



NECOG Development Corporation

RLF Quarterly Newsletter

April 2011

In the hope that spring arrives soon. This copy of the NECOG-DC newsletter has somewhat of a green theme. So enjoy and.....

Green Energy

By Rich Galbraith, RLF Manager

I can remember not that long ago many people hadn't even heard about "Going Green". Today it's hard to make it through the day without seeing some reference to Going Green. We're reminded daily of Going Green through commercials, product packaging, green jobs, and the media. Most everything we come into contact today has to meet some degree of greenness. This includes new buildings and renovation of existing buildings. A simple search on the internet now returns an overwhelming number of hits if one types in Going Green.

One of the biggest topics of Going Green is that of renewable energy. Which consist of energy coming from natural resources such as the sun, wind, rain, tides, and geothermal heat. This means that the energy is naturally replenished. Some sources of renewable energy generated in South Dakota include: hydroelectric, ethanol, and wind.

In 2010 bipartisan Senators pushed for a renewable electricity standard that would require 3 percent of US electricity to come from renewable sources by 2012 and 15 percent by 2021. In January, President Obama pushed this even further by calling for 80 percent of US electricity to come from clean sources by 2035.⁽¹⁾

This is good news for South Dakota as the [American Wind Energy Association](#) (AWEA) has us listed as one of the top 10 states having the best wind energy resources. However without the necessary transmission capacity South Dakota will not be able to move this renewable electricity to market.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Rising to Challenge of Energy Standards](#), Center for Rural Affairs.



Spring ???

By Rich Galbraith, RLF Manager

A lot of us are still wondering when spring is going to start. While the official start of spring was in March, our local weather has been far from spring like. With many areas in our region getting several inches of snow (some multiple times) in the last week and continued cooler than normal temperatures... many are still asking when is spring coming?

While some families with young children are looking forward to Easter and the Easter Bunny this weekend many other families are looking forward to getting into their farm fields. Everyone should be praying that area flooding alleviates and more spring like weather arrives soon. Due to a combination of factors (weather and infrastructure) area farmers have been delayed getting into fields. With agriculture being this region's largest economic driver, everyone should hope that farmers are able to get into their fields soon.



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Earth Day

(www.earthday.org/earth-day-history-movement)

Each year, Earth Day -- April 22 -- marks the anniversary of what many consider the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

Earth Day 1970 capitalized on the emerging consciousness, channeling the energy of the anti-war protest movement and putting environmental concerns front and center.

The idea came to Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after witnessing the ravages of the 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, he realized that if he could infuse that energy with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution, it would force environmental protection onto the national political agenda. Senator Nelson announced the idea for a "national teach-in on the environment" to the national media; persuaded Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman, to serve as his co-chair; and recruited Denis Hayes as national coordinator. Hayes built a national staff of 85 to promote events across the land.

As a result, on the 22nd of April, 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized protests against the deterioration of the environment. Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the [Clean Air](#), [Clean Water](#), and [Endangered Species](#) Acts. "It was a gamble," Gaylord recalled, "but it worked."



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QuickBooks

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) will be offering QuickBooks workshops. QuickBooks is a great way to collect your information AND have it readily available during the year to help you better manage your businesses. Whether you are just considering an accounting software package or are currently using QuickBooks, you will find helpful information in these classes.

The Basics: Designed for those considering a computer-based accounting system or those QuickBooks users who are using it in their business but feel they could benefit more. Topics covered include: Chart of Accounts, Items, Customers, Vendors, Invoicing, Check Writing, Bills, and Reports.

Inventory & Payroll: This training will provide an overview of how inventory and payroll are processed and the basic concerns to be addressed when setting up and using these features. Topics covered include: Inventory Items, Inventory Types, Purchase Orders, Payroll Items, Payroll Checks, Payroll Liabilities, and Reports.

Register today, slots fill up fast!

QuickBooks

DATE: Wednesday, May 11, 2011

TIME: **The Basics:** 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Inventory and Payroll: 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

LOCATION: Smart Center, Aberdeen, 416

Production Street (1/2 mile north of RDO
Equipment Company)

FEE: \$45 per person for one class; \$80 per person for both classes. Late fees apply after
May 2nd

Register Now

Registration can be done by contacting the SBDC in Aberdeen at:

Email: kweaver@midco.net

Phone: (605) 626-2565



Going Green: Tips for Retailers

Ways to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

By: Shari Waters, About.Com

Retailers who think 'going green' is just another fad or marketing ploy should think again. Consumers are becoming more aware of their overall impact on our communities. Shoppers are developing more of a green attitude as a way of life and retailers need to be there to meet those needs.

