



# The Eco Beat

*Insights to help people live in a healthy and sustainable environment*

A quarterly newsletter

Fall 2009

## Green Tips: Easy on the Environment and Your Wallet

In tough economic times it's been easier than ever to use financial constraints as an excuse for ignoring environmental concerns. The spokesman for **lazy environmentalists** everywhere, Dorfman, has compiled simple tips that are easy on the environment and your wallet into his second book, "The Lazy Environmentalist on a Budget". No more excuses.

### Use a remote-control power strip.

**The Belkin Conserve** is an eight-outlet power strip that comes with a remote control device to help you easily turn off electronics — and completely kill the power (no vampire power drain) — without having to bend over or reach behind your desk to unplug them from the wall. Save energy, save money, save your back.

### Get your magazines digitally.

**Zinio.com** offers digital versions of more than 500 magazine titles like BusinessWeek, Cosmopolitan, Car & Driver, Men's Health, Dwell, Outside and Yoga Journal. Download the Zinio Reader and read the magazines on your personal computer or access your subscriptions online from any computer at Zinio.com. Owners of iPhones can even access entire magazines through their phones. And in the spirit of budget consciousness, Zinio is offering a free one-year trial subscription to a wide selection of magazines so people can try the service.

### Choose filtered water over bottled.

Save money as you wean yourself off your disposable water bottle habit — a practice that collectively results in more than 38 billion disposable plastic bottles deposited in the landfill each year in the United States. **Brita** pitchers are easy to use, and when it's time for a new replaceable filter, you can easily recycle the old one. Early in 2009, Brita launched a new program with eco-products maker **Preserve** to recycle the plastic from used filters into a sleek line of personal care, tableware and kitchenware products. You can drop off filters at participating Whole Foods Markets or mail them directly to Preserve.

### Get paid to recycle your electronics.

Instead of tossing your gadgets in a landfill when you're finished

with them, get paid to recycle them. Services like [www.buymytronics.com](http://www.buymytronics.com), [www.myboneyard.com](http://www.myboneyard.com) and [www.greenphone.com](http://www.greenphone.com) will recycle or refurbish your electronics, which keeps them out of landfills. Simply mail them in and wait for your check. Also check out [www.dyscern.com](http://www.dyscern.com) and [www.refurbdepot.com](http://www.refurbdepot.com) for a solid selection of refurbished electronics, most of which are still under warranty and often sell for less than 50 percent of the retail price.

### Update your wardrobe by connecting with fashionistas with garb to barter.

**Swapstyle.com** lets you swap accessories, cosmetics and shoes with fashionistas all over the globe for free (you only pay for shipping). You can also combine barter with cash to trade up while avoiding the full cost — both monetary and environmental — of consuming a new product.

### Ride share to get where you want to go.

Another alternative to owning a car is to catch a ride with somebody else. Ride sharing not only saves you the cost of car ownership and maintenance, but also keeps additional cars off the road — a positive eco step. **Zimride** is a ride-share service built on the Facebook social networking platform that enables members to create personal profiles and select ride mates who share similar music tastes, favorite sports teams, or who just seem "normal." Zimmers can also evaluate things like driving speed, music volume and smoking preferences before agreeing to hop in. Find rides at [Zimride.com](http://Zimride.com) or by using Zimride's Facebook application.

### CDs, DVDs and books: Swap, don't buy.

Now you can avoid buying new products (good for your wallet, great for the environment) without sacrificing your need for entertainment. Check out the following swapping sites for access to thousands of CDs, books and DVDs: [Swapacd.com](http://Swapacd.com), [Swapadvd.com](http://Swapadvd.com), [Paperbackswap.com](http://Paperbackswap.com)

### Conserve water and energy with low-flow showerheads.

**Evolve** has designed a series of water-saving showerheads that let the cold water run until the water temperature reaches 95 degrees and then slow water flow to a trickle. This way hot water doesn't release until you actually step in the shower and turn the showerhead's valve to release the flow. Multiple showerhead styles are available, including the Roadrunner low-flow showerhead, which delivers strong water pressure using just 1.59 gallons per minute.

