



THE COMMON FIRE FOUNDATION

"In my life's work my heart longs for and seeks those who are committed to living and leading by example – from the ground up and the inside out. Common Fire is a shining and beautiful example of this."

-- Julia Butterfly Hill Founder, Circle of Life Foundation; Author, Legacy of Luna

UNPRECEDENTED GREEN BUILDING

In the summer of 2006 the Common Fire Foundation completed construction of a housing co-op in Tivoli, NY, just two hours north of New York City in the Hudson River Valley. The Common Fire Housing Co-op is a landmark for the region and the country as the "Greenest Building in the Eastern United States" (official certification pending from the US Green Building Council).

We invite you to learn more about the importance of green building, strategies for approaching green building, and details about the products used in the Common Fire Housing Co-op on our website: www.commonfire.org/green. We also offer regular tours of the building. Call or e-mail to schedule a visit.

UNPRECEDENTED LIVING FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND JUSTICE

The housing co-op serves as a nurturing and stimulating home for a diversity of people actively engaged in helping create a more just and sustainable world. By weaving opportunities for learning and engaging into the fabric of everyday life, the co-op offers an unparalleled opportunity for ongoing personal growth and transformation in the world. *Now accepting applications!* We also welcome changemakers to stay on retreat in our guest room. Contact us for more information.

COMMON FIRE MOVING FORWARD

- Common Fire aims to create a network of similar housing co-ops and co-housing communities.
- Work has begun on an international youth camp to help young people learn about critical issues of our times and experience ways of living more justly and sustainably, all in the context of a loving and nurturing community
- And we are in the planning stages of a retreat center to host a broad range of education, personal and professional development programs in the context of an inspiring and engaged model community.

Common Fire's success depends on the passion, skills, and support of a broad range of people. Please contact us if you wish to be involved. Tax deductible donations can be mailed in or done through our website.

Common Fire Foundation
464 West Kerley Corners, Tivoli NY 12583
www.commonfire.org info@commonfire.org
845-750-6476

CITATIONS FOR FACTS AND FIGURES

^{1,2} Energy Star

³ ERA - Municipal Solid Waste

⁴ US DoE

⁵ Energy Star

⁶ US EPA and Sterling

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

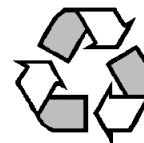


DOUG HOFFMAN OF ECO-CON BUILDING SYSTEMS

Eco-Con is the only exclusively "green building" construction company in the Mid-Hudson Valley
www.ecoconbuilding.com

CHUCK SILVER OF HUDSON RIVER DESIGN

Chuck is a master designer of environmentally-responsible residential and commercial buildings
845-246-0725



Printed on 100% Recycled Paper with Soy Ink
NY Press Direct
Your Print Professionals
845-896-0894

DESIGN BY YULIA ZARUBINA • YULIYAZA@HOTMAIL.COM

15
THINGS
YOU CAN DO
TO GREEN AN
EXISTING HOME
OR BUILDING

GO GREEN AND SAVE GREEN - THINGS THAT ARE EASY AND SAVE MONEY!

1 Use energy-efficient lights. Compact fluorescent bulbs use 66% less energy and last 5000 hours, ten times longer than a regular (incandescent) bulb. Which means they save you a lot of money. Cold cathode lights use the same energy as compact fluorescents but last an incredible 25,000 hours and can be used outside. They're currently only available to replace regular 20-25 watt bulbs and need to be ordered online (energyfederation.org, goodmart.com). *If every US household replaced just one light bulb with a compact fluorescent or cold cathode bulb, it would prevent enough pollution to equal removing one million cars from the road.* ¹

2 Change your heating and cooling settings. Reduce your water heater temperature to between 115 and 120°F. Lower your thermostat to 68 degrees in the winter and turn it down at night. Raise it to no more than 78 degrees in the summer. *Almost half the energy used in a home goes to heating and cooling.* ²

3 Plug the gaps in your home that allow heat to escape. This could save up to 10% on utility bills. Install weather-stripping around exterior doors and along thresholds. If the gap at the bottom of a door is high, install a door sweep. Use expanding foam to seal gaps around pipes that enter your house from the outside. Check the joints and insulation on the ducts of your heating/ventilation/air conditioning system. Fix any leaks with mastic sealant. Make sure your water heater is wrapped in an insulation jacket, particularly if the unit is in an unheated area of the house. And definitely keep fireplace dampers closed when not in use!

