

Greenest Practices for South Loop Condos

Culled from our three categories of Winners: Green, Greener, and Greenest.

NOTE: Since 2011, when this list was compiled, many of the practices below have become commonplace in South Loop condo buildings. There are always new opportunities to “Go Greener.” Let us know what your building is doing!

What are the basics that my Condo Association can start with?

Recycling

- Put a recycling bin on each floor. Include signs detailing what can and cannot be recycled.
- Create a Recycling Center for bins to hold all recyclables: glass, paper and cardboard, plastics (#1 & 2, at a minimum) and metal.

Energy

- Change all Stairway and Exit fixtures to LED.
- Change all garage lights from Fluorescent (compact fluorescent lamp, CFLs) to LEDs
- Reduce the wattage of interior hallway lights.

Supplies

- Use earth-friendly Green Seal cleaning products, such as those with 0% VOC (volatile organic compounds).
- Purchase cleaning supplies from a local company. For example, Portion Pac.
- Management office can print and copy on 100% recycled paper and use both sides of the sheets.

Transportation

- Support bike usage by promoting bike sharing.
- Set up a free air pump station in the Recycling Center for residents' bicycle tires.
- Ask the City of Chicago to install bike racks in front of the building.

Plants

- Use native plant species in landscaping.

What else can you do?

Green Team

- Establish a functional Green Team or committee to:

- Provide monthly "Green Tips" to residents via e-newsletters and bulletin board postings. For example:
 - o Recycle cell phones, printer ink cartridges and gift cards @ best buy.
 - o Recycle plastic bags at Jewel/Marianos.
 - o Purchase as much as possible in bulk.
 - o Share books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions.
 - o Cancel your junk mail
- Provide input on purchases for property and projects to ensure that we are being as environmentally green as possible.
- Host an annual Spring Clean, where residents donate items to Salvation Army.
- Look for solutions to make the condo building and operations more green-friendly.
- Create a "Rehab Your Unit" booklet that will offer green products to the residents so that they may build with sustainable products.
- Provide friendly green tips to residents that include purchasing green-friendly pet products.
- Train the staff on how to recycle and encourage them to use positive recycling habits.
- Establish an employee orientation/new resident information package that includes information and training on green practices.
- During move-in orientations, have management inform residents of the recycling programs and have them visit the garbage chute room and Recycling Center.
- Direct new residents to the Green Team website to view past recycling tips.

Recycle

- In the Recycling Center, collect non-working electronics, alkaline and rechargeable batteries, fluorescent (CFL) bulbs, old paint and old eye glasses.
- Provide pick-up or drop-off services for materials not collected by waste hauler.
 - o Recycle fluorescent (CFL) bulbs via City of Chicago or recycled-waste hauler.
 - o Drop off / donate the working electronics to the Salvation Army (during the spring clean).
 - o Drop off batteries to any Chicago Public Library or Walgreens Drug Store in the city.
 - o Drop off old paint to the City of Chicago.
 - o Drop off old eye glasses to the Lion's Club.
 - o Hire an electronics recycling company to pick and recycle non-working electronics.
 - o Recycle Christmas trees into mulch or wood chips after the holiday season.
- Use email notifications/newsletter instead of paper.

- Order recyclable cups for the Fitness Center and trash bags that made from recycled plastic.

Energy

- Replace electric-powered exercise bikes in the Fitness Center with battery powered bikes.
- Train residents on "green-friendly" thermostat use.
- Purchase digital thermostats locally and in bulk (to reduce the price) and sell at cost to unit owners.
- Start a thermostat replacement program where staff replaces manual thermostats with digital programmable ones.
- Use energy efficient lighting: photovoltaics (solar panels), and/or renewable energy.
- Install a night-time programmable set back for the Fitness Center A/C unit and economizers on the A/C units for the elevator mechanical rooms.
- Install GREEN STAR appliances and fixtures or replace with Green Star appliances and fixtures when it comes to replace them.
- Hire an energy consultant to advise on how to reduce power requirements.

Heating / Cooling

- Encourage residents to move down thermostats in the winter and up in the summer.
- Encourage residents to install tints or energy-saving window treatments on windows to reduce power requirements for summer cooling and to hold heat in, in the winter.
- Green Team to outline the benefits of installing energy saving window tint and provide residents with the name of a company to contact if they wish to install the tint.
- Hire an energy consultant to advise on how to reduce cooling and heating consumption and power requirements.
- Install frequency drives on dryer and toilet exhaust fans, cooling towers, and make-up air units for the residential hallways.
- Install a high SEER air conditioning unit(s).
- Replace a gas boiler with a high energy efficiency boiler (replace 10,000 BTU gas boiler with four 2,000,000 BTU high energy efficiency boilers).
- Install a rooftop-cooled air chiller, which is used during low-demand days

Transportation

- Provide a bike room.
- Establish a bike club.
- Establish a mobile bicycle repair team to come to the building to repair residents bikes.
- Donate parking space(s) for I-Go or other car-sharing business.
- Promote green transportation, such as: transit benefit for employees; ride sharing; car pooling; preferred parking for Zero Emission Vehicles, etc.
- Support shared resources, such as: bikes, grocery carts.

Plants

- Establish a garden committee.
- Grow a victory garden (edible plants for consumption).
- Compost vegetable matter/yard waste.
- Use compost as ground covering for our landscaping instead of mulch.
- Have a green roof.

Water

- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and/or other water conservation devices.
- Lower the temperature of hot water heaters.
- Install soaker hoses for exterior landscaping.
- Use a water-use matrix developed by the Green Team that instructs the staff on how and what time is best to water the landscaping.
- Divert rainwater off of a roof, to be used for watering landscaping.
- Reduce use of potable water for landscaping; use rain barrels, bioswales, and/or gray water landscaping.

Remodeling

- Support earth-friendly rehab and remodeling projects, such as using: 0% VOC paint/adhesives/sealers; recycled carpet; etc.
- On hallway renovation projects, recycle old carpet. Choose new carpet that is made from recycled material and/or is recyclable.
- Use 0% VOC paint for the walls, 0% VOC carpet glue and 0% VOC base board glue.
- Replace baseboards made from recycled materials. For example, 52% recycled rubber.

Other

- Provide biodegradable doggie poop bags at all doggie stations.
- Establish other earth-friendly pet initiatives.

- Email all building notifications to residents. Use Survey Monkey for resident surveys.
- Conduct a Reserve Study and request that the company provide green friendly recommendations for future equipment replacements.
- Regularly and prominently promote green practices for staff/residents.