By implementing sustainable practices, retail businesses can become more efficient and save money in the process. The small business owner may think the cost and trouble of going green isn't worth the return, but the fact is each eco-friendly idea retailers adopt can make a huge difference to our planet.

Develop a Plan

Now that the decision to go green has been made, where to start? First, contact the local utility company to request an energy audit. Many companies offer an audit at no charge and provide recommendations of ways to reduce costs.

Next, take the list of recommendations and create a plan of action. Examine each area of store operations to determine what processes should be changed and how.

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Here are a few ways retailers can reduce, reuse and recycle for improved social-responsibility.

- Recycle paper, plastic, aluminum, and ink cartridges.
- Reuse packing materials and cardboard boxes.
- Use double-sided printing when possible.
- Reduce paper transactions by going digital for bill payment, vendor ordering, invoices, online banking, e-mail and faxing directly from your computer.
- Eliminate disposable cups, plates and utensils in the break room. Replace with permanent dishware.
- Switch to rechargeable batteries. Large office supply stores even have collection centers for recycling dead rechargeable batteries.

- Use eco-friendly cleaning products that are biodegradable and non-toxic.
- Purchase energy-efficient PCs, printers, and other equipment with the EnergyStar label.
- Donate or recycle old computers and equipment.
- Keep up with regular maintenance of all mechanical equipment.

Call a store meeting and share the new business practices with staff. Solicit input and offer employees incentives for submitting green ideas. Reward those staff members that walk, bike or use other alternative methods to get to work.

Enlist the help of store employees with conservation by instituting a policy to turn off equipment when not in use. Other ways to conserve are:

- Use ceiling fans to reduce the use of air conditioners.
- Insulate hot water heaters and lower the temperature.
- Switch to low-energy lighting and compact fluorescent bulbs.
- Put outdoor lighting on timers.
- Install air hand dryers in the restrooms.
- Use low-flow toilets and urinals.
- Set PCs to power-down when not in use.

Ban Bags

One of the biggest environmental issues encompassing the retailer is the use of plastic bags. Paper may be better for the environment but the plastic vs. paper debate continues to leave retailers without an ideal ecological choice when it comes to disposable shopping bags.

To provide shoppers with a low-cost, green solution consider selling reusable bags at cost. Other shopping bag options include products made of industrial post consumer materials. Certain retailers, depending on the type of product sold, may want to skip the bagging. Many booksellers have opted to forego shopping bags.

Green Marketing

Once you've begun to practice sustainability, don't keep it a secret. Be sure to announce your new green initiative to customers, staff and even vendors. Let them know the store is committed to saving the environment making responsible choices.



New Look

Come and visit the new website for the Northeast Council of Governments (NECOG) and the NECOG Development Corporation (NECOG-DC) at www.necog.org. While we've launched our new website, it's still evolving. If you've any suggestions or comments, we would like to hear from you.

NECOG is an association of city and county governments formed to provide technical and professional assistance. Our goal, like yours, is to improve the quality of life in Northeast South Dakota by providing the tools to create and retain jobs and increase the services available in your community. To accomplish this goal we offer professional development, planning, and management services to local governments as well as assisting in the administration of local programs and projects.

In addition, through NECOG's relationship with the NECOG Development Corporation, we help promote economic development in the region by providing financing for new and expanding businesses.



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On the Web... Personal Finance

www.mymoney.gov

This contains information on getting credit, paying for education, buying a home, creating a budget and starting a small business.

www.federalreserve.gov

In the Personal Finance section under Consumer Information, you can find worksheets that will help you establish goals, create a budget and find tips on how to stick to a budget.

www.sec.gov/investor/oiea_podcasts.htm

Securities and Exchange Commission offers podcast that cover a broad range of savings and investing topics.

www.ncua.gov/newspublications/publications/index.aspx

Under this site you can learn how to create an emergency financial first aid kit to help you maintain financial stability in an emergency and serve as a reference file for all of your financial documents.

www.usda.gov/personalfinance

This site provides information on personal finance through lessons, frequently asked questions and an ask-the-expert feature.