*Adapted from an article by Marisa Belger on MSNBC.com. See full article at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30330043/>.*

# What We Have Been Up To...



## EcoLiving Tour '09

The EcoLiving Tours began in 2002 to showcase practical solutions adopted by creative citizens in order to reduce their energy costs and reliance on the Earth's precious resources.

The objective of the annual EcoLiving Tour is to demonstrate that innovative energy saving and environmental friendly technologies are accessible to everyone. It also provides an opportunity for open discussion on alternative energy and other environmentally friendly home applications.

This year's tour included six destinations varying from eco-friendly landscaping to residential solar tie in systems and the wind power generator at Olympic Heights School. As a last minute surprise the tour landed at SAIT campus to see progress on the Solar Decathlon net-zero house being built in partnership between U of C, Mount Royal, SAIT and ACAD. To see a project of this scope in the middle of construction was so great no one complained about spending the lunch hour on a construction site!

Thank you to the Pembina Institute who generously supported the 2009 EcoLiving Tour by way of Carbon Offsetting their recent Carbon Capture and Storage Forum and donating \$1,000 towards the tour. EcoLiving Events is already looking forward to next year's tour. Please check our website for the next date.

## Earth Hour By the Bow

The first annual Earth Hour by the Bow River event in Calgary was a huge success. The pending snowstorm and low temperatures did not deter many from attending. Roughly 150 Calgarians gathered by candlelight in front of the Calgary Area Outdoor Council building along the Bow River. We were situated directly across from many large office towers and apartment buildings and noticed that many building owners participated in the Earth Hour initiative by shutting off their lights. Calgary's Earth Hour 2009 was more successful than previously showing 1% drop in power consumption compared to 3.6% spike in power consumption in 2008.

Preparations are beginning for next year, where we will have to at least beat Edmonton's 5.2% drop in power consumption in 2009 and strive for Sydney, Australia's 10.5% decrease in the city's power consumption in 2009. Watch for more details.

### *Looking for an exciting, short term Volunteer Role?*

EcoLiving Events Ltd. is currently looking for volunteers for this year's Fair! Volunteers have the opportunity to be involved with the worthwhile event, meet the exhibitors and speakers as well as other supporters. Volunteers are provided with a t-shirt and refreshments. The orientation night for volunteers is Thursday, September 17th at 6:30pm on Mount Royal campus. Please email [danicarruthers@gmail.com](mailto:danicarruthers@gmail.com) to request an application form or receive more information about volunteering.

# EcoLiving Fair - Sept. 26th & 27th

*Come see over 50 exhibitors and speakers!*

## What to Expect at the Fair

The 8th Annual EcoLiving Fair and Speaker Series will take place at Mount Royal University's Centre for Continuous Learning on September 26th and 27th. Over 50 exhibitors and 30 knowledgeable speakers promoting sustainable lifestyles will share their ideas and expertise with Calgarians. This year the Calgary Farmer's Market is partnering with the EcoLiving Fair. Guests of the EcoLiving Fair and the Farmer's Market will be able to travel by pedi-cabs (human powered vehicles) back and forth to each venue. We are asking for donations to use this service.

Exhibitors from various corporate, government and non-profit organizations throughout Alberta will highlight their sustainable initiatives and share the successes they have witnessed over the years. Exhibitors will be available to answer questions and provide information on sustainable housing opportunities, alternative energy sources, water conservation technologies and eco-friendly products.

Experts from government agencies, academia, businesses, and community organizations will share information about unique building techniques, alternative energy sources, innovative technologies, various initiatives and sustainable living with visitors to the Fair.

While donations are graciously appreciated, the fair is free of charge and open to all. For more information, including locations, directions, a detailed list of exhibitors, and the schedule of speakers, please visit the EcoLiving Fair & Speaker Series website at [www.ecolivingfair.ca](http://www.ecolivingfair.ca).

## Activities for the Entire Family

Attending the EcoLiving Fair is fun for the whole family. Demonstrations lined up for the event include a workshop on how to make your yard more environmentally friendly, with Laureen Rama, author of Eco-Yards – simple steps to earth-friendly landscapes. Laureen will discuss steps to take to put your yard “to sleep” for the winter and composting tips at 1:00pm on Saturday, September 26. A few other topics include: the benefits of using foam insulation, having a green roof, environmentally friendly travel, organics or the power of solar.

