



SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

The Washington DC Sustainable Business Network's Newsletter

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Questions / comments:
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**THE WASHINGTON
DC SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS NETWORK**

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Hello and welcome to the second edition of the [Washington DC Sustainable Network's \(DCSBN\) Sustainable Solutions](#) newsletter! Our bi-monthly newsletter is designed for those interested in leveraging the power of business to help make Washington DC a better place to live and work – now and in the future.

What you can expect: *Sustainable Solutions* will bring you the latest news on CSR, and how it impacts the local region, provide legislative and regulatory updates on CSR issues affecting business, detail goings-on in DC that affect the sustainability of local communities, provide highlights of sustainable businesses, and events of interest. We will also provide you with information that you can use from our growing network: DCSBN stays on top of the best practices for our members in order to share best practices and case studies with you.

Membership & Sponsorship Opportunities: DCSBN, a recently launched non-profit corporation in Washington DC, is working to enhance the role corporate social responsibility (CSR) plays in building better businesses and communities. If you are interested in learning more about membership click [here](#), or sponsorship click [here](#) for more details, or contact Mike Mielke at mike@dcsbn.org.

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- Recent & Upcoming Events

- "LEGAL-EASE": Legal/Regulatory Developments affecting the "Triple Bottom Line"

- Latest CSR Headlines: "The Business of Green"
- Call for Volunteers

WHAT YOU CAN DO / HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Attend [events](#); Let us know [what you are doing](#) so we can tell the whole community – share your experiences, best practices and how-to information; Invite us to [tour your organization](#) or business; [Join the network](#) – as an individual, business, non-profit; Get involved with one of our Board committees; Contact us about [academic and cross-sectoral](#) partnerships; Get involved with our [CSR Symposium](#); Tell your [organization](#) about us!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



The Willard InterContinental Hotel – Seeking to Set the Standard for Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry in the Nation's Capitol, and Beyond.

Note: *This is the first in a series of articles on the Willard InterContinental Hotel's effort to integrate CSR and sustainability concepts into the way it does business. In the future we will explore, in-depth, specific, practical strategies the hotel uses to "do well by doing good."*

Lovingly and faithfully restored, the Willard Hotel is again a crown jewel on Pennsylvania Avenue. During the year-long [20th Anniversary celebration](#) of the re-opening of the historic landmark, where Julia Ward Howe wrote "the Battle Hymn of the Republic", President Ulysses S. Grant coined the term "lobbyist," and the reverend Dr. Martin Luther King finished his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, it is appropriate to note that the historic hotel is seeking to make history again – this time by setting the standard for sustainability in the hospitality industry. (Continued on Page 3)

UPDATES

Social Investment Forum is reporting that shareholder resolutions requiring environmental, social and economic responsibility are on the rise.

- An estimated 180 social and environmental shareholder resolutions either already have come to votes or are scheduled to be decided at U.S. corporate meetings for the first half of 2006, compared with 169 for the first half of 2005.
- The number of corporate governance resolutions that have come to votes or are under consideration at U.S. corporate meetings through June 30, 2006 stands at about 400, up from 383 for the corresponding six-month period in 2005.

The Forum's analysis is based on data tracked and supplied by the Social Issues Service and the Governance Research Service of Institutional Shareholder Services (ISS), a member of the Forum.

Key trends in social and environmental resolutions identified by the Social Investment Forum include: **global warming** (32 resolutions filed for January 1 to June 30 meetings, compared with 34 for the same period in 2005 -- but with 2006 proponents withdrawing 12 proposals after reaching agreements with management); **toxics and pollution reduction** (22 resolutions filed in 2006, compared with 12 in 2005); and calls for **disclosure of political contributions and donations** (43 resolutions filed in 2006, compared with 39 in 2005).

STAY TUNED FOR UPCOMING EVENTS!
More information coming soon about DCSBN's next educational program and networking event. This event will address legal issues related to sustainability in the DC area.

Also on the agenda: a sustainable cuisine event! Enjoy a fabulous dining experience and, at the same time, learn about how one local restaurant incorporates sustainable practices into its business.

Check out SustainAbility's SustainAbility Showcase for products and ideas which help us live our lives in more sustainable ways. They go to show that with such creativity, passion and entrepreneurial flair, sustainable development can be fun. Examples include **Belu Water**, Bottled mineral water company that invests 100% of profits in clean water projects and **Freeplay Radio**, a radio that runs on the sun.

"LEGAL-EASE"

Regular legislative and regulatory updates on CSR issues affecting business! DCSBN has partnered with McDermott, Will, and Emery LLP to provide monthly legislative and regulatory updates on issues affecting the business community as it relates to ethics, environment, labor issues and worker's rights, and economic transparency and accountability, including financial reporting and shareholder's rights.

McDermott
Will & Emery

Highlights from May's editions of "Legal-Ease" include:

Maryland Government Makes Power Moves

In the face of rising power costs, Maryland government will spend \$100,000 to install a solar energy system in Annapolis office building. For more information, visit <http://baltimore.bizjournals.com/baltimore/stories/2006/05/15/daily19.html?surround=lfm>

Safety Day 2006

The State Employee Workers' Compensation Services division of the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management will sponsor the sixth annual Safety Day on Thursday, May 11, 2006. For more information, visit <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/workerscomp/safetyday2006/safetydaymain.html>

Help is on the Way! DC Government Online Service Request and Tracking System

DC City service requests, from street light and traffic signal repairs and trash removal, can now be filed online. Users can also track the government's response to their issues. For more information, visit <http://dc.gov/registration/login.asp?appid=3&target=http%3A%2F%2Fsrc%2Ecdc%2Egov%2Fccc%2FcccValidateUserDefault%2Easp>

Join the discussion on CSR and how it can contribute to helping to make the Washington DC metro region a better place to live and work; **check out our [blog!](#)**



DCSBN IS RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS!