4 Recycle. Yes, this oldie is still a goodie. Make sure you have separate bins or boxes for recyclables to make it super easy for everyone. *35% of the waste in landfills is recyclable paper and paperboard. Only 22% of glass waste is recycled. About 40% of aluminum is recycled.* And recycle your food, too! Start a compost bin (or a worm bin!) for all vegetable and garden waste. *10% of the waste in landfills is food.* ³

5 Use no-VOC and low-VOC primers, paints, sealants, and carpets. Volatile Organic Compounds can irritate eyes and throat, cause headaches and fatigue, damage major organs, and cause cancer. AFM Safecoat is one company that makes only no and low-VOC products. They do cost a little bit more, but it's worth it for your health.

• **WE'LL THROW IN AN EXTRA TIP FOR FREE!** WHERE YOU LIVE HAS A HUGE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT BECAUSE IT AFFECTS HOW MUCH YOU DRIVE. NOT MUCH YOU CAN DO ABOUT THIS IF YOU ALREADY OWN A HOME. BUT IT IS DEFINITELY AN OPTION FOR YOU TO SAVE A LOT OF MONEY WHILE RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF PEOPLE BY CHOOSING A CAR THAT GETS GOOD GAS MILEAGE AND MINIMIZING YOUR TIME DRIVING.

HYBRID CARS DEFINITELY GET THE BEST MILEAGE OUT THERE -- WITH THE TOYOTA PRIUS AND HONDA CIVIC GETTING OVER 50MPG AND THE HONDA INSIGHT GETTING 65. BUT THERE ARE MANY REGULAR CARS THAT GET OVER 40 AS WELL. AND WHILE SUVs STILL CANNOT COMPARE FOR MILEAGE OR SAFETY, THE HYBRID VERSIONS ARE MUCH LESS WASTEFUL THAN REGULAR SUVs. THE MOST EFFICIENT HYBRID SUV, THE FORD ESCAPE, ACTUALLY GETS OVER 30MPG.

AND WHATEVER CAR YOU DRIVE, YOU CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE BY PLANNING YOUR TRAVELING SO YOU TAKE CARE OF ALL YOUR ERRANDS IN ONE RUN RATHER THAN MANY. THIS

WILL SAVE YOU TIME AS WELL, GIVING YOU MORE SPACE IN YOUR LIFE FOR THE THINGS YOU ENJOY. THE HUDSON VALLEY IS NOT GREAT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, BUT MUCH OF IT IS HEAVEN FOR CYCLISTS. TAKING SMALL TRIPS BY BIKE WILL HELP SAVE YOUR BODY WHILE SAVING THE EARTH!

THE NEXT STEP- BIGGER INVESTMENTS THAT SAVE THE EARTH WHILE SAVING YOU MONEY OVER TIME

6 Great insulation is the most cost-effective energy saver there is. No use getting fancy with things like solar panels if your home leaks energy! Try to get your attic insulation value up to R-50 and your walls up to R-30. Blowing in cellulose (made of recycled newspaper) is the best for insulating a closed wall. If you're doing a big renovation or are able to open up the wall you have two options. If you have limited space and need to keep the wall the same size, then isonene is more environmentally-friendly than other foams and gets twice the insulation value of cellulose when not sprayed in. If you spray it in it only gets the same as cellulose which is a better product because it's recycled. Which is why cellulose is also the best option if you can increase the wall size to get the insulation value you want using cellulose rather than foam. Atlas Roofing also offers a polyisocyanurate board that is a good insulator and that is made with no ozone-depleting chemicals. You should replace older windows with Energy Star windows (go for three panes if you can) with a low-E coating. Pella Designer Series windows are currently the most energy-efficient windows that are widely available. *Inefficient windows and doors cost Americans \$40 billion each year in higher utilities costs and waste as much energy as the US gets from the Alaska Pipeline.* ⁴

