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new creation:

JUNE 2009

caring for God's earth in NE Iowa

The NE Iowa Synod Care of Creation Work Group uses this newsletter to call attention to community and environmental issues, eco-problems, earth stewardship, and global concerns.

Save Energy, Save Money

By Miles Renaas

Many appliances continue to draw a small amount of power when they are switched off. These "phantom" loads occur in most appliances that use electricity, such as VCRs, televisions, stereos, computers, and kitchen appliances. In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. This can be avoided by unplugging the appliance or using a power strip and using the switch on the power strip to cut all power to the appliance.

ENERGY STAR® computers and monitors save energy only when the power management features are activated, so make sure power management is activated on your computer.

Look for the ENERGY STAR® label on home appliances, electronics and other products. ENERGY STAR® products meet strict efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy.

For older appliances, use a power controlling device to reduce the energy consumption of the appliance's electric motor.

Plug home electronics, such as TVs and DVD players, into power strips; turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use (TVs and DVDs in standby mode still use several watts of power).

Studies have shown that using rechargeable batteries for products like cordless phones and PDAs is more cost effective than throwaway batteries. If you must use throwaways, check with your trash removal company about safe disposal options.

There is a common misconception that screen savers reduce energy use by monitors; they do not. Automatic switching to sleep mode or manually turning monitors off is always the better energy-saving strategy.

To maximize savings with a laptop, put the AC adapter on a power strip that can be turned off (or will turn off automatically); the transformer in the AC adapter draws power continuously, even when the laptop is not plugged into the adapter.

Turn off your computer and monitor when not in use.

Unplug battery chargers when the batteries are fully charged or the chargers are not in use.

Turn off your personal computer when you're away from your PC for 20 minutes or more, and both the CPU and the monitor if you will be away for two hours or more.

This advice on saving energy is from the U.S. Department of Energy. For more information go to www.energy.gov or www.loseyourexcuse.gov.



A Word of Thanks...

The Care of Creation Work Group extends its heartfelt thanks to Jackie Juhl of Waverly for her many years of service to the Work Group. Jackie was a founding member of the Work Group back in 1989, along with Lillian Bruvold, who is still a Work Group member. Jackie served as the secretary for the Work Group until 2009, a 20-year labor of love. Jackie lives her commitment to the care of creation through her daily life, her leadership in her congregation, and her political involvement. Even though she will no longer be attending meetings with us, the foundation she helped to build over the years is strong and continues to support new efforts by the Work Group. Thank you, Jackie!

Pastor Nancy Larson has been the Synod's staff person assigned to Care of Creation for several years, but she is moving on to other duties with the national office. We want to thank her for her years of dedicated guidance and wish her well in her new position. Thank you, Nancy!

"All the waters run to the sea and yet the sea is not full, and from the place where they began, thither they return again."

Ecclesiastes 1:7

Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund

The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund will provide a permanent and constitutionally protected funding source for Iowa's natural resources – to improve and protect our diverse natural environment and outdoor recreational opportunities.

The Trust Fund will provide protection for water quality, conservation of agricultural soils and enhanced natural areas in Iowa, including parks, trails, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Trust Fund monies will be obtained by allocating 3/8 of one cent from sales tax revenue the *next* time the Iowa Legislature approves a sales tax increase. These monies will amount to an additional \$150 million annual investment for these vital needs, while costing the average tax payer only 8¢/day.

History. The decision to establish a trust fund for natural resources in Iowa was the result of over two years of research and study conducted by many of the state's leading conservation, environmental, sportsmen, and agriculture advocates, along with members of the Iowa legislature.

The first two steps in establishing this Trust Fund have been completed. Iowa House and Senate resolutions to establish this Trust Fund have been overwhelmingly approved by two separate general assemblies of the Iowa Legislature (in 2008 and 2009). More than 90 percent of Iowa legislators voted in favor of the measure.

Now the public must decide. The measure will go to Iowans for a vote in November, 2010.

Why we need the Trust Fund:

- An investment for Iowa's future generations.
- Provides a more reliable, consistent annual investment.
- Protects funds from a fluctuating state budget and from being diverted.
- Benefits citizens, students, communities & landowners.
- Grows as the economy grows.

Environmental Benefits

- Cleaner water
- Soil conservation
- More wildlife and fish
- More natural areas that preserve beauty and diversity
- Improved parks, trails and cultural facilities

Economic Benefits

- Increase Iowa's current \$1B/year outdoor recreation industry
- Attract/retain businesses and jobs
- Enhanced environmental opportunities. Improving quality of life necessities
- Opportunities to leverage grants/donations
- Enhanced flood protection

All Iowans can benefit from this crucial investment – the quality of our natural resources affects us all. This investment is about the air we breathe, the water we drink and play in, and the soil we depend on for our food.

Trust Fund Allocations

The Sustainable Natural Resources Advisory Committee reviewed and researched current budgets and funding streams and concluded that an additional \$150 million per year, strategically used at state and local levels, would go a long way toward meeting Iowa's natural resources and recreation needs.

The following categories were identified by the Advisory Committee and supported by the Interim Legislative Committee. These represent increases to baseline funding to meet current needs.

- **REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection):** provides moneys for projects that enhance our natural, cultural, and recreational resources across the state at multiple levels of government and management.
- **Local Conservation Partnership Program:** for habitat protection and conservation, infrastructure needs, conservation education, and nature interpretation at the local level.
- **Watershed Protection:** to improve and encourage a watershed approach to solving water quality environmental problems. Watershed protection includes encouragement of watershed groups, targeted projects, wetland restoration, and runoff filtration management techniques.
- **Lakes Restoration:** for healthy lakes that provide a full complement of aesthetic, ecological, and recreational benefits.
- **Trails:** for the addition of new hiking, walking, biking, and water trails, and maintenance of existing trails.
- **Natural Resources Management:** to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for identified needs in state parks, state preserves, wildlife areas, state forests, wildlife habitats, wildlife diversity program, access for hunting and other recreational activities, technical assistance from forestry, fisheries and wildlife biologists through private landowner programs and incentives, water trails, river and streams programs, natural resources outreach including natural history interpretation in the parks and natural areas, angling opportunities, conservation law enforcement, recreational safety programs, etc.
- **Agriculture and Land Stewardship:** to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to meet the identified demand for the soil conservation and watershed protection programs the Department administers. This money would provide additional technical assistance to soil and water conservation districts, develop a stream bank and buffer stabilization project, initiate a state-funded CRP-type program to keep lands in hay and grass, and start a tillage management incentives program to assure adequate crop residue levels in areas impacted by demand for cellulosic ethanol production. It would also be used to support environmental agricultural and livestock stewardship.

(From information from the Sustainable Funding Network, now known as Iowa's Water and Land Legacy -- I WILL)

The Lutheran Resource Center in Clear Lake is sponsoring a workshop later this year to train congregational leaders who can go back to their congregations with ways to reduce their carbon footprints. For more information, contact Karen at The Resource Center at 641.357.4451, or lrc@netins.net, or go to www.lutheranresourcecenter.org

For more information about the Care of Creation Work Group, contact the Northeastern Iowa Synod office at 319/352-1414 or go to www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources.