

# “Green” Hotels Association® GREENING NEWSLETTER

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Sales Manager  
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Personnel  
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## GOOGLE WANTS SOLAR PANELS ON YOUR ROOF

Google is investing \$280 million to help private homeowners put solar panels on their rooftops. It's Google's latest—and largest—investment in clean energy. The money will allow installer SolarCity to offer solar systems to homeowners for no money up front. In exchange, customers agree to pay a set price for the power produced by the panels. Google earns a return on its investment by charging SolarCity interest to use its money and reaping the benefits of federal and local renewable energy tax credits. “It allows us to put our capital to work in a way that is very important to the founders and to Google, and we found a good business model to support,” said Joel Conkling of Google's Green Business Operations in an interview before the company announced the investment.

Google co-founder and chief executive Larry Page wants Google's operations to eventually produce no net greenhouse gas emissions. To this end, Google has invested in wind farms in North Dakota, California and Oregon, solar projects in California and Germany and the early stages of a transmission system off the East Coast meant to foster the construction of offshore wind farms.

A typical rooftop solar system costs \$25,000 to \$30,000, too much for many homeowners to lay out. Instead, solar providers like SolarCity and competitors SunRun and Sungevity can pay for the system with money borrowed from a bank or a specially-designed fund. The resident then pays a set rate for the power generated. The rate is lower than or roughly the same as the local electricity price.



A typical 5-kilowatt system will generate about 7,000 kilowatt-hours of

power in a year, or about 60% of the typical household's annual use. The homeowner buys whatever remaining electric power he needs from the local utility. The homeowner typically enjoys lower overall power bills and is protected somewhat against potentially higher traditional electricity prices in the future.

These types of programs don't work well in all states or for all homes. In order for both the solar company to make money and the homeowner to save money, there must be some combination of high local electric rates, state and local subsidies, and low installation costs. And, of course, sunshine. A home needs a roof, preferably facing south, that is not shaded by trees or structures.

Google's \$280 million is expected to pay for 10,000 rooftop systems that will be installed over the next 18 months. These

types of programs originated in California, by far the nation's largest solar market, because the state has offered generous incentives, power prices are high and there is ample sunlight.

Google's investment generates returns three ways. Google gets a tax credit from the federal government of 30% of the cost of the solar projects, in this case \$84 million. It also can write off the total value of the systems in the year they are built, an accounting benefit called accelerated depreciation. The value of state and local tax credits also flow to Google.

Google—and solar installers—hope that this investment will inspire other corporations to establish similar funds.

Fahey, Jonathan, AP Energy Writer, San Antonio News, September 28, 2011

## 2011 Technology Innovation Awards

Each year The Wall Street Journal awards businesses' technology innovations in 16 categories. GHA wants you to know about honored innovations that may be useful in the hospitality world.

- Heat-reflecting windows let in light without straining air conditioning. In the Environment category, the top prize went to the Industrial Technology Research Institute of Taiwan, or ITRI, for a spray insulation coating that can be applied to glass windows and other materials at a much lower cost than existing techniques. ITRI's Spray-IT uses a tin-dioxide material laced with minute amounts of lithium and fluorine that can be sprayed on glass or building tiles. The material is less costly than the silver-based films that are commonly used in reflective materials, ITRI says, and can be applied without specialized equipment. The ability to use regular spraying methods means the product can be used on existing structures.

- Runner-up in the Environment category is Certain Teed Corp., U.S.'s gypsum wallboard that can improve indoor air quality by permanently capturing formaldehydes and other volatile organic compounds.

- The Industrial Technology Research Institute of Taiwan also won top honors in the Materials and Other Base Technologies category for a reusable and recyclable electronic paper that can take the place of regular office printer paper. ITRI says not only is its i2R e-paper less expensive than the costly rewritable printer products currently available, but also the cost could be comparable to that of conventional black-and-white inkjet or laser printing.

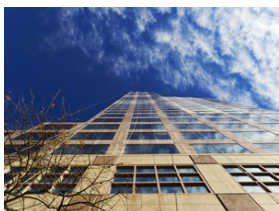
The i2R e-paper uses a special type of liquid-crystal technology to display text and other images on a bendable, thin plastic sheet. To print a document, the sheets are run through a simple device, similar to an old-style thermal fax machine, turning molecules light or dark. ITRI estimates that a single sheet could be reused 260 times before it would need to be replaced.

ITRI, a nonprofit research center, says it has licensed the i2R technology to Taiwan's ChangChun Plastics Co., which plans to begin pilot production of an e-paper product in 2012.

Leer, John M., "2011 Technology Innovation Awards," Technology, The Wall Street Journal, October 17, 2011

## Spending on Building Energy Efficiency to Boom in Next 5 Years

Building energy efficiency may not be sexy, but it is big business and it's going to get a whole lot bigger. Pike Research predicts the building energy efficiency market will soar more than 50% between now and 2017 to \$103.5 billion. Among the leading factors: an active stable of energy service companies (ESCOs) and aggressive efficiency policies being enacted around the world.



