



green light

The quasi-quarterly newsletter of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light
Volume 1, Number 3
September 2005

Executive Director's Report

Well it has been a busy busy summer! We have been working hard on our energy audit pilot program, starting a new duct-sealing initiative, going to the national Interfaith Power & Light conference in Washington, DC., and doing lots of educational programs as well. And there are all sorts of additional activities right on the horizon, including a whole host of things to do the first weekend in October. You can read about all of those things and more in this edition of Green Light!

New Website!

Our new website is up and running. Check it out and tell us what you think!

Visit www.gipl.org.

Christmas in July? No! It's Earth Day in October!

I know what you're thinking: "Wasn't Earth Day in April?" But the first weekend in October is turning into Earth Day redux, with several important events and activities. Be sure to come October 7 to our special screening of *Kilowatt Ours*, a great film about electricity generation, its effects on our environment, and how we can use less energy. A panel discussion will follow.

Want to take action to help creation? Participate in National Change-A-Light day on October 5 and switch out those energy-hogging incandescent bulbs with power-saving compact fluorescent lights.

Want to save money while doing it? Georgia is having a tax free holiday for EnergyStar appliances and CFLs October 6-8.

See the announcements throughout this edition of Green Light for more information on these activities.

And if you want to help recapture some of that CO2 that electricity generation puts in the air, check out the Trees Atlanta Annual Tree Sale on October 8 in Piedmont Park (www.treesatlanta.org).

GIPL Movie Night: *Kilowatt Ours* – October 7th!

On October 7, GIPL will sponsor a showing of "*Kilowatt Ours: A Plan To Re-Energize America*" (Jeff Barrie—2005), followed by a panel discussion of the connection between faith and energy usage and the ways that faith communities can be good stewards of creation through energy efficiency. The film will be shown at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (1790 LaVista Rd. NE, Atlanta, Ga. 30329). Gathering begins at 7 pm, with the film starting at 7:30 pm. The panel afterwards will include the film maker, Jeff Barrie, as well as GIPL's Executive Director, Katy Hinman, and others.

"*Kilowatt Ours*" offers an uplifting and hopeful message of solving problems of air pollution, water pollution, and global warming through energy conservation and renewable power. The film traces the wires from our light switches to the power source, revealing how electricity is generated in the southeastern United States, and then demonstrating outstanding examples of solutions that are helping to improve the quality of life in the southeast today. "*Kilowatt Ours*" also provides practical ideas for consumers to lower their energy bills, showcasing successful examples of homes, businesses and schools in the southeast that are saving hundreds -- even thousands of dollars annually on their energy bills. "*Kilowatt Ours*" will give you handy tips to cut your own energy bills dramatically.

If you can't make it to our screening, there will be two other chances to see the film. The Sierra Club is sponsoring a screening at Landmark Midtown Arts Cinema at 7:30 pm on October 6 (www.georgia.sierraclub.org/letstalk/film_series.asp), and the film will be shown at the Sustainable Atlanta Roundtable meeting at 7:30 am on October 7 (www.southface.org/web/programs&events/SART/sart-menu.htm). For more information on the film, check out www.KilowattOurs.org.



Georgia Interfaith Power & Light Committee Reports

Policy Committee

GIPL's Policy Committee focuses on issues with our utilities and government. This means a lot of meetings out in the public but also a lot of action, including the duct sealing initiative with Georgia Power Company, which is detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Another move forward occurred when Georgia Power signed a contract with DeKalb County to start generating electricity from burning landfill gas at their south DeKalb landfill. This will be the first green energy produced under Georgia Power's new green power program. However, there is a shadow over the project as Georgia Power decides whether or not to get independent, third party accreditation for its green power program. All of the advocates strongly favor accreditation, but the company so far seems to be reluctant to do so. Efforts continue to persuade them to be accredited, which would then allow all parties to enthusiastically support the new program. We'll be keeping you posted with more details as events unfold.

Lastly, as if to illustrate the hazards of non-accreditation, the City of Savannah is applying to the Public Service Commission to add the burning of municipal solid waste as a legitimate green energy source. They would sell the energy to Savannah Electric and Power Company, which would then seek to collect a premium from its customers to pay for the program. As of this writing, Savannah Electric and Georgia Power are silent on the application but everyone knows that the nationally recognized third-party accreditor absolutely forbids the burning of municipal solid waste as a green energy source. Therefore, if the application is approved, as far as GIPL is concerned, the green energy program in the state is in deep trouble because we can no longer be assured that green is green. Then anything will be allowed including, perhaps, burning old tires to generate electricity. GIPL has applied to be an intervener in the case and will give strong testimony against it.

