

The Green Pages



Reducing, Re-using and Recycling: Grey Water

Grey water is wastewater generated from domestic activities such as laundry, dishwashing, and bathing, which can be recycled on-site for uses such as landscape irrigation and constructed wastelands. This is a great way to conserve our water, and become energy efficient.

The average single four-person family home uses over 20,000 gallons of water monthly, and over half of that is used for irrigation. That means we are using clean water just to spray on the ground!

Over 3,000 gallons of water is used to simply flush the toilet each month. With new and advanced water recycling systems, we can cut this water usage usually from about 50%-70% and cut your bill too.

Not only are you helping yourself, but help preserving nature's most important natural resource. No more feeling guilty when taking long showers, because you know that water is being recycled and used to irrigate your lawn and garden, or to simply flush your toilet. Recycling water is far from new, but simply an updated system Mother

Nature has been using for years! According to livestrong.com recycling water has many benefits; most obviously that it saves potable water. In addition to conserving potable water, grey water may actually be better for vegetation. Grey water often contains detergents that have nitrogen or phosphorus, which are plant nutrients.

Detergents made especially for grey water systems are now available on the market. Recycling water is also a great way to keep grey water out of septic systems, decreasing the chance of

grey water leaking into stream, lakes, and ponds.

And recycling your grey water decreases the amount of water that goes to the water treatment plant, ultimately reducing energy used to treat water. Recycling grey water is another simple and sustainable solution, inspired by nature.

Visit www.graywater.net to learn more about protecting nature's most vital natural resource.

By Cody Wooten



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Energy Efficiency Improvements on the Hill

WKU has been proud to partner with Johnson Controls Inc. to come up with an Energy Savings Performance Contract. This contract, set into place over the past few years, includes \$9.7 million in energy reducing and facility improvements. Water and lighting improvements have been made to 38 existing buildings, promising a cost avoidance of more than \$1 million annually!

The metric savings for the project have totaled:

- 35,000 indoor light fixtures—saving 7,833,962 kWh annually, which equals annual electricity use for 709 homes!
- 2,114 water saving fixtures and 3 rainwater collection systems—saving 20,312,792 gallons of water annually, which is enough to meet the annual need of 62 families

Together, all of the changes are projected to reduce WKU's greenhouse gas emissions by more than 21,000 metric tons annually! And as an added bonus, 200 Kentucky jobs were created or impacted because of the upgrades.

Beyond the Energy Savings Performance Contract, the Department of Facilities Management imple-

mented further energy efficiency projects, including:

- Reflective roofing on the Ivan Wilson Center for Fine Arts
- Weatherization of all academic and administrative buildings
- Elevator misers, which turn off the lights when nobody is aboard
- Temperature setbacks during nights, weekends, and other unoccupied periods

These further projects saved enough money in 2008 and 2009 to buy two natural gas boilers, which have allowed WKU to become completely coal free, thereby reducing our carbon footprint. Western's commitment to energy efficiency will only continue to grow as these installments prove themselves worthy of replication and hopefully other campuses will look to WKU as inspiration to change their own energy policies.

by Ashley McCloughan

Tips for Reducing Your Use:

- Set your computer to power save mode
- Use a power strip to kill phantom energy
- Use natural light in place of artificial
- Bike to your destination
- Take shorter showers
- Reduce, Re-use, Recycle... in that order.

Would you like an energy audit for your office, dorm room, classroom?

Would you like a Green Campus Intern to come speak to your class, organization, or at your Residence Hall?

Contact Sophia, Cody, or Ashley today!

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Bright idea: the best little bulb shines.

When most people think solar energy they think giant panels on the top of that one building down the street, never breaking the mystic of the panels.

Solar energy has now made a new name for itself, helping meet the needs of the 1.4 billion people in the world without electricity. One company has changed the effectiveness of solar energy: Nokero, which stands for no kerosene. Founded in 2010 by Stephen Katsaros, a mechanical engineer with a taste for entrepreneurship, his specificity is the little LED lightbulb that is powered by the sun, can charge gadgets such as cell phones, and has a changeable battery.

I discovered this amazing little clean energy device while home for Christmas in Haiti. We used them at the beach, charging them on the table during the day and using them for dinner and cooking. Non-profits such as CARE and others use them in countries that suffered disasters, or all around lack of electricity and extreme poverty, to ensure the reduction of fuels such as kerosene, or charcoal made from trees. Nokero itself even has several campaigns to supply



Nokero solar powered LED lamps.

light to places in Africa, and the Navajo nation, to mention a few. These combustible substances often cost 70% of a family's income, simply to light their house. Thus supplying a sustainable, more importantly renewable, source of power that is reliable through thick and thin, brightens more than the night.

By Sophia Sterlin

Know a Greenie worthy of celebration? Nominate them for the President's Sustainability Award today!

The President's Award for Sustainability honors individuals who exhibit excellence in supporting WKU's commitment to sustainability. Each year, one WKU student and one WKU employee are chosen to receive this award and are recognized at the opening convocation in the fall.

In order to be eligible for this prestigious honor the nominee must meet certain criteria. First, they must demonstrate leadership in education and/or activities that promote sustainability at WKU and instill a culture of stewardship, conservation, and social responsibility. They must also actively engage others in efforts to advance sustainability in campus operations, culture, and/or academics. And finally, the contender must pursue these efforts above and beyond what is expected of them as a student or employee. The nominations will be accepted and reviewed by the University Sustainability Committee and will receive final consideration from President Ransdell. The recipients will each receive an award of \$500 and the honor of being a steward for sustainability at WKU.

So if you know of anyone who fits the above criteria, then nominate them! The deadline for doing so in Tuesday, May 1st. Nominations should be submitted electronically to Sustainability Committee Chair, Christian Ryan-Downing at: christian.ryan-downing@wku.edu

The form can be found online at: <http://www.wku.edu/sustainability/sustainabilityaward.php>

By Ashley McCloughan

ONE PLANET



EARTH DAY FESTIVAL

April 20th, 2012
11:00am - 4:00 pm
Duc Courtyard



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