

Newsletter 87 – Late Summer 2003

Is this the first time you saw our newsletter?

Even though we have published 86 previous issues of this newsletter for the last 21 years, why would this one be the first you have seen? The answer is that we purchased a new and more complete mailing list of congregations in and around Philadelphia. Since 1982, we have been updating an old list. But there have been many zip code and address changes. So, we made a big upgrade by purchasing a new mailing list in the summer of 2003.

Now, here is a question for you.... How many religious congregations are within a 50-mile radius of Philadelphia City Hall? The answer is 7,272 – according to the mailing list company! We are fairly certain that about 3,000 of you are new to us. By the way, there are about 388,000 congregations in America.

For our new readers, here are descriptions of who we are and what we do. ICE

What is the Interfaith Coalition on Energy?

After the second oil price shock in 1979, the religious denominations in Philadelphia decided to take their energy fate into their own hands, so they started the Interfaith Coalition on Energy (ICE). Early energy surveys stimulated congregations to reduce their energy costs by an average of 14%. With those results, ICE received seed funding from Philadelphia foundations. In the intervening years, we became sustained only by people of faith, like you. Today, only congregations and denominations fund ICE – no corporation, utility, foundation or government funding. And we are non-profit... serving your best interests only. We are governed by an 18-member volunteer advisory board. Check us out! ICE

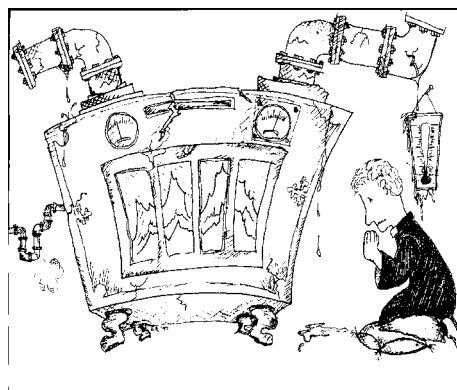
What does ICE do?

We analyze energy used by congregations just like yours, to figure out how to reduce the use and cost of electricity and fuels. Since 1980, we have kept track of how much energy congregations use. So... when you ask for our advice, it is based on real data from thousands of real buildings owned by congregations. We charge for surveys, and can tell you beforehand how much yours would cost based on the size and complexity of your buildings. Just call us at 215-635-1122.

We learn what works. By studying the data we gather, research by others, trade shows, and dozens of trade periodicals, we continually learn what works and what does not. Right now, for example, many people are interested in radiant floor heating, geothermal energy, solar energy, new lighting, and wind energy. Because we are continuously looking for what lowers energy use and what does not, we can advise you best about controlling energy use.

We publish this newsletter – *Comfort and Light* – four times a year... mostly during the heating season. If you don't want to receive this newsletter, please ask us to remove you from the mailing list.

We have a website – We list all our publications and many other things on our website www.interfaithenergy.com.



Our accomplishments

We have done on-site surveys for about 600 congregations in and around Philadelphia. We have also helped with similar efforts in Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, Arizona, Houston, North Carolina, Indianapolis and elsewhere.

Our energy management workbook for congregations is now in its 12th edition and has been used by many congregations wanting to reduce the use and cost of electricity and fuel.

Our church-in-a-computer simulates the energy used by an actual church building in Evanston, Illinois. By changing insulation, thermostat settings and many other parameters, we have shown that lower temperature settings produce the best savings in fuel use.

We have received awards for our work from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Association of Energy Engineers, the Governor of Pennsylvania and many others.

Our solar-powered home/office is where all this originates. We generate more electricity than we use, and are paid for every kilowatt-hour by the Energy Cooperative of Pennsylvania. ICE



November 15 Energy Management Workshop

Spirit and Truth Fellowship is going to host an ICE Energy Management Workshop on Saturday, November 15, 2003 from 10am until 1pm. Registration is free but required, so that the Fellowship can plan ahead. The Fellowship is located at 4400 North Sixth Street, on the corner with Cayuga Street – 3 blocks south the Roosevelt Boulevard (Route 1). There is plenty of parking on Sixth Street and Cayuga Street. Their phone number for more details is 215-228-9777. Ask for Andres or Mark. Refreshments will be served. ICE



Solar PV grant program

Grants up to \$25,000 toward the installation of solar electric panels are still available from the Sustainable Development Fund to any congregation in PECO Energy territory. Call 215-635-0900 to request a packet of information. ICE

Environmental Message from the Pope

Here is an excerpt from the text of a message from John Paul II to Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I on the occasion of the 5th Symposium of the Religion, Science and Environment Project:

...It is imperative however that the true nature of the ecological crisis be understood. The relationship between individuals or communities and the environment can never be detached from their relationship with God. When man "turns his back on the Creator's plan, he provokes a disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of the created order....

