



# PRESS RELEASE

**Center for Older Adults**  
800 Cheshire Road, Suite A  
Delaware, Ohio 43015

**Contact: Donna Meyer**  
(740) 363-6677 or (800) 994-2255  
donna@growingolder.org

This news release can be found and downloaded from the "News Release" page of the Council for Older Adults web site at [www.growingolder.org](http://www.growingolder.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 22, 2010**

## **The Council for Older Adults celebrated Earth Day by reviewing a year of "going green"**

Each day, the Center for Older Adults is visited by hundreds of individuals. They come to work out, eat lunch, exercise in the pool or participate in the many activities offered by Senior Citizens Inc. of Delaware County. Each day, fifty five employees come to work at the Council for Older Adults, using office supplies and the resources necessary to provide a system of in-home care for older adults. Last year, management took steps to implement policy resulting in a greener activity center and workplace, a lighter ecological footprint, a healthier and more productive place to work, dine and enjoy activities, and good news for the financial bottom line.

"Our new facility on Cheshire Rd. brought lots of new challenges in terms of our usage of electricity, water and gas, and the new, large production kitchen also uses an enormous amount of food, material and other resources," explained Bob Horrocks, executive director of the Council for Older Adults. "We wanted to find ways to reduce, reuse and recycle wherever possible and to generally raise awareness among our staff to be sensitive to our impact on the environment. This also saves taxpayer dollars by reducing expenditures on energy, office supplies, and other budget items," he said.

The first lesson that the Council learned is that there was no one "big" cure-all that would solve the problem. "Progress has been dependent on everyone pitching in to do the little things that together make a big difference. We all have learned to turn the lights out when we are the last one to leave a room. We think twice before we print a document or use the copy machine. When documents need to be copied we use both sides of the paper, and if we have a piece of paper with a blank side it is put with others and turned into notepads by volunteers," Horrocks said.

Other small fixes have taken more of an organizational approach. The Council's website has been redesigned, which allows much more information to be viewed online by customers rather than the Council needing to print and then send documents through the mail. Staff has all been provided with blue receptacles just for recyclables. The Council now recycles all paper, newspapers, cardboard, plastics, aluminum and tin cans. Over 600 pounds of tin cans are recycled every month from the kitchen alone, and the recycling effort has resulted in the reduction of the number and cost of garbage picks-ups to only once per week. Styrofoam containers have been banned from the building. All Meals-on-Wheels containers and "to go" containers from the Council's café are made from biodegradable materials. In house, food is served on plates with real silverware in order to avoid disposable products.

Horrocks credits Facility Manager Scott Early for going the extra mile to hold the line on electrical usage. Light sensors have been installed, hallway lighting in the administrative area of the building has been reduced, automatic timers are used to turn off lights in the parking lots when not needed, and the heating and air conditioning systems are constantly being monitored and adjusted. In addition, a new ultraviolet light filtering system was installed in the exercise pool, which has resulted in less usage of chemicals and a dramatic reduction in the need to drain the pool. The combination of all of these small steps has added up

to real savings. Comparing each month to the same month a year earlier, the Center's electricity usage was reduced by 8.51 percent during the 13-month period ending March 31, 2010. "Scott is always finding ways to tweak our systems, and it is paying off in lowering our electrical usage and related cost," Horrocks said.

The combination of all of these small efforts has helped make a big difference at the Center for Older Adults, according to Horrocks. "I know that we still have a way to go when it comes to our environmental footprint, but we are all much more sensitive to the issue than we were a year ago, and our efforts not only make us feel good but also are making a difference on our bottom line. One of our future environmentally friendly efforts will include looking for ways to transfer all food scraps to a commercial composting operation. This will require some procedural changes and may turn out to be too expensive, but testing will allow management to make an informed decision about how to implement it."

Horrocks' next big dream is to have solar panels installed on the roof and maybe a wind mill or two in the yard, but this will need to wait for a generous donor or perhaps a government grant. Until then the Council's staff will continue to look for new ways to improve and to work on the small stuff.

The Center has a large receptacle in its parking lot for paper and cardboard, and the public is welcome to drop off these items in the receptacles. In fact, the public's contribution to the Council's recycling program can have more than an environmental impact; the Council earns money for each ton of recyclable paper it collects. (The Center for Older Adults is located at 800 Cheshire Rd. just off US Route 23 in Delaware.) A complete list of all green initiatives may be found on our website – [www.growingolder.org](http://www.growingolder.org).

The Council for Older Adults of Delaware County is a non-profit local organization responsible for planning, coordinating and developing local services for older adults, their families and caregivers in Delaware County. The Council is the home of SENIOR CHOICES, the local one stop center for information, assistance and in-home services. The Senior Choices program is supported in part through the local senior services levy.