



## Green Guide for Health Care Newsletter

June 2006

### Green Guide Tips

Simple "How-To's" for Using the Guide

#### How To Reach Beyond Simple Credit Fulfillment

The three examples below, taken from the *Green Guide for Health Care's* Pilot project database, demonstrate how a guiding principle can lead a project team to synergies that cut across professions and facility departments, enabling the project to achieve high performance outcomes using the *Green Guide*.

#### Connection to Nature

Establishing a clear connection to nature at all levels led one *Green Guide* Pilot project to a design that encompasses protecting the site's natural vegetation, implementing stormwater management on site, and maximizing daylighting and views. While the project budget precluded structured parking, the architect cut the building footprint in half by designing a two-story building with all patient beds on the second floor. A portion of the site was designated a natural preserve, and dense tree plantings in the parking lot provided a natural view across the parking area's tree canopy to the natural preserve. Patient rooms were oriented to benefit from views of the natural preserve. All stormwater on site is directed through the parking lot to a constructed wetland that treats the runoff and allows it to filter into a retention pond, where it is stored for use as irrigation and cooling tower makeup. A therapeutic walking path weaves through the wetlands and the natural preserve. Consistent with the focus on the natural preserve, the supporting vegetation is native and drought-resistant, designed to blend in with the preserve's native wildlife habitat.

#### A Healing Hospital

Another *Green Guide* Pilot project focused on reducing toxic chemicals as a pathway towards creating a patient-centered healing environment. The materials targeted for reduction/elimination in the new facility's building materials, furnishings, medical equipment, and facilities operations include: asbestos, dioxin (through PVC avoidance), fiberglass, formaldehyde, mercury, and flooring finishes with high VOC emissions. Adopting a precautionary approach to achieve a healthy environment, non-toxic building materials were selected using criteria that evaluated both emissions and content. Where possible, natural products sourced from rapidly renewable materials replaced conventional synthetics, such as wheatboard in place of plywood in casework and natural cotton insulation in place of a conventional fiberglass product. The attention to health-focused strategies also extends to construction of a vegetated roof that reduces the facility's contribution to polluted stormwater run-off, and an alternative transportation program for visitors and staff. Facility operations echo the same theme, including programs such as greener cleaners and organic food.

#### Continuous Improvement

A final example from the *Green Guide* Pilot program illustrates the power of incremental implementation. Having already implemented several environmental programs in its operations, a renovation project provided the hospital with the opportunity to begin to implement green design and construction practices. Using the same incremental approach that led to their successful achievement of an Energy Star rating and Hospitals for a Healthy Environment's (H2E) prestigious Mercury Free award, the hospital has begun to apply the *Green Guide for Health Care* on several upgrade and renovation projects. They also plan to certify every building on campus with the LEED® for Existing Buildings green rating tool. By combining green construction and operations into a single continuous improvement program with clear, measurable goals, the hospital has successfully implemented projects that reap multiple benefits, such as reducing both energy and water consumption by installing a dynamic control for the chilled water plant. This project expanded into other water and energy projects, such as a recommissioning program for major air handling systems and an investigation into possible use of rainwater for landscape irrigation. Likewise, programs for mercury elimination and a HIPAA-compliant paper recycling program have expanded into a recycling program that has incorporated construction waste into an already impressive list of recyclables: aluminum, cardboard, furniture, light bulbs, kitchen oil, medical instruments, metal, motor oil, paint.

### News

- 1. Green Guide for Health Care teleconference series on vacation for the summer.** Check back in for the October 6 presentation on Healthy Food. The *Green Guide* offers teleconferences through the Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E) website. Visit [www.gghc.org](http://www.gghc.org) for updates and scheduling information.
- 2. Support the Green Guide for Health Care!** Visit the [Supporters](#) section of the *Green Guide* website for information on how to support our work. All donations to the *Green Guide* are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
- 3. Attend the ASHE Annual Conference to hear the latest on the Green Guide Pilot program!** The conference will be held July 9-12 in Boston, MA – the GGHC session will take place on July 12 from 9:15 to 10:30. Register at: <http://www.ashe.org/ashe/education/annual2006/index.html>.
- 4. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has released a new monthly newsletter** on the nursing profession and hospital care for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To learn more, visit: <http://rwjf.org/global/signin.jsp>.
- 5. Green Guide version 2.1 has been released in print and on our website.** Visit the *Green Guide* [Download](#) page to purchase printed copies through our Online Store or to download the electronic PDF version for free.