

ENERGY WARS

Dear Residence Hall Leaders,

Welcome to the Fall 2009 Energy Wars! Does our campus operate sustainably? That is up to us, our actions, decisions and habits strongly influence the level of impact our University has on our local environment. That is why we have created this competition in which each Residence Hall will compete to reduce their water, natural gas and electricity consumption the most. Results will be based on percent reduction from past years water and energy usage. We have provided tips which will help your Residence Hall win this competition, and the best part is that we are asking them to do less not more! Simple things like remembering to turn off lights when they are not in use, taking slightly shorter showers, turning off the water while brushing teeth and washing clothes in cold water can make a huge difference. What we are asking is that you take an active role in teaching new students how to live sustainably on campus. In the enclosed packet you will find lists of tips which you can use to learn about living sustainably on campus.

The Environmental Health and Safety Department together with the Environmental Action Team (EnAct) and in collaboration with the Resident Housing Association (RHA) is bringing you the Energy Wars because we are interested in encouraging more sustainable living on campus and feel that reaching out to the student body is the most powerful way to affect change within our community. We hope that you will consider the impacts your own actions have on our local ecosystem and choose to reduce your impact at every opportunity. Committing to live sustainably in the residence halls makes you a good role model for the students you lead. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact us anytime.

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Sustainability Tips

1. Turn off the lights when you leave a room.
2. Put your desk by a window to make use of natural light.
3. Unplug your cell phone charger, IPOD charger, coffee maker, toaster, etc when you are not actively using them, these electronics consume electricity even when they are not in use.
4. When drying your clothes, use the cool air option, remove lightweight items to air dry.
5. Wash your clothes in cold water.
6. Walk, ride your bike or take the bus whenever possible.
7. Buy local and/or organic foods.
8. Use a reusable mug/bottle for your coffee and drinks.
9. Take a reusable bag to the grocery store.
10. Use a reusable produce bag instead of the plastic ones.
11. Avoid taking a bag whenever possible, put items directly inside your purse or backpack.
12. Turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth or shaving.
13. Take shorter showers and turn off the water when you are applying shampoo/conditioner/soap.
14. Recycle all plastic, aluminum, glass and paper products, if you don't have recycling services where you live find a friend who does have them and take your recycling there or to the recycling center at 1100 E Commercial Row, Reno, NV - (775) 329-8822
15. Buy clothes/furniture from local thrift stores.
16. Set your printer to duplex printing (printing on both sides of the paper), or print two pages per sheet. Also, don't print materials which are available online unless you need to.
17. Shut off your computer when you are not using it or put it into hibernate mode if you need to save the work on the screen.
18. Buy Free Trade products, especially coffee.
19. Replace your light bulbs with CFL (compact fluorescent lights).
20. Avoid single-serving packaged products- Buy in bulk and portion it into reusable containers.
21. Recycle your cell phones at www.onemillioncellphones.com.

Green Homecoming Tips

Reduce

- Only buy what you really need.
- Buy things in bulk to cut down on packaging waste.
- Avoid idling your car while tailgating- it's bad for the air and smelly too!

Reuse

- Use reusable cups, plates, and utensils at your pre-game party.
- If you use disposable picnic-ware you can still re-use it, and doing so can save you some money next time.
- Make signs from old poster boards then recycle them when you are done.
- Make a float using recycled materials, try using UNR paraphernalia such as plastic bags from the bookstore or old club or team gear.
- Save anything with a UNR logo for making spirit signs to show your Wolfpack support.

Recycle

- Recycle all plastic materials.
- Recycle all aluminum cans.
- Have your own bins for recycling to make sure the job gets done.

Tips for a Green Halloween

1. **E-mail party invites rather than snail-mail them.** Free e-mail greetings abound online, using them is not only eco-friendly but is also fun and can save lots of time. "Talking" and/or "dancing" ghosts, ghouls, mummies and more are there for the taking at cyber card shops postcards.org/postcards, greetingsdepot.com and e-cards.com. The best pumpkin card patch this year has to be castlemountains.com, which features 96 animated cards, some with short plots or story lines. Witches on brooms warn revelers not to drink and drive. Party invites come with electronic pumpkin piñata games. For retro-themed parties, consider vintage postcards at Penny Postcards or Antique Halloween postcards. There's no flash but the illustrations are spectacular.
2. **Serve healthy and seasonal foods.** The options are endless. Remember pumpkins are not just decorative items. The tender meat of the seasonal gourd can be pureed for soups, mashed for pies or spiced up for a main entrée, such as an Indian curry. Healthy recipes for all things pumpkin are posted at Vegweb, from vegetarian pumpkin chili to "Stroke of Midnight" pumpkin bread. Recipes for the sweet squash are also plentiful at epicurious.com/recipes. Serious home chefs might consider whipping up some pumpkin pesto or pumpkin flan with pumpkin seed praline.

Apples also are at their best this time of year. So make use of the crunchy fruit. Fill party bowls with several varieties of fresh apples, from tart Pippins to sweet Spartans. Serve cider hot or cold, don't forget to remind your guests to bring their own travel mug, this will cut down on waste and reduce the amount of time you spend washing dishes after the party. Bake a few apples with cinnamon and sugar for healthy, tasty dessert.

