

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT
GREEN SANCTUARY PROGRAM
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF MARIN

Energy Use patterns:

Lighting: Fluorescent bulbs used in Fireside room (perimeter lights) and exterior lights. Fireside Room overhead lights are halogen. Hallway and exterior lights are on a timer (from dusk to 1:00 a.m.). Day time lights are turned off whenever possible.

Furnaces: 4 gas furnaces are time controlled and kept at 67 degrees when rooms are in use. Sweaters are suggested. Time switches used to prevent heat being left on.

Hot water: Signs suggest use of cold when possible.

Water saving:

Low flow toilets are installed in all but one bathroom.

The grounds have a time controlled sprinkler systems..

Recycling procedures: California has a legally defined goal of reducing waste streams. Marin County has exceeded this goal and has a 75% recycling rate. Paper, cardboard, glass, plastic bottles and metal cans are recycled throughout the county by curbside pick-up. The City of Novato also includes plastic food containers up to # 7 and some members collect those after Church luncheons and take them to Novato. Several recycling centers in the county accept hazardous waste and items such as computers, and cell phones. Members may bring used batteries and ink cartridges to the Church which we recycle. An annual book exchange has been instituted. All garden waste is taken to the composting center where we also purchase mulch for the grounds.

Cleaning Supplies:

Landscaping: Only natural fertilizers are used and no artificial pesticides or herbicides. Only native plants or those suitable for our Mediterranean climate are used.

Investments: Our portfolio is handled by the UUA where securities are screened for social justice and share holder activism is practiced.

Kitchen Reusable's:

We routinely use metal or re-useable plastic utensils, cloth tablecloths and dish towels, metal or glass, baking pans, glass punch bowl and cups, wine glasses and serving dishes. We have ceramic plates that encourage use of our commercial dishwasher. We earlier encouraged members to bring and mark their own coffee mugs and plan to re-emphasis this.

We can use our microwave oven for the weekly sterilization of cellulose sponges.

Religious Education:

In 2006 all children's classes studied the Seventh UU Principle this year and produced art work for a month-long display on the theme of water. The younger children celebrated Earth Day at the nearby convalescent hospital they visit three times a year. Our youth group has built and is maintaining a labyrinth. We have a barn owl nesting box set up. The Hungry Owl Project came out last fall and showed the children a live barn owl and did a program about owls.

Worship: Our sanctuary has banners portray aspects of our environment.

Our Women's Spirituality group meets once a month and is earth-centered. This group also leads an all-congregation worship service once or twice a year.

Several recent services have had an environmental/conservation theme.

X: Social Action:

We had an active "Go Green" program for three years when some of the above mentioned actions were developed. We circulated to all our members a check list of suggested conservation practices. Two of our monthly social action lunches featured speakers on environmental topics. We organized car-pools and plan to reorganize them to include newer members. The Social Action Committee arranges seven educational luncheons a year, and some of the speakers have been on environmental subjects. Occasionally, we have letter-writing or e-mail campaigns on environmental concerns.

XI: Other Activities: One member was involved in advocacy for affordable housing in the city of Novato. The youth group has built a labyrinth on the hill below the main building. We also have a memorial arbor on top of the hill. Three members of our congregation volunteer with Audubon.