High-efficiency equipment, such as HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) and lighting, will become more desirable in the coming years, according to the Pike report, "Energy Efficient Buildings: Global Outlook." The market for high-efficiency HVAC systems, for example, will more than double to \$6.4 billion between 2011 and 2017.

ESCOs will see their fortunes rise handsomely as well, with global revenues more than doubling to \$66 billion in 2017. A major player in the commercial buildings space, often using energy performance contracts (ESC) to finance projects using the expected savings, they will account for the largest segment in the energy efficient buildings industry.

A prime example of this trend is Johnson Controls. As Leslie Guevarra reported earlier this year, the company's Building Efficiency Business has more than 1,000 public projects in the pipeline. The projects, with government agencies, schools and the like, will generate \$4.7 billion in energy, water and operational costs over the next decade. Honeywell is another player. The company is helping the city of Antioch, CA, with a \$4.65 million lighting retrofit that will essentially pay for itself over the next 10 years through the projected energy savings.

As noted earlier, government policies for energy efficient policies is a major factor in the growth of this market. In the US, money from the stimulus bill is helping to fund the Honeywell-Antioch project and others. President Barack Obama also announced the Better Buildings Initiative to spur investment in building energy efficiency. The UK government is also targeting zero-carbon new housing by 2016 and new commercial buildings by 2019.

Herrera, Tilde, Greenbiz.com, November 29, 2011

## PROPOSED AUSTIN BAG BAN WOULD BLOCK PAPER, PLASTIC

The city of Austin might enact one of the broadest bag bans in the nation and prohibit disposable paper and plastic bags at all checkout counters starting in January 2016. As early as 2013, customers would start paying 25 cents for every disposable bag a retailer provided them. Within three years, the single-use bags would be banned, according to a draft of the policy.

More than two dozen US cities have enacted bag bans since

2007. Most prohibit plastic only, or ban plastic and impose a fee on paper. Austin would be one of only a few US cities to ban both, said Bob Gedert, director of Austin Resource Recovery, the city department that wrote the draft ban and handles trash collection and recycling. Under the ban, retailers would be able to offer only reusable bags, defined as those that have handles and are made of fabric or durable materials or are thick paper or plastic bags with some recycled content.

Exempt from the ban would be restaurant carryout bags, bags for wine and beer, dry cleaning bags, newspaper delivery bags and bags that hold meat, fish, produce, bulk foods or pharmaceuticals.

**Retailers object:** City Council members and environmental activists say plastic bags pollute waterways, harm wildlife, clog drainage systems and often end up as unsightly litter or landfill trash. But others say paper bags also cause environmental harm, taking as much or more energy to make and transport.

The city would get 22.5 cents of every 25 cents retailers charge for single-use bags from 2013 to 2016, the draft says. Retailers would keep the rest. The city would use the money to promote the use of reusable bags.

**Effective in 2016:** When the ban starts in 2016, retailers could offer only reusable bags, including thick plastic bags with at least 50% recycled content and thick paper bags with 100% recycled content.

Coppola, Sarah, Austin American-Statesman, The Houston Chronicle, December 12, 2011

## HOWDY ARION PRODUCT SOLUTIONS!

ALLY MEMBER Arion Product Solutions is a Green product and service provider. It primarily provides eco-friendly, bio-degradable, renewable packaging products made from bamboo fiber, corn starch, sugarcane, bagasse and more. Products include "To Go" food containers, cups, clam shells, utensils, soup containers, beverage containers and much more. The main concept of our products is to protect the environment because they convert automatically to compost in municipal and industrial aerobic composting facilities within three months—and vanish forever.



Arion also provides Green services (technology) through its IT division. More specifically, Arion focuses on utilizing Quick Response (QR) Codes on behalf of clients who wish to advertise or interact with their customers by utilizing Arion's mobile bar code technology on packaging products. For example, QR Codes have been placed on disposable tableware or anywhere else to advertise products, services, and disseminate promotions such as coupons and give-aways. By using this technology, we avoid the excess usage of paper, saving trees and bettering our environment. Arion International Group has always focused on providing value-added products and services by always keeping the environment in mind. We "Think Green" and "Go Green." Learn more by calling **626/358-2828** or visiting [arionretail.com/category\\_s/69.htm](http://arionretail.com/category_s/69.htm) TODAY!

## NOBODY LIKES AN IDLE CAR . . .

. . . IT COULD BE MAKING MONEY. Several auto makers, anxious that a growing number of consumers would rather borrow cars than own them, are wading into the nascent car-

sharing business alongside a flock of start-ups.

General Motors is expected to disclose an alliance with RelayRides, a San Francisco start-up that helps car owners rent their cars when they don't need them. GM will modify its Onstar communications system to enable RelayRides members to unlock cars using their cell phones in place of a \$500 device now used for remote unlocking.