7 When you replace old appliances and water heaters, be sure to select models with the Energy Star symbol. They use 10-50% less energy than a standard appliance and can save about \$80/year. *If just 1 in 10 homes used Energy Star appliances, the change would be like planting 1.7 million new acres of trees.* ⁵

8 Install Energy Star ceiling fans. Casablanca is a brand that offers a wide variety of quality fans. This will cut costs by circulating heat in the winter and cooling air in the summer.

9 Install solar panels -- and leave out the batteries! Solar panels can help you avoid the massive environmental and social ills of coal, nuclear, natural gas, and big dam projects. New York State will foot half the bill, and New York allows you to "Net Meter". That means you stay connected to the electrical grid and any time you produce more electricity than you use, it gets sent into the grid for someone else to use and your meter runs backward -- so you're part of helping provide clean energy to your neighbors. Then when you need more than your panels produce, you just draw from the grid like normal. This allows you to not use batteries, which are not so good for the environment, add a lot to the cost, and can only store so much energy before any extra is just lost.

10 Install geothermal heating and cooling. A geothermal system uses the earth's constant underground temperature to cool and heat your home, as well as provide all of your domestic hot water. It uses about 50% less energy to heat your home and about 25% less to cool it.

SOME THINGS THAT JUST COST MORE TO DO RIGHT - BUT DO THEM ANYWAY!

11 Replace your toilets with "dual flushers". 40% of the water used in a home goes right down the toilet. Dual-flush toilets let you choose whether you need a big or a little flush. This simple choice saves at least 6,000 gallons of water per year for a family of four. They cost a little more, but not much. Low-flow shower and sink fixtures will save additional water, much of it hot water, which saves money! ⁶

12 Buy green power or offset your carbon emissions. In New York State you can choose who supplies your electricity and there are many companies that use renewable sources, such as solar, wind and hydro power. It's very easy and reliable to switch. Just call your local utility or visit their website. If you are served by Central Hudson, sadly, none of the options is very green. But don't let that stop you! You can offset the electricity you use in your building, or the emissions from your car, or any flights you take by going online and paying for the creation of an equivalent amount of clean energy. Two popular and reliable websites are nativeenergy.org and carbonfund.org.

13 When you need to replace the roof, consider a metal roof. They are long-lasting, often made of highly recycled material, help to deflect heat in the summer, and are recyclable. Asphalt shingles are short-lived, made of oil, are rarely recycled, and give off toxic VOCs which can be drawn into the house. If you have to go with asphalt, make sure you go with 50-year asphalt shingles with recycled content. Regardless, never drink water coming off an asphalt roof.

14 If you are re-siding your house, do not use vinyl (PVC) siding. Dioxins are a byproduct of PVC. They also happen to be the most toxic substance on the planet, known to cause cancer, neurological damage, birth defects, and more. In the US, PVC is manufactured predominantly near low-income communities in Texas and Louisiana. Due to illegal dumping, mishandling, and burning, dioxins are now found all around the world -- they are even detectable in our bodies. Dioxin exposure of the average American poses a risk of cancer of greater than 1 in 1,000. PVC releases deadly gases in fires, including one that turns to hydrochloric acid if inhaled. PVC is not biodegradable and less than 1% can be recycled. Powerful information about PVC and its alternatives can be found at www.healthybuilding.net/pvc/index.html

15 Whenever you do renovation work, be sure to buy FSC-certified wood. The Forest Stewardship Council provides independent audits that assure the wood you buy was not stolen from protected lands or lands of indigenous people without their consent. The FSC label also means wood was not taken from fragile ecosystems, that it was harvested sustainably, and that local communities benefit from the process. Sadly, all too often wood without the FSC symbol was clear cut, or stolen from protected or sensitive lands, or from lands of indigenous people, and more