



Compact Fluorescent Bulbs

The swirling bulb of a Compact Fluorescent light bulb (CFL) can be an efficient energy saver that you can take advantage of. The average CFL will use about 75 percent less energy than the standard incandescent bulb and last up to 10 times longer.

I use CFL's at home that produce 75 watts of illumination but need only about 18 watts to achieve that. Most of the energy of the standard incandescent bulb is lost as heat, so the bulb is hot when handled while on. A CFL loses so little energy as heat that it is not hot when handled while

on.

There are many advantages to lighting your house with CFL bulbs. They are available at Wal-Mart, so they can be easily purchased. They will cost more than incandescent bulbs, however, but remember that they will last much longer than incandescent.

Also, CFL's do contain a small amount of mercury, so there are certain clean-up guidelines that should be followed if you bust a bulb in your home. These guidelines are to assure that you do not spread mercury around or contaminate foods.

The amount of energy saved over the course of a year is signifi-

cant, so they are very earth-friendly bulbs that reward your pocketbook, as well. There are also LED lights that are even more efficient, but they cost more and are more difficult to obtain. You might look into them, however, if you want to save even more money and use less energy while doing it.

Lastly, maybe you don't want to stop using all of your incandescent bulbs all at once. Fine, then replace one bulb in your house with a CFL, and you'll be glad you did. Make it one of those bulbs that you tend to use frequently, and it will still pay off.

Composting at Your Home

Last summer the KEO performed a survey about solid waste disposal on the reservation. According to that survey, a number of you felt the size of your trash container was inadequate for your family needs. To reduce the vol-

ume of your weekly trash load, you could try composting in your backyard, feeding most of your food scraps to the compost pile. This newsletter will feature consecutive articles on composting to help guide you through the steps. To

get started you simply need a place to put the compost and the 3 elements needed in all compost piles: 1) browns (leaves, twigs) 2) Greens (veggie waste, fruit, coffee grinds), and 3) water.

EPA Website

ABOUT THE GREEN CLAN

This is an introductory newsletter from the Kickapoo Environmental Office (KEO) which will come to you quarterly with information of a local environmental concern. This newsletter is designed to inform you about such general topics as global warming, recycling, acid rain, or it may be specific to address issues such as saving energy by using more efficient light bulbs, or what to include in a home emergency kit.

Once we've finished running all the copies, then we'll distribute this newsletter by making it available at frequented points of interest on the reservation: the Trading Post, Senior Citizens, etc.

We hope you enjoy the articles in "The Green Clan", and we invite you to give us your feedback at 486-2601. You can speak to Luke, Tom, or Merle about this newsletter on most any weekday.

Acid Rain

some information obtained from EPA Website

Farmers and gardeners often send in soil samples to the county extension office to determine the pH levels of their soil. It needs a pH balance of 7 to be good soil, but it can be close to 7 and still be okay. If it's a pH 1 or maybe a pH 13, then there would be problems in trying to grow things. Sometimes the soil can become too acidic, and sometimes the atmosphere can also become too acidic. An acidic atmosphere can become acid rain, and a host of problems stem from areas where acid rain falls to the ground.

At power plants across the nation, we burn fossil fuels to create electric power, and the burning of fossil fuels emits sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide into the air. These chemicals

float around and combine with other chemicals already in the atmosphere to form acidic compounds. Some of the acidic compounds combine with atmospheric moisture then falls to the earth in the form of acid rain. The acid rain affects the acid levels of lakes, streams, and soil. It doesn't even have to fall to be harmful. High acid levels in the moisture of the air can do much harm to tall tree structures.

Acid rain is not a major problem here in the Midwest; it is a significant problem in the Northeast where there are many more power plants. To combat the problem of acid rain, the power plants in the Northeast are required to use filtering devices called "scrubbers" to reduce the amounts of

pollutants entering the atmosphere. Scrubbers are costly, but they have been effective.

Once sulfur dioxide enters the air, it can travel for hundreds of miles before it settles to earth. The Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for monitoring pollutant levels across the U.S..



Making a Compost Bin to Help Reduce Trash at Home

It's winter, so it's a good time to start on your compost bin, then maybe you can have a rich batch of compost by the time you dig for your garden.

I've seen people use hay bales, plywood, pallets, wooden fence or lattice to make a compost bin. You can simply make a pile of compost with no walls, but it's nice to keep it contained. You will also need to cover it with a tarp of some kind

so that it will stay moist or not become saturated.

It should be in a shady spot to help protect it from drying out. You may want to buy a pitchfork or shovel to turn the pile periodically, and a garden hose to add water when needed.

Browns, Greens, and Water are the three ingredients of any compost pile.

It will take two or three months before you get dark and rich compost ready to use, but you'll feel good about it when you have it and can add it to home soil or gardens.

You can share it with others who are also gardening. See if it doesn't beat store bought chemicals.

Things to Put in a Compost Pile

some information obtained from EPA website

Put in fruit and veggies, sawdust, shredded newspaper, grass clippings, tea bags and coffee grinds, leaves, hay and straw, eggshells, clean paper, nut shells, cotton and wool rags, and animal manure—especially cow or horse manure since it has the right kind of beneficial bacteria in it.

You can also drill 1/2 inch holes in the bottom and sides of a plastic garbage can

to make a compost bin, then you can keep it covered with a lid. It still has to be turned, and it should be insulated in the cold weather.

Things to not put in your compost pile.

Dairy products which can create odors and attract flies and rodents.

Pet manure which might contain para-

sites, bacteria, and viruses harmful to humans. Also, keep out meat and fish bones. Do not put in fats, grease, or lard which will attract pest. Call us if you want



Kickapoo Environmental Office
(913) 486-2601