

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BEAT THE HEAT: NEW RESEARCH WARNS – DON'T OVERLOOK NATURE'S ENERGY TECHNOLOGY!

LOS ANGELES, CA, JUNE 11, 2002 - While top executives and governors scramble to avoid a repeat of the past summer's energy crunch, rising prices of crude oil and gasoline coupled with escalating uncertainty in the Middle East add to the concerns. New research, however, indicates that interior plants can play a critical role in off-setting these escalating summer energy costs.

Plants cool by a process called transpiration, which, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Washington, D.C.), decreases air temperature in offices by ten degrees. Dr. Lohr's study out of Washington State University ("The Contribution of Interior Plants to Relative Humidity in an Office") demonstrates that plant transpiration in an office environment releases moisture, creating a humidity level exactly matching the recommended human comfort range of 30% to 60%. Similarly, the same study concludes that in the absence of plants, the relative humidity in offices runs below this recommended range. When the relative humidity is too high, the condensation of windows and exterior walls can result in costly structural damage.

According to the International Society of Arboricultural (Champaign, Ill.), the net cooling effect of one young, healthy interior tree (such as in an atrium or winter garden) is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day. According to literature from the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) of Herndon, VA, proper selection and placement of plant materials can lower heating and cooling costs by as much as 20%.

These statistics have become an important tool for today's environmentally efficient homeowners, corporate designers and facility managers at companies such as U.S. Energy Systems Inc. of White Plains, NY. This growing energy company is enthusiastically endorsing the use of indoor plants. Susan Odiseos, V.P. of Corporate Communications, states, "We practice what we preach and find that our investment in interior plant services has had the expected outcome of improving indoor air quality, supporting a positive outlook in the workplace and increasing employee productivity."

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She continued, "Interior plants are a solid return on investment and a MUST for any corporation concerned with sustainable, 'green building' solutions."

Plants at Work is a national information campaign designed to educate the public on the benefits of interior plants. Please see www.plantsatwork.org to learn how plants are delivering many bottom-line benefits.

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