

## Green Week Activities Include Variety of Events to Educate and Motivate Participants

Contributed by Mitchell Diggs  
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OXFORD, Miss. - A panel discussion on climate change, the annual WorldFest celebration and a keynote address by Toyota's chief environmental officer are among the highlights of Green Week, hosted next week by the University of Mississippi and city of Oxford.

Green Week 2009, which begins Monday (April 20), includes a series of free lectures, forums, interactive activities and displays to educate participants about environmental sustainability and conservation efforts. Most of the events are set for the Student Union Plaza and Grove, but several displays are planned for the Oxford Square near City Hall. All activities are free and open to the public.

"As a community, we are committed to being good stewards of the Earth," UM Chancellor Robert Khayat said. "It is important that the educational experience of our students includes a keen awareness of the responsibilities of each of us to protect, preserve and enhance our world."

Likewise, the city is committed to sustainability efforts and is working with UM officials to maximize the impact of the week's activities, Mayor Richard Howorth said.

"The city is very supportive of Green Week," Howorth said. "We want to promote all the values of sustainability that Oxford citizens embrace, and we believe we have a responsibility here at City Hall to set an example - by recycling, conserving energy and resources, and doing all we can to ensure a healthy environment for our children."

Each day focuses on one aspect of environmental preservation, with activities designed to support the day's theme. The theme for Monday is water conservation, and university officials plan to unveil a bioswale just west of Crosby Hall at 10:30 a.m. A bioswale uses rocks and plants to slow rainwater runoff to help purify water and reduce erosion. Other events for the day include a water trivia contest, a five-minute shower awareness campaign and water quality exhibits from the UM Field Station and USDA Sedimentation Laboratory.

Energy conservation is Tuesday's focus, and participants can sign up for a free home energy savings kit at "Energy Conservation 101," a workshop by TVA Marketing Manager Angela Carrol at 10:30 a.m. in the Student Union Ballroom. At 2 p.m. in Johnson Commons Ballroom, Kevin Butt, general manager/chief environmental and safety officer at Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America Inc., is to discuss sustainability efforts. The talk is hosted by the UM Center for Manufacturing Excellence.

On Wednesday, the university's annual WorldFest goes green for Earth Day. Sponsored by the Office of International Programs, the day features music, food and games from around the world. Activities begin at 9 a.m. in the Grove with educational activities for children, and continue all day. Participants also can calculate their carbon footprint and compare it to those of people in other countries.

Thursday's focus is transportation, and organizers are sponsoring a 7:30 a.m. race among bicycles, cars and Oxford-University Transit buses. At 3:30 p.m. in the Lamar Law Center, Moot Court I, panelists are to examine "Consequences of Climate Change: Policy, Law and Community." Moderated by David Case, UM associate professor of law, the discussion features Tim Mulvaney, research counsel for the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Legal Program; Wei-Yin Chen, UM professor of chemical engineering; and Rita Harris, regional environmental justice community organizer for the Sierra Club.

The week concludes with Low-Carbon Diet Day on Friday. Groundbreaking for the Oxford Community Garden is set for 9 a.m. near the old National Guard Armory, and workshops on composting and "green" gardening begin at 10 at the Armory. The university plans an Arbor Day ceremony at 10 a.m. in the Lyceum Circle, and International Paper plans to give away 1,000 hardwood seedlings.

Throughout the week, local and national vendors plan to showcase environmentally friendly products and services on the Student Union Plaza. Also, Aramark is giving a 50 percent discount on coffee to customers who bring in their bicycle helmets at all three campus Java City locations.

UM student Katie Hiatt of Dallas is blogging each day about Green Week activities. To read her blog, go to <http://olemissgreen.blogspot.com> .

For more information and a complete Green Week calendar, go to <http://www.olemiss.edu/green/> .