Stay tuned or even join our efforts if you want to be heard on issues of concern to us all. For more information on the policy committee contact Woody Bartlett (wbartlett@mindspring.com) or Katy Hinman (khinman@gipl.org).

Congregational Activities Committee

The Congregational Activities Committee is constantly developing new materials that faith communities can use to help their congregants become more involved in energy conservation and more aware of the link between creation care and our faith journey. We are working on developing classes, activities, web sites – all to support this work.

Come and join us.

If you're interested in teaching a Sunday school class, or developing material to be used with children or adults, let us know.

If your congregation would like to have one session or a series of classes on Care for Creation, one of us would be delighted to come and teach. Most recently, classes have been held at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Northside Drive Baptist Church, All Saints Episcopal Church. and St. John's Episcopal Church.

For more information on the Congregational Activities Committee, please contact Carol Bartlett (carolbart@mindspring.com) or Katy Hinman (khinman@gipl.org)

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has completed a new Congregational Covenant, and started efforts for recruiting new congregations. Right now, we are concentrating on Episcopalian and Methodist congregations, but we welcome congregations of all denominations and faiths. We have also developed a new membership packet, which includes our informational CD, as well as other information about GIPL and action tips on what you can do to conserve energy in your home and congregation. We are now working on a new Individual Covenant for congregation members to sign and commit to actions within their homes and workplaces to help protect creation.

If you are interested in helping out with the membership committee, contact Katy Hinman (khinman@gipl.org) or Debbie Shew (dshew@episcopalatlanta.org).

Advent and Hanukkah CFL Kits Available!

It may not seem like it, with the 90 degree temperatures we've been having, but Advent and Hanukkah are not far away! We'd love to get your congregation involved in our compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) projects. You can raise money for missions and other activities while protecting God's creation by selling Advent or Hanukkah CFL kits.

The Advent kit includes 5 CFLs and the study guide "Preparing for a New Light." Congregants change one light in their house to a CFL every Sunday of Advent and on Christmas Eve when they light the candles in their Advent wreath. The study guide includes scripture passages, a prayer, and information on electricity generation for each Sunday. The Hanukkah kit includes 8 CFLs and the study guide "One for Each Night." Congregants change one light to a CFL every night of Hanukkah when they light the candles in their menorah. The study guide includes a prayer, a light bulb joke, and information on electricity generation for each night of Hanukkah.

If you are interested in selling these kits in your congregation, contact us at 404-588-9978 or khinman@gipl.org. You can see samples of the study guides on our website at www.gipl.org/CFLs.html.

New Congregational Covenant

We have developed a brand new Congregational Covenant, and we want your congregation to join in! Our Membership Committee has worked hard on improving and updating our Congregational Covenant, and we'd love for you to take a look. A copy of the new covenant can be found at www.gipl.org/join.html.

Meet & Greet for Congregational Representatives!

In early November, we will be having a get-together for our congregational representatives. This will give everyone a chance to meet other people who are excited about creation care and share ideas on getting your congregation involved. Keep your eyes open for an e-mail with date, time, and location in October.

If you would like to become the congregational representative for your congregation, e-mail khinman@gipl.org.

National Interfaith Power & Light Conference Report

This year, the national Interfaith Power & Light conference was held in Washington, D.C., July 16-19, at the College of Preachers on the grounds of the National Cathedral. There were representatives from most of the 18 state Interfaith Power & Light organizations, as well as from The Regeneration Project, the parent organization of the national IP&L movement. The conference gave us a chance to meet with others who are involved in the work of creation care, to reiterate our spiritual commitment to the work we do, and to learn more about what actions we can take to be good stewards of creation through energy efficiency and conservation. We look forward to collaborating with our counterparts in other states to expand the programs and activities we offer.

On the last day of the conference, we had an opportunity to meet with members of our congressional delegation. We met with Congressman John Lewis (5th district), as well as with legislative assistants for Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney (4th district), Senator Johnny Isakson, and Senator Saxby Chambliss. We had the opportunity to educate them about Georgia Interfaith Power & Light and our mission as well as encouraging them to support green energy and creation-friendly energy policies.