GM Onstar will promote its cars as "RelayRides Ready" starting in early 2012.

GM's interest in RelayRides reflects a broad concern among auto industry executives over several intersecting trends: Apathy among young people about driving and cars, increasing urban congestion that makes driving and parking a car a costly inconvenience, and technology-enabled car sharing services such as Zipcar, RelayRides, Getaround, Car2Go and similar services being offered by established rental-car companies such as Hertz Global Holdings Inc.

"People's driving patterns and buying habits are going to change, particularly young people," says GM VP Stephen Girsky. "There are a number of new competitors and new business models; we need to be mindful of them and look for ways to take advantage of them."

GM's crosstown rival Ford Motor Co. said it would supply Zipcar with 1,000 compact cars for use in Zipcar's college car-sharing fleets. More recently, Ford expanded the Zipcar alliance with a program that will offer student organizations \$300,000 in grants and Zipcar driving credits.

In Europe, BMW AG has a car-sharing venture called DriveNow that offers customers short term rentals in the Munich auto maker's luxury cars, and has established a \$100 million venture fund to invest in companies developing alternatives to traditional car ownership, or technology to help people get around in congested cities.

One such venture is "parkatmyhouse.com," a British company that connects people with extra parking spaces with cars that need them. "The mobility landscape is highly fragmented," says Tony Douglas, head of marketing and sales for BMW i Mobility Services. "We want to fund it so consumers can have one point of entry."

White Joseph B., "Nobody Likes an Idle Car; It Could Be Making Money," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 5, 2011

## WELCOME BERKSHIRE AMENITIES GROUP!

ALLY MEMBER Berkshire Amenities Group, Inc., an industry leader representing Monarch/Cypress offers a unique and exclusive solution for hotels that want to embrace sustainability solutions for robes and towels.



Offering Green Solutions . . . to save money, enhance guest satisfaction and save our precious environment. Green Earth Micro

Cotton Towels offer significant water and energy savings. Our Green Earth towels are made from super-fine, extra-long staple (ELS) cotton, which is known for contributing to the sustainable consumption of cotton.

Our Eco robes are constructed from a Chamois microfiber fabric that is as warm and soft as flannel, yet is five times more absorbent and dries in one-third the time as compared to cot-

ton. Virtually indestructible, this fabric is ideal for the demanding hotel environment. Both lasting 3 times longer with low drying times.

For more information concerning these products, contact Amy Jeschawitz, Director National Sales, Berkshire Amenities Group, Inc., 413/229-8200 x17 or visit [monarchrobe.com / products\\_eco.html](http://monarchrobe.com/products_eco.html).

## How to get rid of a nuisance fish: Eat it

Asian carp may be a plankton-gobbling nuisance threatening the Great lakes, but Illinois officials are hoping to change that perception one bite at a time. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources last week held a public tasting event starring a LA chef-turned-advocate to start a campaign that may lead to feeding the invasive species to the growing number of people facing hunger. Anti-hunger advocates are praising the idea of serving the carp, especially with increasing demand for food stamps.

A community dinner was held to taste as well as learn more about the fish that's better known for its ability to grow to 100 pounds, sail out of the water when startled and has a voracious appetite that could devastate the Great Lakes. If Asian carp ever reach the Great Lakes, they could decimate food supplies and starve out native species, disrupting a \$7 billion fishing industry.

The idea is to exploit Asian carp's nutritional value along with the fact that it's a good protein source, low in mercury and high in Omega 3 fatty acids. The main problem is that the fish has a bad public image.

Tareen, Sophia, Associated Press, "How to get rid of a nuisance fish: Eat It," *Houston Chronicle*, September 25, 2011

## GREETINGS MicrofiberWholesale.com!

ALLY MEMBER MicrofiberWholesale.com by Mops Plus is committed to a cleaner, greener Earth. We provide professional cleaning products for the hospitality industry that are reusable, effective and competitively priced. With over 150 Microfiber cleaning products we can help you save money and help your hotel do its part to help the environment.

Let's be honest, there's nothing green about how microfiber cleaning products are made or what they're made from. Microfiber is made mostly from synthetic material and it requires nearly twice the energy to produce microfiber as it does to produce a natural fiber such as cotton. However, if you really want to be green, you have to look at the whole picture. Even with that handicap, microfiber is a much greener cleaning tool than most of its conventional counterparts. For instance, take a microfiber towel versus a cotton towel for cleaning. A microfiber towel will clean much more effectively than cotton, it will clean effectively without added chemicals, it will last up to ten times longer and it will take less time in the dryer providing big energy savings over the life of the towel. Add up all these benefits, and microfiber is one green cleaning tool! Check us out by calling 877/791-6677 or visiting [MicrofiberWholesale.com](http://MicrofiberWholesale.com) TODAY!



