

# School of Dentistry

## Environmental Health & Safety Newsletter

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### **ENVIRONMENTAL**

*What's going on in SOD...?*

#### **Green Office Program**



#### **What is it?**

UCLA's Green Office Certification Program encourages UCLA staff and faculty to join in working towards a more sustainable university. As part of UCLA Sustainability, the program seeks to build on the achievements of UCLA's own Center for the Study of Women (CSW) and the success of Green Office programs at other campuses.

#### **How to participate?**

Staff & faculty of campus departments can participate in an informal audit process about their

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### **HEALTH**

*For your everyday life...*

#### **DRINKING WATER**

##### **BASICS**

Getting enough water every day is important for your health. Healthy people [meet their fluid needs](#) by drinking when thirsty and drinking with meals. Most of your fluid needs are met through the water and beverages you drink. However, you can get some fluids through the foods that you eat. For example, broth soups and foods with high water content such as celery, tomatoes, or melons can contribute to fluid intake.

Water helps your body:

- Keep your temperature normal
- Lubricate and cushion joints
- Protect your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues
- Get rid of wastes through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements

Your body needs more water when you are:

- In hot climates
- More physically active
- Running a fever
- Having diarrhea or vomiting

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office practices. Each office can designate a sustainability ambassador to be the point of contact and coordinate with a UCLA Sustainability intern and complete a Green Office Evaluation. The evaluation will provide tips for each office to become more environmentally-conscious and attain Green Office certification.

The certification is based on office practices that help decrease energy consumption and waste in each department. The in-office evaluation adheres to a point-system, with set points assigned to various office attributes or behaviors. Based on the feasible actions for each office, certification is awarded according to the following scale:

- Bronze- 50% of feasible points earned
- Silver- 65%
- Gold- 80%
- Platinum- 100%

### Reasons to participate?

1. In our efforts to be the first School on campus to have all of our laboratories and offices certified green
2. Campus recognition
3. Cost Savings
4. Reduce Environmental Impact

### UCLA's goals (Climate Action Plan)

- UCLA'S Climate Action Plan focuses on 3 categories for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction:
  - energy use reduction and efficiency;
  - mobility/transportation
  - behavioral changes
- Reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels by 2014
- Reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020
- UCLA will achieve both goals by 2012
- Behavioral change is expected to contribute 1-2% of UCLA's emissions reductions

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## **SAFETY**

*What's new in Dentistry?*

### Latex Allergies



Natural rubber latex is a common ingredient found in many consumer products, such as balloons, balls, appliance cords, hoses, hot water bottles, pacifiers, swimwear, toys, tires, condoms, rubber bands and shoes. Latex also can be found in many medical or dental supplies and devices, such as masks, gloves, syringes, catheters, dressings, tape and bandages.

Unlike some consumer goods made from synthetic (manmade) latex, such as house paint, natural rubber latex is derived from a milky substance found in rubber trees (*Hevea brasiliensis*).

While many people come in safe contact with latex-containing products every day, some susceptible individuals have developed hypersensitivity to proteins derived from natural rubber latex, which can cause allergic reactions.

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Any issues on your mind?

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If you think you are not getting enough water, these tips may help:



- Carry a water bottle for easy access when you are at work or running errands
- Freeze some freezer safe water bottles. Take one with you for ice-cold water all day long
- Choose water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. This can also help with weight management. Substituting water for one 20-ounce sugar sweetened soda will save you about 240 calories
- Choose water when eating out. Generally, you will save money and reduce calories
- Add a wedge of lime or lemon to your water. This can help improve the taste and help you drink more water than you usually do

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/nutrition/index.html>

### **Causes and Symptoms**

Latex allergy generally develops after repeated exposure to products containing natural rubber latex. When latex-containing medical devices or supplies come in contact with mucous membranes, the membranes may absorb latex proteins. The immune system of some susceptible individuals produces antibodies that react immunologically with these antigenic proteins.

This is a concern particularly for health care workers who are constantly exposed to latex examination or surgical gloves and other latex-based health care products. The powder used on latex gloves can absorb the gloves' latex proteins and cause increased exposure to latex. In addition, as the gloves are removed, the powder may become airborne, coming in contact with the eyes, nose or mouth.

When exposed to latex proteins, a latex-sensitive individual, whether a health care worker or a patient, may experience minor symptoms, such as hives or nasal congestion. Severe cases may result in anaphylaxis, a dangerous systemic reaction that causes a drop in blood pressure, difficulty breathing, swelling of the throat, tongue and nose, and even loss of consciousness and could be life-threatening if unattended. Emergency medical attention is needed at the first sign of anaphylactic reaction.

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## **Energy/waste facts**

- Along with the other campuses in the University of California system, UCLA has a target of aiming for 75% diversion in 2012 and **100% diversion or Zero Waste by 2020**
- The UC Green Building/Clean Energy Policy commits the University to promoting the purchase of more efficient, recycled-content, and renewable products
- Office buildings use approximately 19% of all energy consumed in the US
- Though comprising only 5% of the world's population, Americans consume 26% of the world's energy and generate 30% of the world's garbage
- America uses about 15 times more energy per person than does the typical developing country
- UCLA produces, on average, about 50 tons of waste per day, not including sewage. Landfill represents about 50% of UCLA's waste
- Every ton of paper recycled saves enough energy to heat and air-condition the average American home for at least 6 months
- The UCLA drive-alone rate is 55% - the regional LA drive alone rate is 75%

<http://www.sustain.ucla.edu/news/article.asp?parentid=6058>

## **90 minutes to a greener office**

This is a volunteer program but is not very time consuming. In approximately 30 minutes for the initial meeting, 30 minutes to complete to the Green Office Program Calculator and 30 minutes for the concluding meeting with the sustainability intern. **In 90 minutes you can help save energy, reduce waste and help UCLA achieve its Sustainability goal.**

## **Am I at risk?**

- Although anyone can develop an allergy to latex, the number of people who do is quite small considering the millions who are exposed every day to consumer products that contain natural rubber latex. Individuals with an increased risk are those who have spina bifida and have undergone numerous surgeries, those who are prone to allergies, health care workers, rubber industry workers and others who have regular, continuous contact with latex.
- If you have had a prior allergic reaction to latex-containing objects, consult your physician who can try to determine the cause. Your physician also can determine the best strategy for dealing with a latex allergy. Until that is done, avoid contact with all latex products. Inform your dental office staff so that your medical history can be updated and appropriate precautions can be taken before your next dental visit.

For more information:

<http://www.ada.org/5102.aspx?currentTab=2#top>