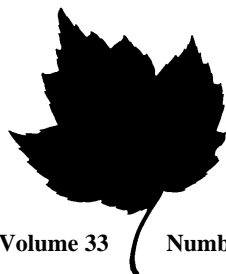


# LEAF



Volume 33 Number 3

Published by Lebanon County Conservation District, 2120 Cornwall Rd. #5, Lebanon, PA-272-3908, ext. 4

# Lebanon's Environmental Awareness Flyer

NOVEMBER 2008

## LEAF GOES ELECTRONIC

LEAF, Lebanon's Environmental Awareness Flyer, has been sent to all public and private school teachers throughout the county for 33 years. We look forward to having LEAF provide useful and helpful information for another 33 years, but beginning January, 2009, we want to make some improvements in our distribution activities.

As of January 1, 2009, LEAF will only be sent to those who 'register their subscription request.' This 'subscription request' will allow us to update our records and to distribute it only to those who are truly interested in receiving it.

We hope that the majority of you will request to receive LEAF electronically, so that we can reduce paper consumption. However, for those of you who prefer a hard copy, we will gladly send it through the US Mail or via the IU Mailing, as we have done in the past.

So, please help us update our files and conserve our resources by emailing or calling the Conservation District and confirming your "subscription request". Email Leigh at [leigh.beamesderfer@pa.nacdn.net](mailto:leigh.beamesderfer@pa.nacdn.net) or call us at 717-272-3908 ext. 112 to continue receiving LEAF.

For those of you who request LEAF electronically, please know that your email address will be maintained by the editor, Leigh Beamesderfer, and your email address will not be shared with any other agency or used for anything other than the LEAF and an occasional environmental awareness news update.

LEAF is also currently available on our website at [www.lccd.org](http://www.lccd.org) and we will continue to post every issue on our site.

## THE BENEFITS OF PAYING ONLINE

More and more people are now paying their bills online; not because of the numerous environmental benefits, but because of the convenience. Credit card statements, utility bills and quarterly investment statements can now all be 'filed' electronically and the records kept on your computer instead of in drawers or filing cabinets. Postage stamps no longer need to be affixed to an envelope and mailed. But these economic and organizational benefits of online banking pale in comparison to the environmental benefits.

According to a 2007 survey by Javelin Strategy and Research, if all U.S. households viewed and paid their bills online, it would save 16.5 million trees, reduce fuel consumption by 26 million BTUs, reduce toxic air pollutants

by 3.9 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, and reduce toxic wastewater by 13 billion gallons. All of these benefits and reductions of toxic pollutants would occur each year.

Online banking is easy and it saves money. It's a win-win situation, and more and more people are beginning to catch on and take advantage of this service. But not everyone is hooked. Some people remain leery of fraud, identity theft, and losing control over their finances.

Research has consistently shown that online bank customers have fewer fraud problems than those customers who send their checks through the mail. Online customers are able to check their accounts more than once a month via a statement, and are able to catch problems sooner and get it corrected before it becomes a major problem. Banks are also keeping historical data/statements and allowing their customers access to seven years' worth of bank statements.

Online banking is more secure now than it has ever been. So if you haven't yet jumped on board and become an online banker, what are you waiting for? The benefits—both environmentally and economically—are well worth it.

National Wildlife Magazine April/May 2008 Issue

## EPA LIMITS LAWN MOWER EMISSIONS TO STEM POLLUTION

Gasoline-powered lawn mowers are a big cause of summertime air pollution, but thanks to new rules issued in September by the EPA, they'll soon be much cleaner.

The long-awaited regulation requires a 35% reduction in emissions from new lawn and garden equipment beginning in 2011. Big emission reductions are also required for speedboats and other recreational watercraft, beginning in 2010.

The reductions will be the equivalent of removing one out of every five cars and trucks on the road, according to Bill Becker, executive director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies.

The EPA estimates 190 million gallons of gasoline will be saved each year when the rules take effect, and more than 300 premature deaths prevented annually. The rules will also reduce emissions of nitrogen oxide, a major source of nitrogen to the Bay, and a key component of smog.

