

## December Eco-Newsletter

### County Awarded \$552,500 for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Grant



The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded Johnson County \$552,500 in Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding. The funding is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that Congress passed earlier this year. A portion of the funding went to waste reduction projects including the following:

- Support for seven Ripple Glass recycling bins throughout the county
- Start-up of an event recycling program
- Funding for a compost education program and discounted home composting bins

In addition to the waste reduction projects, Johnson County will use its EECBG funding to support the following energy efficiency activities:

1. Energy audits of 20 county buildings. The audit findings will inform decision makers about improvements that could be made to increase a buildings' energy efficiency.
2. Installation of LED parking lot lighting.
3. Installation of recharging stations for plug-in electric vehicles at selected county buildings
4. Promotion of home weatherization efforts in partnership with Johnson County municipalities and other community partners.
5. Energy-focused education and outreach campaign to 4000+ county employees.
6. Coordination of a regional energy efficiency and sustainability strategy in partnership with Mid-America Regional Council and other local governments.

The county has three years to complete projects funded through the EECBG program. Much of the program implementation will occur in the first year of the grant.

For more information, contact James Joerke, sustainability program director, at 913-715-1120 or [james.joerke@jocogov.org](mailto:james.joerke@jocogov.org).

### Green Business Recognition Awards



The Johnson County Solid Waste Management Committee is recognizing businesses that are leading the way to reduce waste and conserve resources.

Businesses with innovative recycling programs, green purchasing policies, waste reduction measures, and employee education programs are encouraged to apply for the Johnson County's Solid Waste Management Committee's Green Business Recognition Award.

Interested business, institutions or schools should submit applications by January 30, 2010. The Solid Waste Management Committee will score the applications based on overall program effectiveness and the use of innovative approaches and activities. The awards will be announced around Earth Day, April 22, 2010.

For more information or to download a copy of the application, visit the county website at [www.jocorecycles.org](http://www.jocorecycles.org) or contact Craig Wood at 913-715-6917.

## December Eco-Newsletter

### Plan for an eco-friendly holiday this year!



**RECYCLE AT HOLIDAY EVENTS.** Impress your guests by having convenient recycling at your events. During the holiday season, there are many reasons to get together with family and friends to celebrate which can generate additional waste. An easy way to reduce waste is to provide recycling. It is also easy!



**BUY ENERGY-SAVING "LED" HOLIDAY LIGHTS.** Now you can decorate your house with LED lights that use 90 percent less energy than conventional holiday lights, and can save your family up to \$50 on your energy bills during the holiday season! LED lights are available at many major retailers.



**MAKE YOUR OWN WRAPPING PAPER.** Most mass-produced wrapping paper you find in stores is not recyclable and ends up in landfills. Instead, here's a great chance to get creative! Wrap presents with old maps, the comics section of a newspaper, or children's artwork. Or use a scarf, attractive dish towel, bandana, or some other useful cloth item. If every family wrapped just three gifts this way, it would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.



**ADD ORGANIC & LOCAL FOODS TO YOUR HOLIDAY FEAST.** Support local family farmers who grow sustainable meat and produce. Not only does it taste great, you'll be doing your part for the planet too. Looking for an organic turkey or ham for Christmas dinner? [Find out where you can get local green products.](#)



**RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE.** Ninety-eight percent of Christmas trees were grown on farms, not in forests, so at least it's not as if you're cutting down an ancient tree. Each year, 10 million Christmas trees end up in the landfill. While your tree won't fit in the recycling bin with your newspapers and bottles, you can recycle your tree: many cities offer programs to turn your tree to mulch or wood chips.



**DONATE YOUR TIME OR MONEY TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP.** Get into the holiday spirit by volunteering! There are countless ways to help improve your community—and the planet—from cleaning up a local river to helping inner city kids experience the outdoors for the first time. A donation in honor of a loved one can also be a special holiday gift.



**PLEDGE ENERGY EFFICIENCY THIS NEW YEARS.** Take a pledge this New Years' to reduce your home energy use by buying energy-efficient light bulbs. Installing only 6 compact fluorescent light bulbs will save the average American family \$60 per year. [For more home energy efficiency tips visit click here.](#)

**RECYCLE YOUR OLD CELL PHONE.** Getting a new cell phone for Christmas? Not sure what to do with the old one? Now, you can drop off that old phone at any phone store. Each year, 130 million cell phones are thrown out, weighing approximately 65,000 tons.