

# The Green Wire

Resource Conservation News September 2011



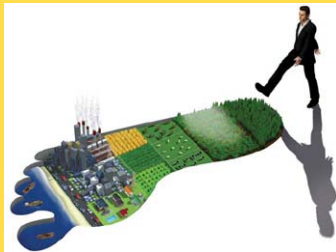
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## Eat and Grow

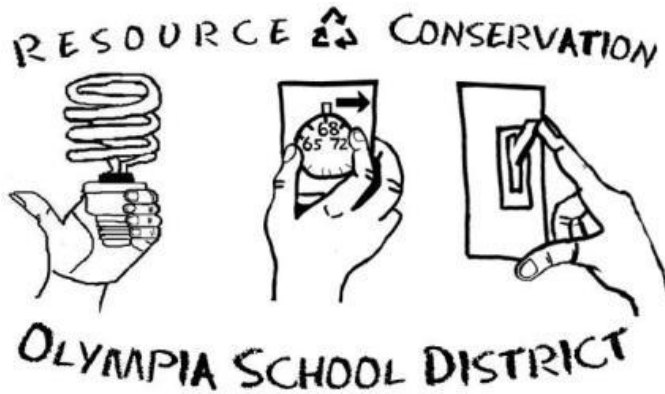
- Check out the Meat Eaters Guide from the Environmental Working Group for ideas on how to reduce your carbon footprint:

<http://breakingnews.ewg.org/meateatersguide/>






- If you are developing or maintaining a **school garden project** that will help children engage with fresh fruits and vegetables you can apply for a **grant**. Garden projects may be at any stage of development, planning, construction, or operation. Applications will be accepted through 5pm CST, Dec. 31, 2011

<http://wholekidsfoundation.org/gardengrants.php>



This year the Resource Conservation Management Program helped the District earn \$1,040,000 in grant funding and \$542,000 in utility incentives and rebates. As a result we have installed efficient, bright, quiet lamps throughout the district, and replaced several water heaters, boilers, restroom fixtures and our main commercial dishwasher. Our Support Services Center staff have trimmed operating schedules and increased efficiency of heating systems. Everyone has helped as we increased composting and recycling, turned off unneeded lights and appliances and generally improved our carbon footprint on the earth.

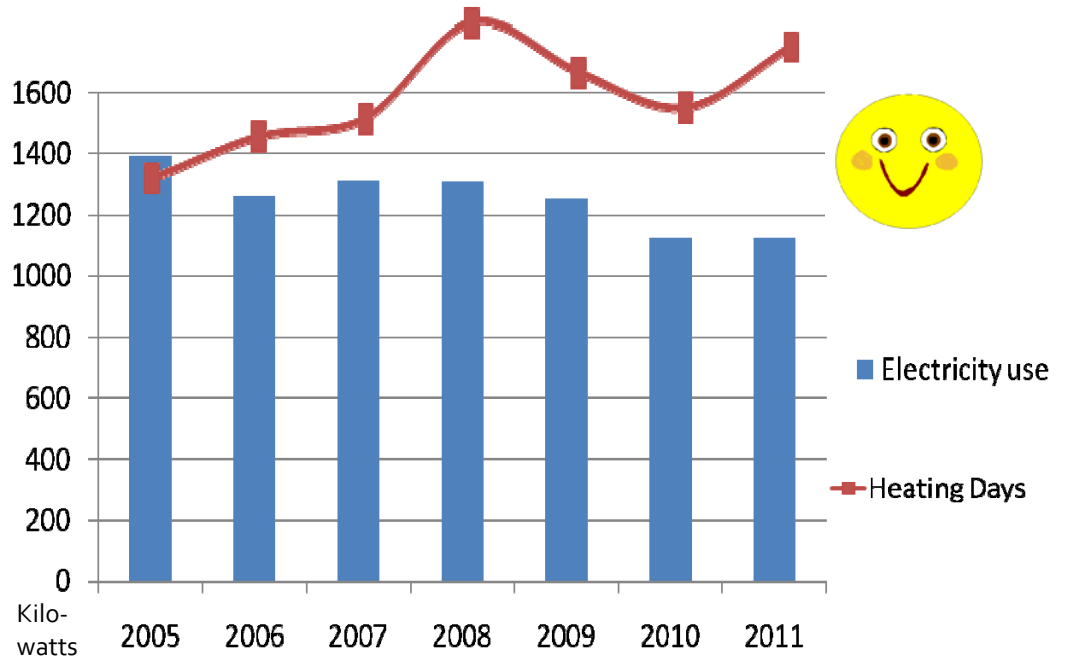
As a bonus, compared to three years ago, this year we paid \$214,347 less for utilities and used 19% less energy. Our new efficiency projects will continue to save resources in the future. They'll help us annually to avoid using 1,680,000 kilowatts of electricity, 9000 Therms of natural gas and 776,000 cubic feet of water.

-  Over the summer I was pleased to see how many people had unplugged their T.V.s, projectors, stereos and assorted equipment. As a consequence our base plug-load for the summer months was reduced and we saved money and resources.
-  When we counted personal appliances we found none in 96% of our 500 classrooms and 300 offices. This shows that people are behaving responsibly and curtailing their use of appliances.
-  I also want to congratulate the teachers who redistributed their supplies. Several teachers just starting out told me that they appreciate the supplies they received from experienced teachers who were changing assignments or retiring. Both parties win when items stay out of the landfills.

