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AYEA is a program of the National Wildlife Federation (www.nwf.org)

Demonstration Project: "Lighten Up" or "Bright Ideas"
Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb Donations

Problem: Selling and donating compact fluorescent light bulbs saves energy. Replacing a 75-watt incandescent bulb with a 20-watt CFL will reduce your consumption of electricity by roughly 550 kilowatt-hours over the life of that bulb. In relation to a coal-fired power plant, this amounts to nearly 500 pounds of coal (about the size of a couple garbage cans) that didn't need to be burned to power your bulb. That reduction translates to 1,300 pounds LESS carbon dioxide and 20 pounds LESS sulfur dioxide released into our atmosphere.

Goal: A "Lighten Up" project could take several forms. One option could be securing donations of the bulbs from lighting and hardware stores, and then partnering with a community group that could help place the light bulbs in low-income neighborhoods. Many low-income families cannot afford the higher initial cost of CFL bulbs. Another option is selling the bulbs at a higher price to friends and supporters and using the profit to buy bulbs to give to disadvantaged families. One student group had the goal of getting one compact fluorescent light bulb to every student in their school district.

Activity: A group could solicit donations from lighting stores and business, explaining the benefits of CFL bulbs and that the bulbs would be placed in low-income neighborhoods. Another activity could be selling t-shirts and bumper stickers related to global warming, and then using the funds to buy light bulbs to donate. A group could also sell CFL bulbs to friends and supporters and ask them to pay for the cost of at least one other bulb to be donated. A group could generate a brochure about the benefits of CFL bulbs, how to use them, how to dispose of them, and how else people can reduce their emissions. This brochure could be distributed with every light bulb.

Inventory: The resources needed would depend on the route taken. Either a group would need people to buy the bulbs in bulk for resale, or people would need to go around to businesses and solicit donations. The group would have to organize and publicize a light-bulb sale. The group would also have to make contact with a community service organization that could help get bulbs into target households. Printing materials and a designer would be needed for the brochure, or the group could use an existing pamphlet on the subject.

Promotion: One group of teens used Earth Day as the day to sell donated CFL bulbs on the sidewalk. They promoted the sale as an Earth Day event. Another group contacted Oprah after her show on global warming to ask for publicity for their effort to get one light bulb to every student in their state. Many church groups use church events as light bulb sales. A group could

place a public service announcement in the newspaper explaining the project and asking for donations. A group could also hold a light bulb party or event, call the media for media coverage, and educate an audience about the benefits of CFL bulbs. Many groups have sold t-shirts or bumper stickers with global warming-related messages to help pay for bulbs and publicize the issue. A group could also use the AYEА newsletter and other conservation group publications to publicize the campaign.

Celebration: If the group partnered with a community service organization, a joint celebration could be organized. Volunteers could receive promotional t-shirts or bumper stickers for free. Food donations could be solicited for a post-campaign party.

Celebration: One group had a goal of getting light bulbs to 2500 families by 2010. For a shorter-term project, the group could set a target goal as to how many light bulbs they wanted to distribute over the timeline of the project. Again, this is flexible. At the end of the campaign, the group could measure its success against its initial distribution goal.

Related Links

<http://cflbulbs.com/compact-fluorescent-bulbs-faq.php>

<http://www.uuworld.org/news/articles/lightbulbprogramabrightidea3421.shtml>

<http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:RdXE3L8VEaIJ:www.greenontario.org/solutions/compactcalculator.pdf+Lighten+Up+light+bulbs&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=50>

<http://www.greenontario.org/solutions/compactcalculator.pdf>

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20060526005>

<http://www.interfaithpower.org/cflight.htm>

http://www.energytrust.org/residential/ehp/lfl/Entire_flyer_older_students.pdf

http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:qTjgU8PGRcwJ:www.energytrust.org/residential/ehp/lfl/Entire_flyer_older_students.pdf+Lighten+Up+light+bulbs&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=4

<http://uuministryforearth.org/sppnews/sppv5n1.pdf>

<http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:0nkR4ETI9j8J:uuministryforearth.org/sppnews/sppv5n1.pdf+3-2-1+Bright+Idea+Program&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=11>

<http://www.cleanenergydurham.org/RESOURCESlightbulbs.htm>