## \$40 Million for Ecological Sailing

For those who like their yachting to be ecologically correct, the Ned Ship Group is marketing a 215-foot schooner covered in solar panels, with two diesel engines plus Prius-like electric motors.



Rigid “wing” sails, of the sort used on many America’s Cup yachts, contribute to its efficiency, while panels covering the upper-deck canopy capture 100 kilowatts of energy per hour. A lithium-ion battery stores the solar energy, which can drive the propellers or power everything else on board, says designer Richard Sauter of Sauter Carbon Offset Design. Under wind and electric power, the ship can cruise at 14 knots. At 22 knots, with the engines on, it emits 75% less carbon than peers. Price tag: about \$40 million.

“Ecological Sailing for \$40 Million.” The Wall Street Journal, October 1-2, 2011

## BE A FRIEND TO POLLINATORS

Three-fourths of the world’s flowering plants depend on pollinators to reproduce. Most fruit, vegetable, and seed crops—and other plants that provide fiber, medicines and fuel—are pollinated by animals. Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies and moths, birds and bats and beetles and other insects.

**Animal Pollination:** Pollinators visit flowers in their search for food (nectar and pollen). During a flower visit, a pollinator may accidentally brush against the flower’s reproductive parts, unknowingly depositing pollen from a different flower. The plant then uses the pollen to produce a fruit or seed. Many plants cannot reproduce without pollen carried to them by foraging pollinators.

### TYPES OF POLLINATORS

**Bees:** Bees are the main pollinators for fruits and vegetables. There are over 4,000 species of bees native to North America. They nest underground in twigs and debris or in dead trees.



**Butterflies & Moths:** Nectar-seeking butterflies are daytime garden visitors and moths are their nocturnal counterpart. These popular creatures pollinate many plants.

**Birds & Bats:** Hummingbirds are the most common avian pollinators in the continental US. These tiny wonders prefer tubular flowers in bright, warm colors—especially red. Two species of bat are major pollinators in the Southwest.

**Beetles & Other Insects:** There are many thousands of beetle species—in fact, 40% of all insects are beetles! Flies and other insects are common flower visitors and pollinators.

**Pollinators are in trouble:** Bees, bats and other animal pollinators face many challenges in the modern world. Habitat loss, disease, parasites and environmental contaminants have all contributed to the decline of many species of pollinators.

**You can help! Provide food and habitat for pollina-**

**tors to help them thrive.**

► Use pollinator-friendly plants in your landscape. Shrubs and trees such as dogwood, blueberry, cherry, plum, willow and poplar provide pollen or nectar, or both, early in spring when food is scarce.



► Choose a mixture of plants for spring, summer and fall. Different flower colors, shapes and scents will attract a wide variety of pollinators.

► Reduce or eliminate pesticide use in your landscape or incorporate plants that attract beneficial insects for pest control. If you use pesticides, use them sparingly and responsibly.

► Accept some plant damage on plants meant to provide habitat for butterfly and moth larvae.

► Provide clean water for pollinators with a shallow dish, bowl or birdbath with half-submerged stones for perches.



► Leave dead tree trunks in your landscape for wood nesting bees and beetles.

► Support land conservation by helping to create and maintain community gardens and green spaces to ensure that pollinators have appropriate habitat.

► Learn more online at [nifa.usda.gov/Extension/index.html](http://nifa.usda.gov/Extension/index.html), [nrca.usda.gov](http://nrca.usda.gov) or [nrca.usda.gov/pollinators](http://nrca.usda.gov/pollinators).

### Did You Know?

A world without pollinators would be a world without apples, blueberries, strawberries, chocolate, almonds, melons, peaches or pumpkins.

The honey bee alone contributes to the production of many billions of dollars worth of crops in America every year.

Midges are small flies. Two species of midge are the only known pollinators of cocoa trees, which produce the beans from which chocolate is made.

USDA/NCRS, PA-2046, June, 2011

## INDIE LEE & CO. JOINS GHA!

ALLY MEMBER Indie Lee & Co., an exclusive personal care company, has created a line of all natural spa products that are both luxurious and reasonably priced.

Our products are fashioned with the finest all natural ingredients, making it safe for guests and the environment.

They are never greenwashed, a term that describes utilizing natural ingredients to overshadow synthetic aspects of a product. Indie Lee & Co.’s products do not contain petroleum, talc, petrochemicals, parabens, genetically modified ingredients, chemical fragrances and are never animal tested. Indie Lee’s personal care line is perfect for hotel guests as shower or spa amenities or as part of an in-room purchase program. It includes amenity-sized shampoos, conditioners, body washes, lotions and soaps that will heighten your guests’ hotel experience.

*Indie Lee*  
All Natural - Not Greenwashed

Established in 2010, the Company has seen spectacular



growth and has received praise from customers, media, and beauty experts. Indie Lee products are formulated from her greenhouse in South Salem, New York, and are manufactured by an FDA approved facility in Florida. Available online at [indielee.com](http://indielee.com), or please contact us at 914/533-7201 to arrange a meeting.