*Bonnie Meyer*  
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## Did you know ...

- Just one CFL bulb can outlast about 10 incandescent light bulbs.
- ENERGY STAR qualified CFL bulbs use up to 75 percent less energy than conventional incandescent bulbs while providing the same amount of light.
- CFL bulbs come in a variety of shapes and sizes to suit nearly every household fixture.
- CFL light color has improved so much that the color can now match your favorite incandescent shade. Try the warm white and be impressed.
- When they do burn out, find where CFL bulbs can be recycled for free at: <http://pse.com/savingsandenergycenter/ForHomes/Pages/CFL-Recycling-Locations.aspx>
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a television for three hours or the equivalent of one half gallon of gasoline.
- An aluminum can is one of the most efficient things to recycle it can be turned into a new can in 60 days.



## Long-term Electrical Use Dropping at OSD

We are getting by with less at OSD. All of us are doing our part to make a difference by controlling waste and ensuring that we have enough resources to provide for every member of the Olympia School District community.

The District allocates over \$2,000,000 annually for utility costs. According to Superintendent Bill Lahmann, when we avoid spending on utilities, we can use the funds for textbooks and teachers instead.

The above graph shows annual electrical use at the District over seven years. The red line shows annual heating days, reflecting temperature fluctuations. Six schools are electrically heated, so when heating days increase these schools need to use more electricity. This year, however, you can see that while temperatures increased, our electrical use did not. This achievement may be attributed to a combination of individual decisions to use less energy and Support Services Center staff focusing on constantly adjusting our systems to perform at their most efficient levels.



## Water Use Drops

We have achieved spectacular results in water conservation at four schools that participated in water conservation retrofits thanks to funding and technical assistance provided by the City of Olympia and the LOTT Alliance. At Capital High School use is down 67%, at Garfield Elementary use has dropped 63%, ORLA has achieved a 65% water use reduction and at Olympia High School use is down by 25% even as building use has substantially increased. These projects will continue to save us money, water and energy for years to come.

## Fabulous Food



Food provides nourishment, comfort and pleasure and so much more. Decisions about food impacts our local and global and environments. Many schools and individuals grow crops or visit farmers' markets to increase our connections with our food. To help us identify the impacts of our food choices, BC Hydro has prepared a guide adapted below. These suggestions can help you reduce your impact on the earth by the food choices that you make:

### Stay Local

Choose food grown and prepared locally. The shorter the distance between you and your food, the smaller your carbon footprint. You'll also be supporting your community .

### Grow Your Own

Gardens provide delicious fresh treats, healthy exercise and a direct connection with the earth. Many of our schools use gardens to help students learn and experience the wonders of plants and science.



### Cook Efficiently

Please see column at right for suggestions on how you can use minimize energy use as you prepare your favorite dishes.

### Choose Less Packaged Foods

Naturally you bring your own bag to the store, so fill it with items that are not sold covered in foam, plastic or cardboard. When you can, select bulk instead of individually wrapped items to further reduce packaging waste.

### Compost

Collect your scraps, peels and paper to compost or send to your regional composting facility. In this manner your food returns to augment the soil.



### Make Plants the Star of Your Plate

Plant foods have the least impact on the planet and are good for your health.

### Be the Chef

Making food from whole ingredients ensures that you get the best nutrition possible with the least amount of waste. When you cook you can avoid processed ingredients and preservatives. We can all learn more about food preparations through classes, websites, recipe books and anyone willing to pass on their tried and true recipes.

### Save Some For Later

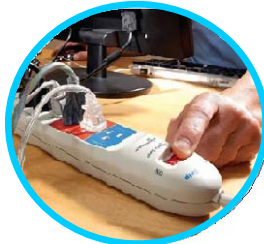
Prepare food from fresh local ingredients then save some for later by canning, freezing or drying your treats to enjoy after the growing season.

## Energy Savings in the Kitchen

- √ Set your refrigerator temperature at from 37° to 40°F and freezer at 5°F. Colder settings are wasteful and unnecessary.
- √ Test your refrigerator door to ensure it has an airtight seal. Place a sheet of paper half in and half out of the door. Close the door and tug on the paper. If your seal is tight the paper will stay put.
- √ Keep inside air dry to help save your motor, cover liquids and wrap food.
- √ Defrost your manual-defrost refrigerator often to preserve the motor. Defrost once you see a ¼ inch of ice built-up.
- √ Boil water in a kettle or a pan with a lid.
- √ Cook with the smallest pan and heater element possible.
- √ Bake or broil in the toaster oven instead of your full-sized oven.
- √ Cook and reheat in the microwave to reduce cooking time and energy use .

## Acts of Green

Make a difference. Make a habit of daily acts of green.



Olympia School District

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resource\\_conservation/main](http://osd.wednet.edu/schools/resource_conservation/main)

### We Can All Achieve Acts of Green

#### Press the switch

- Turn off the lights when you leave a room
- Turn off your monitor and printer at the end of the day
- Turn off all electronics when not in use, including projectors and Smart Boards
- Avoid overhead lights, instead use energy efficient task light at your desk

#### Control Temperatures

- Dress for the weather
- Open or close windows and blinds to control temperatures

#### Choose to Reduce and Reuse

- Drink from a reusable cup or bottle
- Recycle paper, cans and bottles, compost food, paper and garden waste
- Before you buy new, consider borrowing, renting, buying used or avoiding

#### Travel Right

- Choose the stairs
- Ride a bus, bike or carpool