

EARTH

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treatment plants.

Storm sewers carry storm water directly into streams and eventually back into Lake Springfield or the Sangamon River.

"Subdivisions on the southwest side of town all have drainage systems," Norris said. "The ponds are interconnected and run into creeks."

Regardless of the type of sewer near a person's home, nothing but water should go into the sewers. Oil is a pollutant, and even yard waste, such as leaves and grass clippings, can constrict flow and cause backups, he said.

The city hopes eventually to stencil all the storm sewer entry points in town, Norris said.

He didn't know the precise wording that is being stenciled, but the design includes a fish symbol and indicates that no waste should be dumped into a sewer inlet.

Coplea said some people are surprised to learn that water going into storm sewers never undergoes treatment. She said one person she talked to was surprised to learn that biodegradable cooking oil from a turkey fryer cannot go into the storm sewers.

"Even washing the car — let the water soak into the grass," Coplea said.

Chris Wetterich can be reached at 788-1523.

Activities, recycling programs

Earth Day and Arbor Day activities in Springfield this week:

■ **Today (Earth Day):** Debra Rowe, president of the U.S. Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development and professor of sustainable energies and behavioral sciences at Oakland (Mich.) Community College, speaks on "Education and Action for a Sustainable Future" at 7 p.m. in Brookens Auditorium at the University of Illinois at Springfield. The event is free and open to the public.

■ **Friday:** Arbor Day tree planting hosted by Springfield Civic Garden Club, 10 a.m., near Rose Garden parking lot, Washington Park.

■ **Saturday:** Earth Awareness Fair, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Lincoln Park. Free. Live music by Tina Thornhill. Environmental exhibits and activities. Free trees while supply lasts; free document shredding; recycling available for plastic containers, aluminum and tin cans, newspapers, junk mail, magazines, phone books, corrugated cardboard, electronic equipment. Freecycle "free-for-all garage sale."

Recycling in Springfield

■ CITY RECYCLING PROGRAM

Recycling is included in Springfield residents' trash-pickup fee from their private hauler. Those living in buildings with up to four units can sign up by calling their waste hauler:

Allied Waste, 522-7797

Waste Management, (888) 964-9713
Lake Area Disposal, 522-9317

Illini Disposal, 789-7025

■ WHAT THEY'LL TAKE:

Paper: clean and dry newspapers, junk mail and chip board (single-ply cardboard used for cereal, tissue, magazines and soda boxes)

Plastic: All plastic containers with a few exceptions

Metal: Food cans, aluminum beverage cans, pie tins, clean aluminum foil, empty aerosol cans that did not contain paint.

Glass: Only clear bottles and jars accepted. No glass windowpanes or dishware. No colored glass.

Paper products should be separated from metal and plastic items. On rainy days, the recycling box may be covered with plastic to keep paper dry. Items that contained food should be rinsed out. Lids and rings and protective foil coverings should be removed from container openings; labels may remain. Clear glass bottles and jars should be placed in a separate paper sack.

■ DROP-OFF RECYCLING:

Lake Area Recycling Services, 2742 S. Sixth St. 24-hour access to its drop-off facility. Accepts the same materials as the curbside program (with the exception of glass), along with corrugated cardboard.

F&W Resources, 3327 Terminal Ave. 24-hour access. Accepts the same materials as the curbside program (with the exception of glass), along with corrugated cardboard.

What is a carbon footprint?

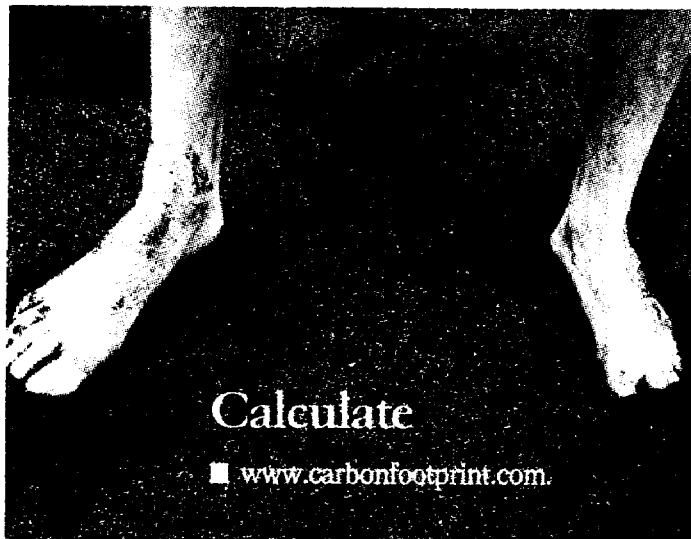
By **THERESA GRIMALDI OLSEN**
CONTRIBUTOR

Every day, we leave a footprint on the planet Earth — a carbon footprint.

A carbon footprint is a measure of the impact people have on the environment, a measure of the amount of greenhouse gases produced in units of carbon dioxide.

Tih-Fen Ting, assistant professor and environmental studies department co-chair at the University of Illinois at Springfield, says the little things we do every day can change the course of earth warming. Global warming is caused by excess amounts of carbon dioxide produced when fossil fuels are burned to produce energy. That is the same message that Al Gore outlined in *An Inconvenient Truth*, the film that recently won an Oscar as best documentary.

"What Al Gore says is not far-fetched at all," Ting says, "If everybody does his part together, collectively, we are going to see a big impact. It would be tragic to think 'I am only one person. It won't make



a difference.' If you do that, things will only get worse. . . . Just think if thousands or millions of people all cut back. As an individual, you can do a lot."

A native of Taiwan who moved to the United States in 1995, Ting is very concerned about how global warming affects ecosystems throughout the world.

She says sea levels are rising as glaciers melt. The trend could have a significant impact on her

hometown and the rest of the world.

UIS is challenging Ting to put her theories into practice and develop a carbon footprint of UIS. She is chairman of the energy taskforce at UIS.

The taskforce began working in February to find ways for the university to reduce energy consumption. The taskforce was formed as a result of a resolution passed by the university board of trustees in No-

vember, Ting says.

The resolution requires the three university campuses in Springfield, Champaign and Chicago to evaluate energy consumption. The policy outlined four goals that have formed framework for the taskforce to address, Ting says. They are:

1. Reduce energy consumption and cost.
2. Measure energy consumption.
3. Reduce reliance on fossil fuel.

Reducing your carbon footprint

You can reduce the amount of greenhouse gases you produce and improve your carbon footprint, Tih-Fen Ting, assistant professor and environmental studies department co-chair at the University of Illinois at Springfield, says.

Ting suggests:

- Monitoring how far you drive and reduce gas consumption.
- Recycling. Recycled materials use less energy than processing raw materials.
- Avoiding excessive packaging.
- Using your own cloth shopping bags instead of taking plastic bags at the grocery store.
- Utilizing public transportation or car pooling.
- Using compact, florescent light bulbs.
- Eating more vegetables. Vegetarian dishes take less energy to prepare.
- Supporting local farmers and buying local produce instead of produce shipped from other countries.
- Holding politicians accountable for their concern for the environment and the legislation they support.

4. Reduce greenhouse gases.

Ting completed a doctorate in natural resources and environment at the University of Michigan in 2003. She studies ecosystems and how human actions change those systems.

Ting initially began her career studying animals before she became interested in the environment. She has a master's degree in wildlife studying northern spotted owls.

GREEN BUILDING



Presented by the Springfield Area Home Builders Association

Green Building Seminars

Thursday, April 24th
Location: The Hilton Springfield,
700 E. Adams St.,
Ambassador Ballroom

Last year we recycled enough paper to save over 41 million trees

