

Dial to calculate your carbon footprint

The Jan. 14 issue of Business Week described how the European Commission has created a way for you to personally calculate your carbon footprint from your own cell phone. If you have cell phone Internet access, simply download the free program from mobgas.jrc.it and voilà—you can record everything from driving time to television use right in your mobile phone. Available in more than 20 languages, the mobGAS software calculates the amount of greenhouse gas your activities create, uploads the data and compares your footprint with national and international averages.

How to be happy on the job

The Jan. 28 edition of The Christian Science Monitor online discussed seven factors that contribute to an employee's happiness on the job. While you may think that a good salary and nice benefits made the list, think again. Appreciation ranks number one on the list, followed by respect, trust, individual growth, a good boss, compatible coworkers and a sense of purpose. Employees want to feel respected and valued, have room to learn and be surrounded by people who play positive roles in their happiness and growth. It involves two primary elements—the individual and the institution—both of which contribute to the overall happiness of an employee's work environment.

Making friends and money at the same time

From Facebook to MySpace, social networking sites have recently become very popular. Valued at nearly US\$11 billion, Facebook already has 50 million members. But what if you could join a social networking site and make money at the same time? According to a December 2007 report for BBC News, you can. Believe it or not, American site Yuwie.com is actually paying their members. Join the site for free, network, connect with friends and Yuwie.com will pay you a portion of the site's advertising revenue. More than 340,000 members are registered already. However, some are wondering whether or not this will become a "non-reputable business model"—making it easy for people to manipulate the site to inflate the number of page views and abuse the system.

Do you drink diet?

When you go to the supermarket or a restaurant, do you buy diet soda? Chances are many of you do. Now published in the American Psychological Association's Behavioral Neuroscience Journal, artificial sweeteners could be linked to obesity. According to a Feb. 11 article for Canada's Globe and Mail, you may want to rethink your soft drink of choice. Recent studies at Purdue University have shown that rats that are fed food with zero-calorie sweeteners tend to eat more and gain more weight than rats that eat foods containing sugar. Even more, research for the Framingham Heart Study found that people who consume one or more cans of soda daily were more than 45 percent more likely to have health problems, including obesity.

Taking advantage of the off button

In today's technology age, it's hard to imagine not having your mobile phone in your pocket at all times. For many of us, the cell phone even sits on the bedside table at night. But what if your boss created rules against using your business phone during personal time? A Feb. 1 article for United Press International described how the Canadian immigration agency in Ottawa did just that. New department rules include turning Blackberry phones off from 7 p.m. through 7 a.m. Other rules include meeting times—they must start and end on time without interfering with employee lunch hour. These new office regulations are meant to reduce stress, allowing employees to manage personal and work responsibilities simultaneously.

Job-seekers aren't seeking

Recent results from a Yahoo Hotjobs survey showed that many people who want a new job aren't even looking for one. According to the Jan. 31 issue of USA Today, more than 35 percent of survey respondents find it difficult to prove oneself to a new employer. More than 25 percent are procrastinating, 27 percent are happy with the work-life balance, others don't want to disappoint their employers and to some the commute is too nice to give up.

What's keeping you from going for your dream job? Visit IFMA's JOBnet at <http://JOBnet.ifma.org> to browse hundreds of facility management job openings!

Greening trash

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, each American creates more than 4.5 pounds of solid waste every day on average. Waste Management is trying to alleviate this landfill overload. A Feb. 1 article for CNNMoney.com explained the various initiatives Waste Management is implementing to live up to their motto—"Think Green." The company's 350-acre landfill in Pompano Beach, Fla., allows up to 700 dump trucks to visit every day. After a truck unloads its trash, the waste is quickly covered with dirt. Vertical pipes sink into the landfill extracting methane from the ground then burn the gas to make electricity. Among Waste Management's other initiatives are waste-to-energy plants that burn garbage at more than 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit creating energy. In addition, there are recycling centers where paper products, glass, plastic and metal are sorted, bundled and recycled. More than 165 Waste Management recycling facilities are currently in operation.

Sound device to keep teenagers away

For schools, shops and other public places, it can sometimes be the case that teenagers congregate outside the building. To keep this under control, Compound Security Systems developed the Mosquito to keep people from gathering in groups. According to a Feb. 12 article for U.K.'s Times Online, the Mosquito has caused quite a stir and Children's Commissioner for England Sir Albert Aynsley-Green is campaigning against the product. Although 75 percent of sales have been to law enforcement and authorities, many

consider this 17-18 kilohertz pulse device to be discriminatory, as only those younger than or in their twenties can hear the sound through small hairs in their inner ears. Some consider the Mosquito to be a quick fix, only solving the problem temporarily; others see no harm in the product, saying it is both legal and harmless.