### EAST EUROPE GREENING

by Patricia Griffin, President, GHA

As you can probably imagine, I am possessed with anything regarding being green. So, no matter where I go or what I do, I'm always on the lookout for new green ideas and opportunities—especially ideas to which hoteliers can relate.

In October I was fortunate enough to visit parts of Eastern Europe. We flew into Vienna, Austria, and then traveled (sort of following the Danube River) to Bratislava, Czechoslovakia; Budapest, Hungary; Belgrade, Slovakia and Bucharest, Romania.

We had a terrific time, enjoyed our love of history, learned a lot about other cultures and ways of life, had good weather, and were especially grateful for the incredible kindness and helpfulness of the people. Almost everyone speaks English—certainly the younger generations—so that always makes travel easier for us. Older cities can be difficult to navigate, but with help from locals, we always found what we were looking for.

In general, I'd consider all of Europe more green-minded than the US simply because they've been at it longer, but also because their cost of energy is much higher and the real estate, in general, is probably more expensive. So, here is info and photos of things I found to be interesting and green.



At the Vienna airport are these benches made of heavy-gauge wire holding large stones and topped with smooth boards. Attractive and very useful.



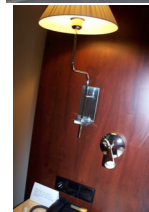
The hotel in Vienna had a heated bathroom floor with this control under the sink. It was really not cold enough to need the heated floor because of winter weather, but my tired feet enjoyed the warm floor very much.

This type of soap dispenser is common in Europe. It works well, is efficient, and, clearly, easy to refill.

Budapest is a very bright, very clean, very tourist-ready city. We saw individual street cleaners hard at work early, late and all day long everywhere we went.



You'll see these large recycling collection containers all over Europe. They're colorful, bright, clearly marked, generally clean and ready to accept recyclables.



I especially liked this 3-way bedside reading lamp. There was a choice of the larger, upper lampshade CFL or two small, more direct LED lights. Since I especially like to read in bed, this was great.

Bicycle paths are common in Budapest though

not as heavily used as in some parts of Europe. They're well marked and convenient for bikers. Here are two photos of attractive bike stands in public park areas.



The Budapest hotel was very large and very attractive. I loved it that they had these beautiful cabinets in the hallways for collection of recyclables. It is also a convenient way for guests to share with one another. For instance, people left unwanted snacks, fruit or partially drunk bottles of wine for others to consume.

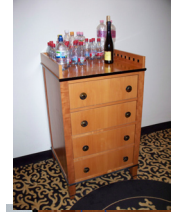
Here a guest's newspaper is conveniently hung on the doorknob with a cord attached to a fold of light cardboard beautifully imprinted with the hotel name. Obviously, it can be reused many times.

A planter made from a used tire adorned restaurant outdoor seating in Budapest, and held a beautiful blooming red-flowered plant.

Our hotel in Belgrade was quite new and had this glass shower wall in the guestroom. The shower area was large and roomy and the frosted glass wall brought daylight into the bathroom. An interesting change.

In Belgrade wherever we walked, we noticed these condensation collection bottles along the street. Clearly the water can be used in many ways. I thought it was really smart that so many people were collecting the water.

Our Belgrade windows overlooked the roof of another portion of the property that included meeting space. This rooftop was covered with artificial grass, and had a number of skylights to brighten the space below. The skylights also had electric lighting that can shine down through the skylight.

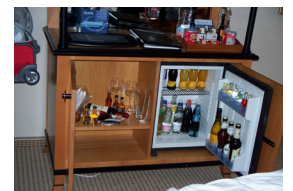


The hotel hallways in Belgrade were exceptionally dark as you can see in this photo. It was not a problem, but I'd guess that most US hoteliers would not be comfortable with such dim lighting.



Two of the hotels in which we stayed had what appeared to me to be an excessive number of things for sale. In fact, at one point I said, "I don't know if we're in a guestroom or a shop" there was so much for sale. In this room, I think I counted almost 50 items offered for sale in the refrigerator, on a tray, and on shelves.

Maybe you've wished for a shower plumbing fixture that would allow you to choose the same water temperature each time you shower. Me too. So,





with this plumbing fixture in Bucharest, there is a knob that allows the choice of a certain temperature. It was super to instantly set the water temperature just as you wish!



Our Bucharest hotel was mostly a business property, and they printed several out-of-town online newspapers on large (11"x17"±) paper, bound them and left them on the news rack for guests to read. That was a special treat even though all hotels had computers available for guests' use as well as wifi.



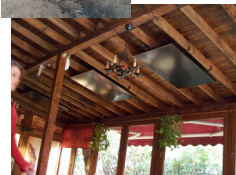
These monster recycling collection containers in Bucharest are almost covered with colorful posters mostly about upcoming events in the area. So, they're useful in more ways than one.



