

OpeningREMARKS

Thoughtful Living

The words spring to mind like it was yesterday: Are you heating the great outdoors? Shut the door! ... Do you own stock in the electric company? Turn off the lights! Usually wise enough to follow my father's directives, I found myself retreating to the porch to tightly close the front door, or backtracking to my bedroom to click off the lights. Simple acts, really. However, little did I know then that beyond monitoring the household utility bills, Dad was actually instilling me with eco-friendly habits. Nor did I realize that, one day as a homeowner and father, I'd address the same issues with my daughter.

Of course back then, climate change meant piling in the car and heading south during spring vacation—and the ramifications of leaving the bedroom light burning bright rarely translated into thoughts of pillaging mountainsides to fuel coal-burning electric plants. Not so today. Let's say our environmental conscience is undergoing a hair-raising makeover. And rightly so, because anyone who's heard those Doomsday global-warming scenarios knows what I'm talking about: melting glaciers, rising sea levels, vanishing coast lines, fleeing refugees. Since that's just one potential catastrophe of ignoring our impact on the planet, it seems reasonable to heed the warnings and tame our ravenous consumption with a more thoughtful approach to living.

There's no doubt we can all live smarter for the environment's sake. It's also encouraging to know that Syracuse University and other campuses across the country are actively involved in sustainability efforts. As you'll discover in this issue of the magazine, the pursuit of sustainability is a mammoth undertaking. But the challenges are accompanied by opportunities. The benefits of conservation, education, and innovation can lead us into new territories on numerous fronts. Considering our sputtering economy, imagine how a Green Revolution might truly transform a faltering manufacturing sector while easing our reliance on fossil fuels and enhancing our commitment to preserving the wonders of our planet for future generations. After all, when my daughter hits the lights and shuts the front door on her way outside, I want her—and the generations that follow—to enjoy the beauty and discover the marvels of the world.



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