall, use of environmentally preferred products (EPP), revisions to

corporate communications (web site etc.) to reflect further greening of Sewall, and marketing "Green Team" consulting to other companies as service offering.

As appropriate, return on investments calculations will be conducted and will accompany recommendations made to Sewall's Executive Team for approval.

### Want to get involved?

The Green Team meets as a whole every month in Old Town. Committees meet more frequently. To be added to the distribution list for the Team or committees, please send an email any of the following:

[GreenTeam@sewall.com](mailto:GreenTeam@sewall.com)  
[GT\\_Energy@sewall.com](mailto:GT_Energy@sewall.com)  
[GT\\_AltTrans@sewall.com](mailto:GT_AltTrans@sewall.com)  
[GT\\_SoldWaste@sewall.com](mailto:GT_SoldWaste@sewall.com)  
[GT\\_Org@sewall.com](mailto:GT_Org@sewall.com)

Also, see the Team's materials and communications on Citrix Print / Temp / Green Team.