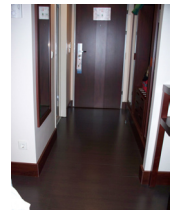
On a Saturday morning we went to a street market that was beside a public park. This group of birdhouses was such a beautiful thing to see that the sight really brightened our day. Apparently they were about to be installed in the park.



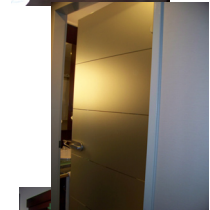
This sight of a broken up, filthy recycling collection container at the Bucharest train station was gross, but this is a post-communist country and their infrastructure still suffers. I have to be glad they're recycling.



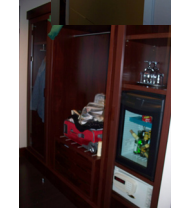
A lovely Bucharest restaurant in an old building had these flat panel space heaters in the ceiling of an addition to the building. A staff member said they work very well, but heat only directly below the panel.



Back in Vienna at an airport hotel, I found that I really liked their use of glass. After entering the guestroom, the bathroom door on the right is heavy frosted glass with a few stripes and is very attractive. On the left is a 3-section suite of furnishings. First a narrow closet with a glass-faced door. The reason I particularly like this glass-doored closet is that one is not apt to forget and leave a clothing item in the closet (which, of course, I have done).



In the middle is a luggage rack area which means your things are very convenient to the bathroom.



Last is a glass door with shelving in the top half and a glass-faced refrigerator below. The fridge's glass front made it handy for seeing at a glance what is in the fridge.

Again, it was a fabulous trip, and the people, in every way possible, could not have been nicer or more hospitable. I look forward to many future travels and green hotel stays.

I was so impressed with the people's kindness that I decided I wanted to do something for others while there. I decided I'd be a camera person and offer to take photos of families or groups with their camera so they could all be in the photo.

Sometimes we're embarrassed to ask others to take photos for us. My offer to take photos startled some people, and perhaps some thought I might steal their camera, but it was actually a wonderful experience for me. Of course, if they spoke English, they immediately understood what I was offering. However, a lady alone with a squirmey 2-year old apparently thought at first that I wanted to get in the photo with her daughter, and that really made me laugh. A group of 6 young men were happy to have a photo in front of the main university building with all of them in it. A family of 4 enjoyed having a group photo taken in a castle setting. It was fun, and I know I'll continue to offer when traveling.

## CRAFTING GREEN POLICIES AND CONTRACTS

A Philadelphia-based hospitality attorney, Joshua L. Grimes, offers the following suggestions for putting your green standards in writing.

- Create a written sustainability policy for your organization's daily operations, including its meetings and conventions. Elements should include recycling, energy savings, food donation, purchasing of products made from recycled materials, other buying criteria and acceptable means of travel.
- Conform your sustainability policy to an established international protocol to ensure that it's comprehensive, and facilitate compliance by your suppliers.
- Ask prospective suppliers to provide their own sustainability policies in their RFP responses.
- Check suppliers' sustainability track records: request records of sustainability practices from other meetings, and check references from prior customers.
- Verify suppliers' membership in "green meeting" and sustainability organizations. Don't count organizations that appear to be nothing more than marketing gimmicks.
- Verify that your insurance will cover volunteer projects, charitable food donation and other CSR (corporate social responsibility) efforts.
- Incorporate your sustainability needs into a strategy for contract negotiations. This is when you have the most bargaining power and the best chance to have your needs met.
- Specify your sustainability needs in meeting contracts. Attach your policy as a contract exhibit, and include a provision incorporating the policy into the contract's requirements by reference.
- Include green-friendly damages clauses in your supplier contracts, with an appropriate remedy for a supplier's failure to meet sustainability requirements. Remedies might include requiring the supplier to purchase carbon offsets, to commit to reaching your sustainability goals at a specified later meeting, to sponsor a local CSR initiative or to donate money or time to a sustainability advocacy organization.
- During event dates, request regular written reports on progress with sustainability goals. Consider daily reporting of such, along with room pickup and master account charges.
- If a supplier is failing to meet agreed-upon sustainability goals, document your concerns in writing as soon as possible

so that compliance can be achieved to the extent possible.

- Follow up on compliance with green goals as part of a post-meeting report. If the supplier did not meet its sustainability commitments, assess damages and agree upon corrective actions as part of settling financial accounts.

Brale, Sarah J. F., "Crafting Green Policies and Contracts," Meetings & Conventions, [meetings-conventions.com/print.aspx?id=44062](http://meetings-conventions.com/print.aspx?id=44062), October 1, 2011

## HELLO SPRINGBOARD BIODIESEL!



ALLY MEMBER Springboard Biodiesel is a clean-tech manufacturer making fully-automated biodiesel processors. These appliances convert used cooking oils collected from kitchens into premium-grade biodiesel for \$0.95 cents per gallon. (That is the cost of all your other inputs including electricity if you collect free cooking oil!) Why should anyone care? Because biodiesel will run in any diesel engine without the need to convert your engine.

