

UNCW No Impact Week: “A One-Week Carbon Cleanse”

September 26 - October 3, 2010

This week-long experience draws inspiration from the book *No Impact Man*, in which author Colin Beavan spends an entire year learning to carry on everyday life with little or no environmental impact. He adapts to live without electricity, non-local food and even toilet paper, in order to raise awareness for individual environmental impact. Now it's your chance to change your habits and to see what a difference no impact living can have on your quality of life.

This week will give you the opportunity to examine and reduce your ecological footprint by taking part in a short and intense period of conscious consumption. We've outlined a schedule of activities below, but feel free to check out the [No Impact How-To-Manual](#) for other ideas. We invite you to share your experiences with the campus community by posting photos, videos and commentary to the [UNCW No Impact Project Facebook page](#).

Adapted from the No Impact Experiment project guide (www.noimpactproject.org/experiment)

Sunday (9/26): Consumption

Live a fuller and happier life by buying less stuff.

Your Challenge

Plan a clothing swap or book exchange with your friends. Make a list of what you need for the week. If you need something other than food, can you find it on Craigslist, Freecycle, SwapTree or at garage sales or a second-hand store (books, furniture, clothes)? Or, plan a clothing swap or book exchange with your friends and make it into a party.

Discussion

What are some of your favorite places for great second hand finds in Wilmington?

Photos

Take pictures of your clothing swap or book exchange and post them on the [UNCW No Impact Project Facebook page](#).

Small Steps for Change

Become a more informed consumer. Send a text message to 66937 with GREEN [company or brand name] (ex: GREEN-nike, GREENdelta, GREENtarget) and you'll receive a message back from Climate Counts with that company's climate score and the company leading that industry sector. Or you can [download](#) the free Climate Counts pocket-sized company scorecard.

Monday (9/27): Trash

Find out if wasting less improves your life.

Your Challenge

Put together a no-trash travel kit for the week with: a reusable drinking receptacle for hot and cold liquids, a handkerchief/old t-shirt, Tupperware®, utensils and reusable produce bags. (If you need a bag to hold the kit, try finding one at a secondhand shop.) *Important: Remember to take it with you all week.*

Discussion

Which do you use more of in a typical week – disposable coffee cups, disposable plastic water bottles or disposable plastic utensils? Do you think the no-trash travel kit will work for you?

Photos

Post pictures of your travel kit or reusable utensil set on the [UNCW No Impact Project Facebook page](#).

Small Steps for Change

[Download](#) this free eco-font that reduces printer ink use by up to 25%. It doesn't affect legibility of the printed product.

Tuesday (9/28): Transportation

Burn calories, not fossil fuels.

Your Challenge

Find ways to carshare. If you need to head to the grocery store and the bus route isn't a feasible option, connect with people traveling to the same place as you. You can return the favor next time. Your shopping trips become social and you're reducing your impact, too. This can work not just for local trips, but big ones, too. What are your plans for fall break? Can you share a ride or carpool?

Discussion

What's the best way to find people to carshare? If you have a place to go and no one to go with – would an online ride-share page work? How about using this [UNCW No Impact Project Facebook page](#) to connect with people headed the same direction as you, who have a similar outlook, too?

Photos

Take pictures of your ride-share. Share ideas for making the trips more fun and productive.

Small Steps for Change

Increase your mileage by pumping up your tires, moderating your acceleration, and turning off the A/C. [Click here](#) for tips on proper tire pressure.

Wednesday (9/29): Food

Healthy eating can also lessen your footprint.

Your Challenge

Eat locally inspired meals. Take your food list from yesterday and calculate your carbon “[foodprint](#).” Did you eat anything grown within 250 miles? [Visit here](#) to find out what’s in season locally. Chose five items from yesterday that were not produced locally and try swapping them out for items that are produced locally. Be sure to check out the [No Impact Lunch](#) at happening today Wagoner Hall.

Discussion

Picture the perfect dining experience on campus that would fit with the *No Impact* goals - what do you see?

Small Steps for Change

Go meatless for one day a week. The tradition of [Meatless Mondays](#) began in WWI, when the FDA encouraged the rationing of meat, wheat and other staples to help the war effort. The campaign was re-launched in 2003 as a public health campaign to help individuals reduce their saturated fat intake. Currently, the UN estimates the meat industry generates nearly one-fifth of the man-made greenhouse gas emissions that accelerate climate change. What’s more, the water needs of livestock are huge, far above those of vegetables or grains. An estimated 1,800 to 2,500 gallons of water go into a single pound of beef. And, on average, about 40 calories of fossil fuel energy go into every calorie of feed lot beef in the U.S. (compared to 2.2 calories of fossil fuel for plant-based protein).

Thursday (9/30): Water

Soak up the personal benefits of using less water.

Your Challenge

Calculate your water footprint. 1 lb plastic = 24 gallons of water, 1 lb cotton > 100 gallons of water. Do you know how much water you really use? Calculate your water footprint using H2O Conserve’s [water footprint calculator](#).

Discussion

How much water do you think you would use if you had to carry your water in a pail from a local well, spring, or river?

Photos

Wilmington has many water sources. Sadly, many of them are very polluted. Take pictures of local water bodies and see how many new ones you find out about. (Cape Fear River, Greenfield Lake, Smith Creek, etc.)

Small Steps for Change

Take a military shower. A [military shower](#) is when you turn the water off while soaping and shampooing. This could cut the water use of an average shower from 17.2 gallons to 5 gallons or less.

Friday (10/1): Energy

Replace kilowatts with ingenuity – explore no-energy alternatives to accomplish your daily tasks.

Your Challenge

Power down your electrical equipment. Don’t just turn them off, unplug them! This will reduce your “vampire power” or standby power usage. The United States consumes 26 percent of the world’s energy. Of that energy, approximately 5 percent is vampire power [source: University of California, Berkeley]

Discussion

You can’t use candles in the residence halls. So, if you wanted to turn off/reduce the lights, but still get work done after dark and not use candles, what suggestions do you have for being more efficient with the electricity you use?

Small Steps for Change

Turn off and unplug your TV and/or laptop one evening each week.

Saturday (10/2): Giving Back

Pay it forward. Feel the benefits of service.

Your Challenge

Make a list with three columns: 1) all the charities you’d love to help out, 2) why you feel you can’t, and 3) how you can address and remove those barriers. Do your barriers — as legitimate as they may seem to you — outweigh the importance of participating? Remember: you needn’t become an “activist” or even a leader to be active in your community! Simply participating in an ongoing project is giving back and living your values.

Discussion

What are your favorite local nonprofit organizations? How do you help them out?

Small Steps for Change

Did you know that the UNCW Center for Leadership Education & Service (CLES) coordinates a number of volunteer and community service opportunities locally and through service trips? [Visit CLES](#) to find out how you can give back to your community.

Sunday (10/3): Eco-Sabbath

Take a break from everything. Ohm Shanti.

Your Challenge

Reflect on the week. What activities did you find most rewarding? What was most difficult? Will you continue any of the practices you tried this week?