A solution to ecological challenges demands more than just economic and technological proposals. It requires an inner change of heart which leads to the rejection of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. It demands an ethical behavior which respects the principles of universal solidarity, social justice and responsibility.

As you yourself stated at the closing of the Fourth International Environmental Symposium in Venice, this calls for genuine sacrifice: "when we sacrifice our life and share our wealth, we gain life in abundance and enrich the entire world."

Your Holiness, I wish to express my encouragement for your commitment to lead the Symposium of the Religion, Science, and the Environment project. I pray that Almighty God will abundantly bless this initiative. May he accompany you and your collaborators and guide you in the ways of justice, so that all creation may give praise to God.

From the Vatican, 27 May 2003

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ICE

For Your Fall Reading List...

If you want to be intrigued and angered by one book this fall, *Power Play* by Sharon Beder is worth reading. Dr. Beder began her professional career as a civil engineer in New Zealand. She wanted to work more with people, so she enrolled for a Masters of Science and Society degree from University of New South Wales, which led to a Commonwealth Research Award that allowed her to get a PhD by studying the social, political, economic and technical factors that influenced decisions in the development of Sydney's sewerage system. In other words, Sharon Beder is an engineer who studies the human consequences of technology.

Power Play describes in detail how international corporations duped governments and taxpayers in California (remember Enron?), Brazil, Argentina, Australia, India and elsewhere. She describes how they framed tricks to gain the confidence of government representatives. The large corporations spent millions of dollars forming fake front groups, buying political influence, writing biased articles for publication, buying off the services of many law firms, and a host of other dirty tricks to privatize electric utilities. The corporations promised lower electric prices for everyone, but in each case, electric costs went up, mostly for residential ratepayers, because large industry was part of the scam. Investors, banks, insurance companies and consultants made loads of money. In most cases, the reliability of the electric system declined.

In some cases, including California, the electric suppliers intentionally caused blackouts until the governments paid the suppliers. *Power Play* is very detailed, with over 1,570 footnotes and references. *Power Play* was published by The New Press in 2003. ICE



Did the August 12, 2003 blackout increase your electric bill?

PECO Energy experienced a blackout on August 12 in downtown Philadelphia. Starting everything up after a blackout can create a large power spike in your electric demand. In turn, this spike raises the cost of your electric bill. If your electric demand (shown in kilowatts on your PECO bill) is higher for August 2003 compared with August 2002, request a refund via certified letter, return receipt requested to PECO Energy. Use the address on your electric bill. ICE

More about City of Philadelphia Water Meters

In past newsletters, we explained that ICE successfully intervened in a Philadelphia Water Department rate increase hearing. While we were not able to lower the water rates, we were able to get a ruling that the Water Department should examine the water billing in each religious congregation to

determine it has the smallest practical water meter and is receiving the City 25% Charitable Credit. The latest rate increase went into effect on July 1, 2003.

New book on Greening Church Operations

Central Baptist Church in Wayne has produced a purchasing guide for congregations. The 16-page Guide can be downloaded as a PDF file from their website, or you can email them from the same website to request a copy. Their website is www.cbcwayne.org. You may also call the Church to request a copy at 610-688-0664. ICE

From an ICE Enthusiast:

As I'm going through all these back issues I was struck by how good *Comfort and Light* is. I always knew it, but seeing all the issues at once really brought the idea home. You are to be commended for your longstanding commitment to energy efficiency and your clear and well-thought-out way of publicizing solid technical information....

I would like to pay for a subscription for a church up here for whom I am doing some pro bono work - I think they would greatly benefit from *Comfort and Light*. Thanks for your help and keep up the excellent work!

Tom Sahagian