DCSBN is recruiting volunteers to help with event coordination and for our regular Networking and Better World Through Business events as well as our annual CSR Symposium. If you are interested in opportunities to network with individuals dedicated to building better businesses and communities, for a good cause, contact us at dcsbn@dcsbn.org!

The Willard InterContinental Hotel – Seeking to Set the Standard for Sustainability in the Hospitality Industry in the Nation’s Capitol, and Beyond (*Continued from Page 1*)

The Willard InterContinental is staking out a leadership position on sustainability, believing that it adds direct value to its bottom line as well as its reputation. The General Manager of the hotel – Hervé Houdré – is the driving force behind the move to incorporate sustainability into the way the hotel does business. ([For more on sustainability and business, visit our blog](#)). With the help of Paul Hurst, Director of Facilities, Mr. Houdré’s ultimate objective is to make sustainability an integral part of the Willard experience; to so deeply imbed the norm of sustainability that it is *the* way that business is successfully done, no matter who is the General Manager of the future. Hervé is not an idealist, but rather someone who passionately believes that sustainable business can make a difference while also realizing commercial success.

The hotel has crafted an integrated strategy, produced with the help of [SustainAbility](#), that comprehensively maps out the objectives, strategy, and tactics necessary to help make the hotel more sustainable. The strategy is not managed in a top-down fashion; rather the hotel has launched an intranet site full of information on the subject for employees – entitled Sustainable Development the Next 100 Years. During quarterly general sessions, where everything is shared and open for discussion, including the hotel’s finances, staff are encouraged to give feedback on how to make the hotel better. Further, most employees are part of cross-disciplinary teams which continually examine the way things are done in order to put forward and implement tangible approaches to make the hotel more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable. In the ten months since the strategy was developed it has grown to influence almost everything – from the food served, materials and machines employed, suppliers used, to the systems that help effectively manage the hotel.

Hervé is convinced of the necessity, for business and larger social welfare, to make the hospitality industry more sustainable. Once proved at the Willard InterContinental, Hervé plans to take the approach to the three other InterContinental hotels he manages, in Baltimore, New York, and Boston, and from there to the InterContinental Hotels International – part of the largest hotel chain in the world, with over 3,700 properties around the globe. Since tourism is the planet’s leading industry, it is hard to overstate the potential environmental, social, and economic impact of the effort if it is embraced by other companies. Further, by introducing sustainability concepts to guests as part of the Willard experience, people may be encouraged to make changes in their lifestyles when they realize they too can live comfortably *and* sustainably. Clearly excited by a future full of potential, Hervé believes this really is the best way – the only way – to do business and to live.

LATEST CSR HEADLINES

From the New York Times’ recent Special Section on “The Business of Green”

- [What’s Kind to Nature Can Be Kind to Profits](#): According to an [article](#) in the New York Times’ recent Special Section on “The Business of Green,” (May 17, 2006) green is in fashion – the new black, the must-have, this decade’s version of business imperatives like “total quality management” or “management by objective.” Business is going green for many reasons, not just the most obvious one, public image. There is also competitive advantage. “You don’t just compete on cost of quality of new products; you can also compete on environmental performance,” said Donald B. Rosenfeld, a senior lecturer at the M.I.T. Sloan School of Management. At first, he said, companies simply dealt with regulations; later, they anticipated regulations. “Now I think that a lot of this is evidence that companies are viewing environmental capabilities as a strategic criterion by itself,” he said. In other words, add environmental impact as an element of consumer choice. “Norms change,” Mr. Rosenfeld said.
- [Companies and Critics Try Collaboration](#): In a [recent New York Times article](#), Environmental Defense wants chicken farmers to stop using antibiotics to spur growth. It wants strict controls on the budding field of nanotechnology. It wants fewer gas guzzlers on the road. Not long ago, when it was still the in-your-face Environmental Defense Fund, the group would have looked for a company to sue, boycott or at least protest. Nowadays, it is looking for companies that can help it out. “Our informal motto used to be ‘Sue the bastards,’ Fred Krupp, the group’s president, said. ‘Now our official tagline is, “Finding the ways that work.””
- [Shaping Restaurants to Be Models of Efficiency](#): Here’s food for thought from [the New York Times](#): if restaurants were automobiles, they would be Hummers. That’s because the restaurant business wastes more energy than any other industry in America. But one organization in California, the Food Service Technology Center, has been trying to turn gas-guzzling eateries into energy-efficient hybrids. For 20 years, the center has been “road-testing” restaurant equipment, as Don Fisher, the center’s project manager calls it. Some customers, which include companies like McDonald’s, Marriott, Darden Restaurants and Safeway, turn to the center routinely for testing. Over time, the center has developed 35 procedures for measuring energy consumption and efficiency in 50 categories of restaurant equipment.

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