3. **Buy pumpkins, apples and other seasonal items from a farmer's market.** Produce bought at farmers' market will not only taste better but saves energy. "Most foods in the United States travel an average of 1,300 miles before reaching us, burning large amounts of fossil fuels," according to the Web site for the National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America held in Detroit in 1999. Buying produce directly from the farmer also cuts out the "middleman" and increases the farmers' cut or share of the profits. (To learn more, Google "Ten things you can do to support a sustainable food system.")

4. **Make use of all pumpkin parts.** After carving a pumpkin, make sure to save the seeds. Bake them and serve them to party guests or feed them to our fine feathered friends, the birds. There's no problem putting pumpkin seeds out for birds, wet or dry, confirms Dr. Ellen Dierenfeld, a nutritionist at the Saint Louis Zoo. If possible, bury or compost the pumpkin carcass instead of sending it to the already overflowing landfill.
5. **Use re-usable plates, cups, utensils, napkins and tablecloths.** Paper party goods can be expensive and just add more clutter to our nation's landfills. Look for re-usable party props at houseware shops and dollar stores. The best deal I found online was a 12-piece set of orange plastic utensils at crateandbarrel.com for 75 cents, reduced from \$2.95.
6. **Make your own costume or buy one at a second-hand shop.** An old sheet still makes a great ghost. Just make sure that the sheet cost less than a commercial ghost costume. Many boomers also have some hippie clothes stashed somewhere. Find them and be a part of the Woodstock generation without living through all that rain and mud!

Can't find anything suitable in the house? Check the UNR Green Guide for a listing of local thrift stores.

7. **Instead of using paper or plastic disposable bags to collect treats, use or buy a recyclable bag.** Be creative; make use of old straw baskets or an old metal pot with a handle. You can use anything to collect candy in, finding something you or a friend already have that matches your costume can save you money and make your look more unique.

Americans use more than 380 million plastic bags and more than 10 million paper bags every year. Plastic bags end up as litter, kill thousands of marine mammals annually, and break down slowly into small particles that continue to pollute soil and water. Paper bag production consumes more than 14 million trees annually in the U.S.

Reusable bags are not only better for the environment at Halloween, they're also better for kids. Paper and plastic bags can tear easily, spilling Halloween treats and disappointing children. Reusable bags are much more durable.

8. **Experience nature.** Visit a pumpkin farm. Pick fresh apples. Talk a long walk outside. Look up at the sky. Notice the moon. Remember, it's Halloween.

9. **Making the extra effort.** Remembering your canvas bags when you go to the grocery store or farmers market, buying foods which require less travel and packaging and making use of reusable dinnerware not only helps the environment but also improves your own life. The good feeling you get after a party when there's only one bag of trash to take out is not only because you don't have to make another trip. Being part of the solution rather than the problem can relieve stress and lead to a general feeling of happiness and optimism.

Checklist for a Green Halloween Party

Basics

- Choose healthy or healthier options when available.
- Look for local foods (like apples and pumpkins) – some of which may be donated.
- If possible, consider products that contain organically grown ingredients.
- Don't use disposables (cups, plates, etc.) – try to find something reusable, or ask guests to bring their own reusable cups and water bottles with them.
- Use a water filter or drink tap water instead of drinking bottled water.
- Make sure that all drink containers are recycled.
- Plan for only as much food/drink as you need.
- Ask the students and teachers to bring canned or dried food that will later be donated to your local food bank.

Activities

- Make Halloween art/ décor only from recycled goods or things found in nature.
- Have a Green Halloween inspired door decorating contest.
- Make leaf rubbing art.
- Make "treat & treasure" bags from recycled goods or old pillow cases.
- Make a Halloween-themed bean-bag toss game out of recycled boxes.
- Have a Halloween-themed obstacle course.
- Have an eco-themed costume contest.
- Make a haunted house or one of those carnival cut-outs where the kids stick their heads through (and you can take a picture) - out of only recycled materials.
- Make a treasure out of trash. Send the kids on a mission to collect litter in fall colors: orange, black, red, brown or gold. Use the pieces to make a fall collage. (Covering recycled soup cans make for great pencil holders, too!)
- Host a "zero" waste party where everything must be consumed, reused/ repurposed, composted or recycled.
- Host a post-Halloween candy exchange and composting party.

Décor

- Reuse classroom décor from last year.
- Commit not to buying anything new.
- Consider using mostly décor from nature – pumpkins, gourds, apples, hay, etc.
- Hit up a thrift store and see what you can find there.
- Make Halloween themed banners and other décor items from recycled, reused or repurposed materials.
- Reuse everything you've used this year, next year.

Waste & cleaning

- Compost all food scraps and natural décor items. Even candy (unwrapped) can be composted or put in the yard waste bin. Pizza boxes and other food contaminated paper/ cardboard items may also be composted/ included in yard waste.
- Recycle anything that can be: aluminum cans, water bottles, cups, food containers, etc.
- Use healthier cleaning supplies – vinegar and water works wonders!