



Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
*Protecting Creation, Generation to Generation*



## Greening Synagogues Menu of Options

### FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

*(Select at least two from the following)*

#### **Energy Conservation**

Using utility bills from the past two years, GreenFaith will work with a Synagogue representative to determine your baseline level of energy use and the resulting environmental impact. We will then arrange for a comprehensive energy audit of the facility to be performed by a highly experienced Energy Auditor. The auditor, Mr. Andrew Rudin from the Interfaith Coalition on Energy ([www.interfaithenergy.com](http://www.interfaithenergy.com)), has surveyed more than 1,500 houses of worship nationwide over the course of his 22-year career, and nearly twenty for -affiliated GreenFaith congregations in the last eighteen months.

Each audit will identify specific opportunities for conservation retrofits at the facility. The audit recommendations are published in a detailed Energy Savings Report which is given to the synagogue. GreenFaith will work with facility representatives to implement the audit's recommendations, striving to reduce the synagogue's energy usage to levels at least 10% below the original baseline. The energy conservation measures reduce the synagogue's environmental footprint while also reducing energy costs.

#### **Lighting the Way**

By participating in *Lighting the Way*, your synagogue could become one of the first 25 houses of worship in New Jersey to install a solar electric system on your facility. In so doing, you will not only be helping to reduce the production of harmful greenhouse gases normally emitted when fossil fuels are burned to produce electricity, but you will save money in the process! Through this unique program, you can install a solar electric system with no up-front cost, while also remaining cash-flow positive throughout the entire 20-year process of paying for the system. Once your system is installed, GreenFaith will work with project leaders to help organize, publicize, and lead a dedication ceremony and renewable energy workshops.

#### **Adopt-a-Windmill**

More than 95% of the electricity that we consume is generated by burning fossil fuels or by splitting nuclear atoms. All of these processes can have harmful side effects. New Jersey residents have other options, however. By purchasing power from Community Energy, a Pennsylvania-based alternative-energy company, your synagogue and its members can displace the "dirty" electricity you use with power that is instead generated by wind-generated turbines. Through Community Energy's **Adopt-a-Windmill** campaign, commitments by 300 faith-based households and religious facilities to purchase wind-generated electricity will result in the official dedication of an entire wind turbine to the New Jersey faith community.

#### **Waste Reduction**

GreenFaith will connect interested institutions with a professional waste consultancy firm to make substantial reductions in their solid waste stream, a step that will benefit facilities financially while protecting the environment. A house of worship that selects this option will receive a waste audit that profiles its current waste stream, and waste-reduction training for staff and volunteers. Participating facilities will also consider making a two-year commitment to work with the waste-consulting firm. Under this agreement, the facility would reduce trash-hauling costs due to lower waste volume; modeling how environmentally preferable operations can reduce costs.

## **Toxics Use Reduction**

In caring for and maintaining their property, many institutions employ contractors who utilize chemical fertilizers, synthetic pesticides and toxic cleaning products. Many of these products endanger public health when they run off into the water supply, and many also pose threats to children who play on the facility's grounds. Through the Toxics Reduction program, GreenFaith can help participating synagogues reduce the deleterious impacts of outdoor property maintenance and the use of toxic cleaning products by arranging for consultation with a New Jersey-based national expert on Integrated Pest Management (a system for controlling insect and rodent pests without the use of toxic chemicals), and/or a consultation with an organic lawn care firm (where available).

## **EDUCATION AND WORSHIP**

*(Select at least two from the following)*

### **Sermon & Liturgy**

COEJL will offer sample sermons and study materials for six Torah portions throughout the year. The materials will express environmental themes inherent in Judaism, enabling rabbis to speak and teach effectively on environmental issues. COEJL will also help congregations integrate environmental themes into annual festivals such as Sukkot and Tu B'shvat. Rabbis at all participating synagogues will commit to speak publicly about Judaism and the environment on at least two occasions during the year. Resources developed by COEJL Rabbinic Fellows Fred Scherlinder Dobb and Lawrence Troster will support this area of activity.

### **Adult Education**

In an effort to raise environmental awareness among adult congregants, COEJL will invite two outside speakers to speak on topics including Judaism and environmental ethics, local environmental issues, and environmental policies. COEJL will provide resources and staff to lead a four-session series of text studies on Jewish teachings on the environment. COEJL and GreenFaith will also conduct a two-part seminar on sustainable living, which will consist of evening lectures on simple steps families can take to reduce their environmental footprint. One of these two sessions will focus on energy conservation and the use of renewable energy.

### **Congregational School Education**

In collaboration with the Teva Learning Center, COEJL will develop and help implement a Jewish environmental curriculum for children in grades two and six, which can be integrated smoothly into congregational schools. The four-week curriculum will teach stewardship of the environment as a central aspect of Judaism, rather than as a separate, isolated issue. COEJL will provide a half-day training in environmental education for congregational educators who choose to implement the new curriculum, and will offer a Shabbaton weekend for children.

### **Family Education**

Drawing upon themes and content presented in the children's curriculum these activities will then be adapted to enable entire families to participate. COEJL will develop holiday and Shabbat activities incorporating the themes of sustainability, appreciation of nature, intergenerational responsibility, and stewardship of the Earth. COEJL will organize events designed to involve families in the greening of synagogue operations. Member families can also participate in GreenFaith's Interfaith Environmental Restoration Days, which provide participants with opportunities to experience the beauty of nature while simultaneously protecting local ecosystems. These events bring together groups of volunteers from different faith traditions for several hours of activity that offer both active, hands-on labor in service to environmental restoration, and a quiet, contemplative period of interfaith liturgy and meditation.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY**

*(Select at least one from the following)*

### **Environmental Health and Justice Tours**

These tours offer participants the chance to tour an environmentally blighted urban area and to view first-hand the threats to poor communities posed by toxic dumpsites, air and water pollution, industrial operations, and inadequate open space. The tours, which GreenFaith has conducted successfully in several New Jersey cities, will be led by local activists and will be open to local clergy, congregational members, and community residents.

### **Legislative Updates**

Each synagogue will receive an environmental briefing containing information on important New Jersey and national environmental legislation. Participating synagogues will receive regular electronic bulletins about important legislation relating to environmental health and justice, and will work with COEJL's Washington, D.C. representative, Hadar Susskind, to see that their voice is heard by the appropriate government representatives.