

ARE YOU SICK OF THE “GREEN” MOVEMENT?

Did the title grab you? Regardless of whether you were mad at me because of the title or whether you agreed with the title, Green has become a movement that is most likely here to stay. I can't even get my periodical magazines with out “Green” plastered all over the covers. This ranges from Reader's Digest and Money Magazine to my Rachel Ray cooking magazine. UGH!

At the last CAI National Conference, one of the sessions that was open for attendance was the Green Movement and CAI's commitment to that movement. They had speakers from the Audubon Institute and the national EPA in Washington, who handle the solid waste national, along with other speakers. I attended the seminar basically to vent some steam about how ridiculous the whole thing is/was, etc.

Having said that, I did learn a few things at the conference that basically **DO MAKE SENSE!** In fact, they make a lot of sense. Regardless of whether we have global warming, are running out of our precious resources, or the past generations are said to have caused all of our problems, I came away with a slightly different opinion and a commitment to do my part, *where I can*.

Below are a few of the commitments that we can make that will take very little effort and result in making a difference:

- 1) Compost where I can – Compost retains water. For every 1% of organic matter, the soil can hold 16,000 gallons of plant available water per acre of soil down to one foot deep.
- 2) Try to spot treat plant for pest vs. the mass use of chemicals that run off into our drinking water. The water that runs off from the yard and runs into the gutter does not go into the City or County treatment plants, but runs directly back into our drinking water.
- 3) Commit to the 4 R's – Reduce, Re-use, Recycle and Re-buy. – What does that mean to me? If I take my bags back to the grocery store to use them, I eliminate a bag(s) that will end up in the garbage dumps. If every one of us did that at least once a week in our community, just think of the millions of bags that would not end up in the dumps.

We *will be facing* or have already faced legislation whether on a State level or a National level. Some of the “right to” challenges that I expect us to face are listed below (there are most likely more):

- 1) Right to Dry Movement – The clothesline movement is pretty strong across the country. Why not proactively realize that this does save energy and prepare rules that will allow for clotheslines while still having the least effect on neighboring owners rights. I really don't want to look at my neighbor's underwear swinging in the breeze. Nor do I want to see it on a daily basis when I have guests.
- 2) Ham's For Action – We have already addressed the Ham Radios in past legislation and hopefully it won't surface again, Nationally, it is now surfacing big time.
- 3) Wind Energy – A company in our own State of Nevada has developed the first backyard wind turbines. To read more about the turbines, go to this link:
<http://www.rgj.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080803/NEWS18/80803014/0/PREPSPORTS25>

The Sparks Nevada company's site actually has a camera recording the sound of the turbine and you can't tell if the sound is the wind from the recording camera or the turbine, but it could be pretty loud. The company is doing very well with back orders stated as over 2,500. Currently in Nevada, any wind device is only allowed on a parcel that is 2 acres or above. With the smaller technology, expect to see it surface again.



4)

During the CAI seminar in Florida, a statement was made by one of the guest speakers, which I found *very* offensive, "Tyranny of the Majority in HOA's." Obviously a clear lack of understanding of HOA's and how they work as private corporations. Our industry can go a long way by implementing and educating our legislators on what actions our communities are taking in Thinking Locally and Acting Globally. The legislators both national and locally seem to have a willingness to legislate to override the clear majorities values and preferences in our HOA's. They even quoted statistics at the seminar that stated that $\frac{3}{4}$ of those living in HOA's understand that they are protecting their property values by living in one. No disagreement there.

What am I going to do?

- 1) Reduce Pesticides
- 2) Reuse when appropriate (I already to the extent that people in my office think I am too frugal.)
- 3) Recycle bottles, cans, bags, clothing, etc.
- 4) Look to buy materials that have been recycled when within my budget.
- 5) Plant perennials vs. annual plants as they take less water.

What are you willing to do? If you have already implemented provisions in your HOA regarding Thinking Globally and Acting Locally, we would love to hear about it. One new idea could help us all.