"These standards help fight smog in our neighborhoods and waterways as we continue to improve the environmental landscape," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson.

The EPA estimated the cost of implementing the reductions at \$236 million a year, which will likely make its way to consumers in the form of more expensive lawn mowers and other machines.

Industry groups said exact figures were difficult to calculate, but the California Air Resources Board has estimated that walk-behind mowers would cost 18 percent more under the new regulation, while the price of commercial turf care mowers would rise about 3 percent.

Environmentalists welcomed the regulation, which applies to lawn care engines under 25 horsepower and to a full range of gas-powered personal watercraft. The rule requires a 70 percent reduction in emissions from recreational watercraft.

"These new clean air standards will reduce dangerous smog pollution from high-emitting gasoline engines while helping to cut costs at the gas pump," said Vickie Patton, the Environmental Defense Fund's deputy general counsel.

The reductions on lawn mower emissions will probably be accomplished by adding catalytic converters that reduce pollution from exhaust but add to the cost.

The Bay Journal—October 2008

  
**Flex** Your Muscle  
Get out &  
 **VOTE!!**

## BUS POWERED BY HYDROGEN FUEL

Her name is Jen, HydroJen, and if folks at the Da Vinci Science Center are successful, children and adults throughout the Lehigh Valley will begin associating her fluorescent green jumper and shocking blue hair with the product some say is the country's best hope to kicking its addiction to fossil fuels.

HydroJen is the face behind a \$2.4 million campaign to introduce the Valley to the possibility of a hydrogen-fueled world. The money came from the Federal Transit Administration and will be used to showcase two 11-passenger buses whose emissions are nearly all water, the creation of an exhibition focused on the element and to provide programming to the public.

The hydrogen-fueled buses, two of only 30 produced by the Ford Motor Company, were unveiled at Da Vinci in Allentown, then brought to Air Products and Chemicals Inc. in Trexlertown for the official opening of the company's

hydrogen-fueling station, the second in the state.

The buses will be used to shuttle employees and visitors at Air Products and employees, patients and visitors at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest for a year. That's how residents can get an up-close introduction to the vehicles. At Da Vinci, visitors can learn more about how the fuel is produced and what challenges exist before it can be distributed on a mass scale.

"The idea of emissions being water, that's something that's totally radical," said 12-year-old Aditya Misra, who attended the ceremony at Da Vinci along with other Swain School eighth-graders.

Air Products has been working on hydrogen technology since the 1960s, recounted Lehigh Valley Hospital President Elliott Sussman during his remarks.

To create hydrogen fuel, the element, which doesn't exist on its own, must be separated from water or natural gas. Two ways to do it are steam reforming, which produces greenhouse gas emissions (the harmful ones) or electrolysis, a way to split the water that remains expensive.

Since 1993, Air Products has filled 75,000 tanks at 90 hydrogen fueling stations in 15 countries. It's new one in Trexlertown looks just like a one-pump gasoline station.

U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent said he envisions the day when Interstate 78 from the Valley to New York becomes a hydrogen highway, similar to one under way in California. Plans there call for the construction of 50 to 100 fueling stations for hydrogen-powered cars by 2010.

But hydrogen on such a large scale could be costly. The National Research Council has said for hydrogen to really take off, \$200 billion in private and industry dollars would need to be infused into research, development, distribution and construction of fueling stations.

Therein lies the challenge, said Da Vinci interim Executive director Frank Schweighardt. To be successful, hydrogen must be produced efficiently, transported cheaply and vehicles produced inexpensively, he said.

Still, Schweighardt predicted in five to 10 years, the buses would be available for mainstream use. Of all the alternative fuels, it "has the highest potential," he said.

On Monday, the Swain students sat patiently through several speeches from officials celebrating the initiative. At the end, stealing a hallmark from the popular show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," just before they unveil the revamped residences, the students said in unison: "Drivers, start the hydrogen buses!" With that the two engines whirred to life, making a sound similar to a dishwasher.

Written By Arlene Martinez, The Morning Call News, Oct. 2008



**EDITOR: Leigh Beamesderfer,**  
**Lebanon County Conservation District**  
Website: [www.lccd.org](http://www.lccd.org)