\$20 Power Credit From Georgia Power

Want to save electricity and earn A \$20 credit while doing it? If you are a Georgia Power Company customer, you can sign up for their Power Credit program – a program designed to control the amount of power used by your home's air conditioner. It works like this: Georgia Power installs a switch on the outside of your home that is connected to your air conditioner. When the demand for electricity peaks in the summer (weekdays between noon and 7 pm), GPC sends a signal to the switch to reduce the length of time your air conditioner runs. The change to your home's temperature is minimal and there's no cost. Participate and get a \$20 credit. You'll even get an additional credit every time the service is used.

For details go to www.southerncompany.com/gapower/powercredit/powercredit.asp.

Virtual March on Washington

Interfaith Power & Light is a featured partner in the Virtual March to urge our leaders to take action to stop global warming. Global warming is one of the gravest threats to God's Creation. As people of faith, we are called to be stewards of Creation. We must take responsibility for our actions and work together for this beautiful world filled with grace and wonder. Please sign up for the march as a friend of IP&L by visiting www.stopglobalwarming.org/campaigns/sgw/partner/interfaith_power_and_light/



ENERGY STAR Change a Light Day – October 5

The US Environmental Protection Agency and US Department of Energy are sponsoring the ENERGY STAR Change a Light, Change the World Campaign which will kick off October 5 with ENERGY STAR Change a Light Day. The campaign asks people to take the Change a Light Pledge to change one light at home or in the office to a light that's earned the government's ENERGY STAR for energy efficiency, such as a Compact Fluorescent Lightbulb (CFL). If every American home made this one-light change, it would be as good for our environment as taking 1 million cars off the road.

This is a great opportunity to encourage Americans to take a simple step that can make a big difference by saving energy, thereby, increasing energy reliability and improving our nation's energy security. Also, by generating less energy, we will reduce air pollution. Please join us in the ENERGY STAR Change a Light, Change the World Campaign.

Help your congregation get involved by placing announcements in newsletters and bulletins, telling people to visit the ENERGY STAR website, and even sponsoring a sale of CFLs. CFLs are available at hardware stores and home improvement stores, or through GIPL. If you are interested in sponsoring a sale, contact Katy Hinman (khinman@gipl.org) or Carol Bartlett (carolbart@mindspring.com). For more information on CFLs, including a fact sheet that details the energy and monetary savings you can realized by switching out incandescent lights for compact fluorescents, go to the GIPL website (www.gipl.org/CFLs.html).

Look for the Change a Light Pledge and related materials on the ENERGY STAR website www.energystar.gov/changealight, updating in mid-September.

ENERGY STAR Tax Free Holiday – October 6-9

If you've been waiting to purchase energy efficient appliances and light bulbs, the first weekend in October is the time to buy!

From October 6th through 9th, 2005, Georgia will enjoy a state sales tax holiday on the following ENERGY STAR-certified products: dishwashers, clothes washers, room air conditioners, ceiling fans, incandescent or fluorescent light bulbs, dehumidifiers, programmable thermostats, and refrigerators. To earn the ENERGY STAR, products must meet strict energy efficiency criteria set by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Department of Energy. Since they use less energy, these products save money on electricity bills and help protect the environment.

For complete details on the tax holiday, please visit www.eere.energy.gov/regions/southeast/news_detail.html/news_id=9064

Energy Audit Program Report

Our energy audit pilot program is a continuing success. We have now completed three audits, with a fourth underway (North Avenue Presbyterian Church) and two more approaching (Druid Hills United Methodist and Kennesaw United Methodist). We have also been following up with our original audit congregations, doing educational programs and helping to plan ways for them to start implementing some of the audit recommendations.

We are now working on ways to expand this program, so that even more congregations can get expert advice on energy efficiency and conservation measures. If your congregation would be interested in having an energy audit done, drop us an e-mail at info@gipl.org, and we will keep you posted as we expand the program.

Duct-Sealing Project

GIPL and Georgia Power Company are working out an agreement for helping homeowners inspect and seal their home air conditioning ducts. The agreement, struck as part of the Georgia Public Service Commission's recent planning process on promoting efficiency in the use of electricity, is called an Affinity Group Marketing Plan.

GIPL will promote duct sealing in its member congregations. Contractors trained and certified by Southface Energy Institute will do the actual work. Georgia Power will prepare promotional materials and reimburse GIPL a small amount for marketing costs. It seems like a win-win for everyone, including God's creation, because, to the extent that people's home ductwork can be made more efficient, the Earth will not suffer the ill effects of the generation of electrical power.

If you are interested in this program, e-mail us at info@gipl.org.