

Green Sanctuary Task Force - Summary of Fall 2008 Survey Results

Green Sanctuary volunteers distributed a survey at FCU's annual Country Faire in early September. Additionally, the survey was collected after Sunday services at Hospitality Hour. In total, 84 surveys were collected from FCU congregants, residents of Littleton and surrounding towns. The average score (indicating positive environmental behaviors) was 21.11 out of 37 behaviors tabulated. It seems Littleton is a fairly environmentally-savvy town, especially members of FCU. Most Littleton residents have the basics of recycling down, according to the results. Most respondents are environmental shoppers, although less than half purchase biodegradable, non-toxic cleaning products. As well, most respondents are not "closing the loop" by buying recycled products.

When it comes to environmental practices that hit the wallet, such as energy consumption in the home, almost 100 percent are turning off lights and appliances when not in use. Most adjust their thermostats down in the winter and their air conditioners up in the summer.

Better than half are replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs or light-emitting diode bulbs. When it comes to hot water, respondents are less willing to take shorter showers and use less hot water in the laundry. Energy Star appliances are a hit with the respondents. In contrast, less than one-third have installed low flush toilets.

When it comes to reducing energy used for transportation, many respondents are planning ahead to take fewer, shorter trips in the car. About half claim to drive fuel-efficient cars and many have changed their driving habits to improve mileage (slowing down, no jackrabbit starts and stops). Few eschew driving alone in favor of walking, carpooling, biking or taking public transportation.

Green citizenship was the weakest category, with the exception of donating to environmental organizations. Less than half have contacted an elected official about an environmental issue or gotten personally involved in an environmental organization.

Most respondents in Littleton compost their yard and food waste and many are organic gardeners. On a positive note, of 50 Littleton respondents, 35 were interested in future environmental events.

Recommendations based on these results are to hold workshops on making your own non-toxic cleaning products, environmental investing, and green lawn practices. As well, a letter-writing campaign to local, state and/or federal officials seems to be in order to get congregants accustomed to green citizenship communication with elected officials.