



# SYNERGIES

The Sustainability Newsletter of The University of Texas at Austin

## Alley Flat Initiative Wins USGBC Award



The US Green Building Council (USGBC) presented twelve programs with Excellence in Green Building Curriculum Recognition Awards and Incentive Grants. UT Austin Center for Sustainable Development in the School of Architecture has won a Recognition Award for the Alley-Flat Initiative. The awards and grants are designed to highlight exemplary programs that demonstrate how important education is in advancing green building and sustainable development. Pre-Kindergarden through college level programs are eligible for the awards and grants each year.

The Alley-Flat Initiative is a collaboration between the UT Center for Sustainable Development, the Guadalupe Neighborhood Housing Development Corporation, the Austin Community Design and Development Center and the BaSiC Initiative. The program aims to build prototype detached residential units accessed from Austin's network of alleys. These flats will show how sustainable housing can be an affordable and adaptable solution to preventing sprawl and providing low income housing in the city.

<http://www.thealleyflatinitiative.org/>

## UT Commuting Options



While maintaining the largest university shuttle system in the country, UT Austin also encourages its students, faculty, and staff members to participate in its Alternative Transportation Program, entitled UT Share, for which it was awarded the "Best Workplaces for Commuters" Award. The program provides a variety of incentives to UT members and visitors to share rides to campus in carpools or vanpools. Participants can enjoy reserved parking spaces, reduced permit fees, provisional parking spaces in the event any individual must take their own vehicle to campus, and the Guaranteed Ride Home Program for personal emergency rides home. And in addition to saving money by sharing fuel and parking expenses, participants can experience reduced stress, and prolong the life of their own vehicles. Finally, members can help address the problem of single-occupancy vehicle ridership, and of course, improve one's environmental impact by reducing vehicular air pollution. Currently there are over 130 carpools and 24 vanpools registered with the university. Join now! Learn more at:

<http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/index.html>

## DSEMC replaces 193,000 light fixtures in retrofits underway



In May, the Demand Side Energy Management Program (DSEMC) began retrofitting light fixtures across campus. At UT, we have more than 15 million square feet of building space, which includes buildings that were constructed in the 1800's. Throughout the 2007-08 academic year, DSEMC audited many of the buildings on campus to see where there are inefficiencies, and to develop a plan to upgrade the lighting systems.

As a result of the audit findings, throughout the summer lighting retrofits will be made. Old, inefficient fixtures are being replaced with new, energy efficient fixtures. These retrofits will save UT \$1 million as we face increasing energy costs, and will help to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions. This project will have a major impact, as DSEMC will replace about 193,000 fixtures in total, or about 12,000 light bulbs per week! Visit: <http://www.utexas.edu/utakecharge/>

**Sustainable Development: To meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.** (Defined in the Brundtland Report)

**Sustainability Tip of the Month:** *Explore UT's alternative transportation options. This will help reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, and save you money! Visit: <http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/index.html>*

### Turtle Pond Water Recirculation



The turtle ponds at the UT Memorial Gardens provides a beautiful location for faculty, staff and students to study and relax outdoors. When the pond was constructed, it was designed to allow potable drinking water to constantly flow through the system with continuous make-up. As the water flowed through the ponds, it was then discharged, requiring a constant flow of fresh drinking water. This used a tremendous amount of water each year, so UT staff created a system to recirculate the water and harvest rainfall to help make up evaporative losses. Now rain-water flows through the ponds and a healthy environment for the turtles is maintained. This system saves money, and reduces our carbon footprint as less potable water has to be pumped from the city supply and delivered to UT. The program has resulted in an average annual savings of about 4.2 million gallons of water each year!

### DHFS Bottle & Can Policy



The Division of Housing and Food Service (DHFS) has adopted a Bottled and Canned Beverage Policy. The policy states that, in support of the University commitment to sustainability, funds for DHFS sponsored meetings, programs and events must go to beverages served from bulk containers. DHFS encourages staff and students to bring reusable containers to events and refill them. This policy will apply to residence hall meetings and all DHFS events. Beverages in individual containers such as bottled water, bottled juices, and cans of soda will no longer be provided from DHFS funds. However, individuals are permitted to bring their own beverages if they choose. This policy takes large strides to help reduce unnecessary waste and conserve resources!  
<http://www.utexas.edu/student/housing/index.php?site=16&rcode=0&id=2046&menu=797>

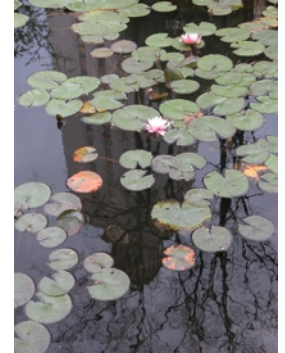
### CEC Finishes Trash to Treasure Donation Drive



The Campus Environmental Center collected materials from students moving out at the end of the semester, as well as from faculty and staff. In addition to the drop-off collection site, students picked up material from Greek houses, the Quad dorms, and the Dobie and Castilian apartments. If not for the Campus Environmental Center it is likely that much of these materials would have ended up in the landfill.

The furniture, clothing, electronics, and housewares will be stored over the summer, and will then be sold in the fall at a giant garage sale. The proceeds of the sale go to support the CEC and their numerous sustainability projects. Any materials that are not sold are donated to local charities. The CEC partnered with the University Co-op, Freescale Semiconductor, Michner Self Storage, AVIS Downtown, Penske Truck Rental, and H-E-B.  
<http://www.trashtotreasureUT.com/>

### Up Coming Events



**June 17, 12:00-1:00**  
The Green Horns will meet in ACES 2.404B. This month's meeting will focus on planning for the future.

**July 11, 12:00-1:00**  
The Green Horns will meet in ACES 2.404B.

**July 16, 12:00-1:30**  
The UT Sustainability Network will meet in the Texas Governors Room of the Union 3.116.