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## Business

Friday, June 20, 2008

INTERACTIVE WEATHER

# Del. hotels adopt greener practices

## State initiative encourages more energy-efficient lodging

BY MOLLY MURRAY • THE NEWS JOURNAL • JUNE 20, 2008

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Guests who stay at the Courtyard Newark at the University of Delaware may notice a subtle difference when they return to their rooms after a day of meetings.

The housekeeping staff routinely adjusts the air conditioning and turns back the lighting to save on energy costs.

It's all part of a new initiative by [hotel](#) and motel owners and managers throughout the state to green up the image of the hospitality industry and save money.

On Thursday, state environmental officials launched Delaware Green Lodging, a program to get [hotels](#) and motels throughout the state to be more energy-efficient, reduce pollution and take steps to reach out to environmentally conscious customers.

The Courtyard Newark has already joined the state program, as has the Hilton-Christiana.

William A. Sullivan, managing director at the Courtyard Newark, said he expects others won't be far behind because of the [economic](#) incentives of operating a green hotel.

In some cases, meeting planners asked whether hotels they have green programs, he said. And in some states, state employees can only attend meetings if they stay in a green hotel, he said.

Delaware's lodging industry -- there are 141 hotels and motels throughout the state and about 75 of those have 100 rooms or more -- can make a considerable difference in reducing pollution, said Crystal Nagyiski, the state pollution prevention manager.

"The average-sized hotel purchases more products in one week than 100 families purchase in a year," she said. "Delaware hotels have a tremendous opportunity to reduce waste and pollution and we hope [businesses](#) across the state will contact us and joint the program."

The state initiative is voluntary and is modeled after a similar program in Virginia. Seven other states already have green lodging initiatives, said Rep. Deborah D. Hudson, R-Fairthorne, who heads the House of Representatives committee on tourism.



The News Journal/CARLA VARISCO-WILLIAMS

William Sullivan, Courtyard Newark managing director, says his hotel is making subtle -- yet effective -- changes. [\(Buy photo\)](#)

### MORE INFO

To learn more about the new Delaware Green Lodging program go to [www.dnrec.delaware.gov/p2/Pages/GreenLodging.aspx](http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/p2/Pages/GreenLodging.aspx).

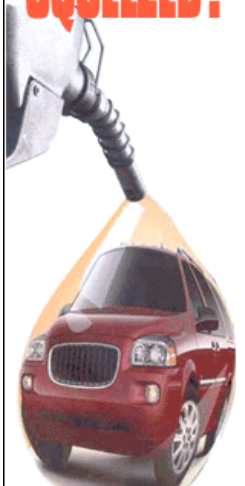
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Hudson said the new program is a great example of what Delaware can do as a public-private [partnership](#).

Hotel and motel owners can turn to state pollution prevention officials for tips on how to achieve five pollution prevention targets.

In turn, they can qualify for state Green Lodging certification by recycling, conserving energy, reducing water use and providing an optional linen service where guests decide whether they want new towels or are content to reuse what they already have. In addition, certified hotels and motels need a green events package as part of their [marketing](#).

Sullivan, who also chairs the Delaware Hotel and Lodging Association, said the biggest challenge for most in hotels and motels has been figuring how to manage the materials for recycling.

The big question, he said: "Where does the waste go?" Sullivan said the organization has been working with waste haulers to address recycling needs.

Meanwhile, he said, there is plenty that owners and managers can do at little or no cost to reduce environmental impacts.

Changing light bulbs to compact fluorescent bulbs as they burn out is one example, he said.


And by having an optional linen service policy, a hotel or motel can reduce water use by as much as 30 percent, according to state pollution prevention [data](#). In the process, a 100-room hotel could likely save as much as \$800 a month.

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