

# COPPERTOPPE

## INN & RETREAT CENTER

### COPPERTOPPE ENERGY CONSERVATION, RECYCLING AND SUSTAINABLE LODGING PROGRAMS

*Coppertoppe Inn & Retreat Center is committed to continually evaluating our operations in order to employ more environmentally-friendly methods of providing the best service to our guests. We believe that each initiative we pursue with the help of our guests, vendors and partners, no matter how small, helps to preserve our beautiful state, our environment and our quality of life for future generations.*

All owners, employees, contractors and service personnel are informed of our commitment to being environmentally and socially responsible. Our policies are posted in our information center and in our room books as well as being described in multiple places on our website. Our annual environmental report narrative is shared in our room books and linked on our website [www.coppertoppe.com](http://www.coppertoppe.com).

We are one year into a 3-year project as part of the **NHDES Environmental Leadership Initiative**.



*Aspiring Leaders* is the first tier of DES's new, voluntary, non-regulatory Environmental Leadership Initiative ([www.des.nh.gov/eli](http://www.des.nh.gov/eli)) that recognizes the many voluntary efforts of businesses and other organizations in New Hampshire that improve our environment and

economy. *Aspiring Leaders'* objectives are simple: to encourage individuals, organizations and businesses to do more than the required minimum to improve our environment and economy.



*Caring for our guests ... naturally*

We proudly participate in the **New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Association Sustainable Lodging Program**. This creative program is run by volunteers dedicated to increasing awareness of environmental impacts within the second-largest industry in NH. Through email news, seminars, collaborative conferences and personal visits, these eco-warriors bring us to a higher level.

### Summary of Conservation Efforts and Practices in 2009:

Things we did to help lower electrical and fuel usage included: installing lined or double drapes and opening-closing them according to weather to optimize heating or cooling; turning off lights, TVs and refrigerators in vacant rooms; using energy-efficient CFL bulbs to replace old bulbs; putting the hot tub to sleep between uses; batching baking and oven use; installing a 3-temperature water dispenser to minimize guests' running water to get it cold for drinking; using insulated carafes to serve coffee and hot water instead of using electric hot plates; and stacking pots to cook multiple foods on one flame.

We have been diligent in our efforts to reduce energy use, especially fuel oil. Unfortunately, a furnace malfunction last year caused excess oil usage. We believed it was repaired, but when heating season started in the fall of 2009, it began to fail again. We changed service companies and hope this time it will be correctly fixed. Finances for the proposed solar systems have been more of a challenge than expected. We are exploring new incentive programs and new technologies, as things are changing.

We are tracking utility costs year-to-year (see attached), and the good news is that our conservation efforts have somewhat offset the furnace malfunctions. This gives us hope that next year we will have actual reductions in usage. We observe that despite adding an outdoor hot tub, and having greatly increased guest traffic, electrical usage has stayed level thanks to our conservation efforts.

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Our recycling program is robust and compulsive. We provide multiple waste baskets in guest rooms to separate burnables from recycling. We have five categories of recycling plus compost in the kitchen and additional bins for clean recyclable materials in the entry porch. Guests are very cooperative and delighted to learn more about how to recycle and what materials are appropriate for which categories. We use biodegradable, non-toxic cleaning supplies and minimize the use of chlorine bleach or any caustic chemicals. Kitchen and bathroom sanitization are done with quaternary ammonia solutions, which are non-toxic and appropriate to the purpose. Frayed or faded linens and towels are donated to the humane society animal shelter or other appropriate non-profits. Household items that are fit to be passed on are donated to local agencies. Of the car-load of materials carted to the transfer station weekly, about one bag contains actual “garbage” burnables not good for recycling, reusing or compost.

For gardening and landscaping, we emphasize native plants that do not require regular watering. When we do need to water seedlings or special plants, we usually draw water from the ponds by bucket. We grow our own herbs and some vegetables, and harvest wild berries. We do not use pesticides; we rotate plantings to discourage recurring pest problems. We use local manure and compost for fertilizing, and select plants that help support the birds and the bees (and other wildlife). We hope to expand our kitchen garden in 2010. The design incorporates overflow water from our pond which is filled by overflow from our artesian well and natural slope drainage. Our landscape maintenance vendor, Simple by Nature, mows and trims, but does not apply fertilizer or pesticide. We weed or spot-fertilize with manure. We provide guests with non-toxic insect repellants, sun screens, lotions, mosquito nets and sun hats.

When possible, we use local sources for groceries and grow what we can. We purchase used (vintage) furniture and accessories, we repair and refurbish, and seek items made locally. We do not provide plastic water bottles to guests, but we have washable bottles to lend or sell. Our goal is to reduce not only our carbon footprint, but our overall environmental impact in every way possible.

We change guest linens every three days unless guests decline the change. We provide low-wattage towel warmers and hanging bars to extend towel use. We provide ceramic and/or high-quality washable plastic water cups in bathrooms, as well as small paper cups. We only use disposable plates for special occasions, and the wiped plates go into recycling. We avoid use of disposable plastic utensils. We wash and recycle guests’ take-out containers, or pass them along to a local soup kitchen, or re-purpose them for gifts or donations. We re-use small containers for seed-starting, berry gathering and craft activities.

Happily, most of the appliances were relatively new and durable when we bought the property, and have not needed to be replaced yet. As this is an owner-operator property, when we do need to replace them, there is little risk of purchasing outside our intention of purchasing Energy Star appliances. Toilets, showers, sinks, fixtures and appliances are inspected between guests and repaired as needed.

By our example and our advocacy, we strive to educate and inspire everyone we meet. Being good caretakers who are mindful of the consequences of our actions is not new to us. However, the process of tracking and reporting for these two programs is a good exercise that is helping us set new goals.

In 2010 we plan to install motion-activated lights in guest rooms and hallways. If costs are within means this year, we hope to install more solar-powered-motion-activated outside lights, solar electric panels, and/or a solar hot water heater and holding tank. We are exploring on-demand hot water for rooms.