The beauty of the the BioPros™ is that they are relatively small (40 to 100 gallons), so they can be sourced nearly anywhere and they're extremely easy to operate. Like a washing machine, all you do is load it up, turn it on and walk away. When the process is complete (in 23 or 48 hours, depending on the converter model), the machine's handy high-quality fueling pump allows you to pump your ASTM-grade biodiesel into your waiting diesel-engined vehicle (or into storage) the way you would at a gas station.

Springboard has over 6.5 million gallons of annual installed capacity already with machines in 14 countries and 49 states. The machines definitely save money. Biodiesel also burns 78 to 90% cleaner than regular diesel (according to the EPA or CARB, respectively). Springboard's guys are experts on biodiesel. So, why not save some money making a cleaner burning fuel from a waste stream? Call **530/894-1793** or visit [springboardbiodiesel.com](http://springboardbiodiesel.com) TODAY! Start making biodiesel next week!

## 20 PLASTIC THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU CAN RECYCLE

- 1) **Bottle and jar caps:** Weisenbach Recycled Products accepts clean plastic bottle caps, plastic jar caps, flip-top caps from personal care products and flexible snap-on lids (e.g., butter tub lids) to turn into funnels and other items. [CapsCanada.com](http://CapsCanada.com).
- 2) **Brita pitcher filters:** Preserve's Gimme 5 program accepts Brita-brand pitcher filters for recycling. See #11 below.
- 3) **Compostable bioplastics:** Find a municipal composter at [FindaComposter.com](http://FindaComposter.com).
- 4) **Computers and other electronics:** Find the most responsible recyclers near you at [e-stewards.org/find-a-recycler](http://e-stewards.org/find-a-recycler). Your local Best Buy store will also accept many types of electronics, large and small—from televisions and gaming systems to fans and alarm clocks. Best Buy partners with responsible recyclers that do not ship items overseas, including Green Business Network™ member Electronic Recyclers International. You can bring three small items per day to Best Buy for free. The company charges a fee to recycle large electronics. [BestBuy.com/recycling](http://BestBuy.com/recycling).

- 5) **Eyeglasses:** Your local Lions Club collects them for people in need.

- 6) **Fishing line:** Mail to Berkley Recycling, which turns it into fish habitat structures: 1900 18th Street; Spirit Lake, IA 51360.

- 7) **Gift cards and customer loyalty cards:** Fill out the form at [www.earthworkssystem.com/Consumers/](http://www.earthworkssystem.com/Consumers/) to recycle them. (Accepts conventional cards only, not bioplastic/ compostable cards.)

- 8) **Ink Cartridges:** [www.RecyclePlace.com](http://www.RecyclePlace.com) pays \$1 each and will recycle them. (Also see #12, "Technotrash.")

- 9) **Pantyhose/tights:** No Nonsense collects all brands of hose, tights, and knee-highs to be recycled into other products. [NoNonsense.com/PantyhoseRecycling.aspx](http://NoNonsense.com/PantyhoseRecycling.aspx).

- 10) **Plastic packaging:** Many pack-and-ship stores will take packing peanuts and bubble wrap. For drop-off locations for foam blocks, contact the Alliance of Foam Packaging Recyclers.

- 11) **Polypropylene (#5) plastics (all types):** Preserve's Gimme 5 program accepts all types of clean #5 plastics, which are turned into Preserve personal care and kitchen products. Drop them off in the "Gimme 5" container available at select Whole Foods and food co-ops. Visit [preserveproducts.com/recycling](http://preserveproducts.com/recycling) to find a location or learn how to mail them in.

- 12) **"Technotrash":** Organizations and schools can earn money for recycling ink cartridges and small electronics like cell phones and iPods through [ProjectKOPEG.com](http://ProjectKOPEG.com). Recycle a large box of CDs, DVDs, jewel cases, audio and video tapes, small electronics and ink cartridges for \$30 (includes postage) through Green Disk, 800/305-3475, [GreenDisk.com](http://GreenDisk.com).

- 13) **Telephones:** Call to Protect ([donateaphone.com/callto-protect](http://donateaphone.com/callto-protect)) refurbishes cell phones for domestic violence victims (see also "Technotrash," above). Take corded and cordless phones to a local Best Buy for recycling.

- 14) **Sports equipment:** Resell or trade it at your local Play It Again Sports outlet, [playitagainsports.com](http://playitagainsports.com).

- 15) **Tennis balls:** reBounces restores old tennis balls that have lost their bounce. [ReBounces.com/recycle](http://ReBounces.com/recycle).