Children will be able to enjoy interactive activities in the Kid's Corner led by Telus World of Science - Calgary. There will be a bike generator that fair-goers can ride to experience how much human energy is needed to power day-to-day items. A solar powered popcorn machine will provide visitors with a tasty treat.

And for those out-dated electronic items that you never use anymore, bring them down to the event for on-site recycling done by the Electronic Recycling Association.



# Upcoming Calgary Events

*Get involved in our green community*



## 31 Day Challenge

Wouldn't it be inspiring to see the environmental impact, in cold hard numbers, a group of Calgarians can collectively achieve in one short month?

Join Acts of Eco, a student initiative, in October 2009 for the 31 Day Challenge. You will be challenged to make small daily actions over the entire month. It could be anything from turning off the tap while you brush your teeth to spending one day with all the lights off in your house. On November 5, there will be a wrap-up party for everyone who participated and prizes and praise will be awarded to the most Eco-improved.

All you have to do is commit to completing your weekly tasks and report back to us with a short weekly survey so we can account for your impact. Sign up at [www.actsofecoco.com](http://www.actsofecoco.com) to join the movement and receive your first set of challenges!

## Sustainable EcoLiving Book Club

*4th Floor North Meeting Room, Calgary Public Library - 616 Macleod Tr. S.E.*

Join us for discussion at the Calgary Public Library, once a month on Wednesday evenings 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the Central Public Library for discussion about relevant topics and trends in the environment. Below are the upcoming 2009 dates and featured books.

### September 16, 2009

***Drive: A Road Trip Through Our Complicated Affair with the Automobile* by Tim Falconer**

Falconer examines our complicated relationship with cars during a 15,000 kilometer road trip through Ontario and the U.S. He talks to industry representative, historians and average citizens, positioning himself between car-hating environmentalists and car-club enthusiasts. Falconer offers a solution for the future of cars in the face of resource scarcity and a growing interest in green, walkable cities.

### October 21, 2009

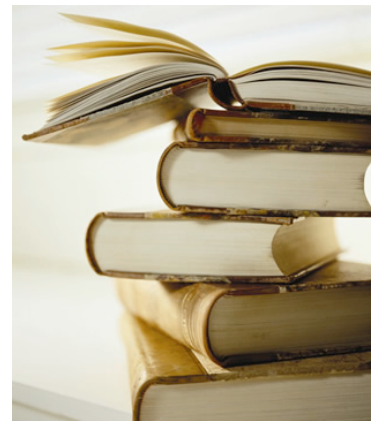
***The Life You Can Save* by Peter Singer**

Singer examines the disparity between the world's rich and poor and suggests how, without any significant sacrifice, the world's richest could save the lives of the world's poorest.

### November 18, 2009

***Economics for Everyone* by Jim Stanford**

Stanford, an economist with the Canadian Auto Workers Union and columnist for the Globe and Mail offers this basic primer on economics. He explains the basic features and relationships of modern-day capitalism in a readable way to show how working people fit into the big economic picture – and the points of opportunity where we can try to build a better, fairer system.



## Ask Us

Do you have burning questions related to sustainable living that you can't seem to find a reliable answer to? Send your questions to [info@ecolivingfair.ca](mailto:info@ecolivingfair.ca) with "Eco Beat Question" in the subject title and we will take advantage of our large environmental expert networks to find your answer. In the next issue of Eco Beat we will feature the most relevant and eye-opening questions for all of our readers!

## Looking For Committee Members

EcoLiving Events Ltd. is a Not for Profit Corporation registered in May, 2007. We are recruiting people interested in becoming part of the EcoLiving Events Committee, we ask anyone interested to fill out an application, which can be found on our website, [www.ecolivingfair.ca](http://www.ecolivingfair.ca) and submitted to [info@ecolivingfair.ca](mailto:info@ecolivingfair.ca) or [jvanden1@telus.net](mailto:jvanden1@telus.net).

## Let Us Know What You Think

We would appreciate your feedback on our first quarterly newsletter as we would like it to be as relevant and useful for our readers as possible. Please email [info@ecolivingfair.ca](mailto:info@ecolivingfair.ca) with comments and suggestions for this and future newsletters. We appreciate your feedback!

### EcoLiving Board of Directors

Clark Dickson – President  
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