- 16) **Tennis shoes:** NikeReuseAShoe.com turns them into athletic flooring. [Souls4Souls.org](http://Souls4Souls.org) and [OneWorldRunning.com](http://OneWorldRunning.com) sends still-wearable shoes to runners in need in developing countries.

- 17) **Toys:** Domestic Metals and Plastics accepts plastic toys of all types for recycling. [Dmpgreen.com](http://Dmpgreen.com).

- 18) **Trophies:** Lamb Awards will break your trophies down and remake them into new ones. E-mail internet at [lamb-awards.com](http://lamb-awards.com), and put "recycling" in the subject line.

- 19) **Tyvek envelopes:** Quantities less than 25: Send to Tyvek Recycle, Attn. Shirley B. Wright, 8401 Fort Darling Road, Richmond, VA 23237. More than 25: call 866/33-TYVEK.

- 20) **Yoga mats:** [RecycleYourMat.com](http://RecycleYourMat.com) accepts yoga mats for recycling.

"20 Plastic Things You didn't Know You Could Recycle," Green American, November/December 2011, p. 17

## MORE, BIGGER UNPROFITABLE CONVENTION CENTERS?

On 31Dec11 Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center's management announced a 1.2 million-sq.-ft. expansion 2025 Master Plan at an undisclosed cost including 3 new hotels with 2,000 additional guestrooms. They hope the expansion will attract \$6 billion worth of new development in the immediate area.

On 5Jan12 New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo announced plans to build the nation's largest convention center at Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens. The 3.8 million-sq.-ft. \$4 billion center is to replace the Jacob K. Javits Center in Manhattan, and will be about 13 miles away. It's predicted that the development will add 3,000 hotel guestrooms.

For two decades, America's convention center business has been declining, resulting in a nationwide surplus of empty meeting facilities, struggling convention halls and vacant hotel rooms. How have governments responded to this glut? By building more convention centers, of course, financed by debt backed by new taxes and fees on already heavily-burdened taxpayers.

Back in 2007, before the recession began, a report described America's convention industry as a "buyers market" suffering excess capacity. It's only gotten worse, attracting just 86 million attendees in 2010, compared to 126 million in 2000. Meanwhile, the amount of convention space angling for business has increased to 70 million sq. ft., up from 53 million in 2000 and 40 million two decades ago.

That's largely because governments refuse to stop making convention centers bigger and hotels even more dazzling, arguing that whatever business remains will flow to the places with the fanciest amenities. To finance these risky projects—which the private sector won't build by itself—cities float debt backed by new taxes and fees on already struggling taxpayers.

Take Chicago's McCormick Place, long one of the 3 most-used centers in the nation. They spent \$1 billion in the early 90s to build a 840,000-sq.-ft. expansion financed by fees on auto rentals, a hotel tax and a surcharge on restaurant meals in downtown Chicago. In 2007 they opened a new building, McCormick West, at a cost of an additional \$900 million. The result? The center operates at 55% capacity.

Then there's Boston, perhaps the quintessential example of a city that interprets failure in the convention business as a license to spend more on it. MA officials shelled out \$230 million to renovate Hynes CC in the late 80s. When the make-over produced virtually no economic bounce, officials decided that the city needed a new \$800 million center financed by a hotel occupancy excise tax, a rental-car surcharge and the sale of taxi medallions. Now MA officials want to spend \$2 billion to double the size of the Boston CC and add a hotel. "The whole thing is a racket," Boston Globe columnist Jeff Jacoby observed. "Once again the politicians will expand their empire. Once again crony capitalism will enrich a handful of wired business operators. And once again Joe and Jane Taxpayer will pay through the nose."

It's the same song and dance in Baltimore. Several years ago they built a \$300 million city-owned hotel. Opened in 2008, the hotel lost \$11 million last year. Now the city is considering an expansion that would add a downtown arena, an additional convention hotel and 400,000 feet of new convention space at a cost of \$400 million in public money.

The list goes on—everywhere from Columbus, Ohio, to Dallas, Austin, Phoenix and places in between. One problem is that optimistic projections about new facilities fail to account for how other cities are expanding too.

The latest sales pitch is that convention and meeting centers shouldn't be judged by how many hotel rooms, restaurants and local attractions they help fill. That's "narrow-minded thinking," they say. The new metric—a city's amorphous brand value—is little more than a convenient way to ignore the failure of publicly sponsored facilities to live up to exaggerated projections.

Malanga, Steven, "Have We Got a Convention Center to Sell You!," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 31-January 1, 2012  
Sarnoff, Nancy, "Doubling Down On the Brown," *Houston Chronicle*, December 31, 2011  
"New York on Track to Build Country's Largest Convention Center," [successfulmeetings.com/print.aspx?id=13966](http://successfulmeetings.com/print.aspx?id=13966), January 5, 2012

## FINAL WORDS . . .

Hospitality consists in a little fire, a little food, and an immense quiet.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

## "Green" Hotels Association®

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