



Chattanooga Launches Green Lodging Certification Program

By Glenn Hasek
07/31/2009



Numerous cities in the United States have green lodging or tourism programs—initiatives that encourage conservation, networking and education. Chicago, Cleveland, Boston and Philadelphia come to mind. No city that I know of, however, has taken it upon itself to create its own green lodging certification program—until now. I recently learned that Chattanooga, Tenn., now has its own Green Lodging Program for hotels, bed and breakfasts, and other lodging facilities. Participants must be members of the Greater Chattanooga Hospitality Assn. and are required to have a minimum number of environmental programs in place—optional linen service, compact fluorescents, a written plan for continuous improvement, etc. An on-site audit is required for certification. Once certified, participating properties will be featured on the [Chattanooga Green Lodging website](#) and several other sites.

According to Dobbin Callahan, president of Skye Con Environmental Consulting, the first two audits already have been conducted. He performed the audits himself and will conduct the future audits for the program. As many as 20 downtown Chattanooga hotels may participate, and two or three times that many properties in the greater Chattanooga area could join them. The Green Lodging Program will undoubtedly become a great selling point for the Chattanooga Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB).

What will help make the program successful is its low cost. The CVB picked up the cost of the Green Lodging Program website. The fee to participate is just \$250 for the audit and a \$10 administrative charge for a property's website profile. A no brainer if you ask me.

Every green lodging program has a visionary or champion and in Chattanooga's case that person is Tom Cupo, general manager of The Chattanooga, a Benchmark Hospitality International property. Cupo hatched the idea for the local Green Lodging Program, borrowed some ideas from other programs—primarily Virginia Green Lodging—and got the program rolling with the support of the region's lodging association and CVB. The only way to establish credibility for the program was to require a third party audit, Cupo says.

"If you are saying you are doing these green initiatives, you should be able to prove it," Callahan adds.

Sample List of Green Initiatives

Here is a sample list of some of the initiatives Callahan looks for when conducting his audit: recycling of items such as glass, aluminum, plastic, and fluorescent lamps; use of bulk soap dispensers in public restrooms; composting of food waste and other compostables; preventive maintenance to stop water drips and leaks; guestroom energy management systems; occupancy sensors for lighting; and the use of fuel-efficient vehicles such as hybrids. (Visit the [Chattanooga Green Lodging website](#) for the complete list.)

"Everything we look at comes with a cost savings for the property," Callahan says.

Chattanooga Green Lodging fits well into Chattanooga's vision for itself. Mayor Ron Littlefield signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement in 2006, joining 235 other communities. Chattanooga Green, the city's sustainability plan, is growing thanks to the city's Green Committee and the participation of hundreds of Chattanooga citizens.

Congratulations to Tom Cupo, Dobbin Callahan, the Chattanooga Area CVB, the Greater Chattanooga Hospitality Assn. and others for getting Chattanooga Green Lodging off the ground. It is something other cities could easily do.

"My ultimate goal is to turn this into something bigger—for all of Tennessee," Cupo said.

GLN Welcomes JL Furnishings, Lone Meadow as Directory Partner

Green Lodging News welcomes JL Furnishings ("JLF") and its sister company, Lone Meadow, as a Green Product & Service Directory partner. JL Furnishings and Lone Meadow are two of a handful of American-crafted milling specialists in volume contract seating. Privately held, JLF/Lone Meadow both offer flexible solutions in fine seating and tables. As the "first in" leader of "green" hospitality seating, Lone Meadow has made a commitment to achieve manufacturing standards that are environmentally sensible. For additional information, call (310) 605-6600, e-mail sales@jlfonemeadow.com, or go to www.jlfurnishings.com.

Arizona Restaurant Assn. Reprint

Thank you to the Arizona Restaurant Assn. for publishing my article on vegetable oil recycling in their June 2009 issue. If you missed that article, [click here](#) to read it.

Green Lodging News Advertising

Green Lodging News ad spots are selling fast. Be sure to call me at (440) 243-2055 to discuss your advertising plans for the remainder of 2009. A 2009 media kit is now available by request or by [clicking here](#). A 2010 kit will be available soon. Thank you to all of those companies that consistently support Green Lodging News.

Green Lodging News Blog & Twitter

Be sure to bookmark the Green Lodging News Blog in your browser. The address for the blog is <http://greenlodgingnews.blogspot.com>. More importantly, participate with your comments. Green Lodging News is also now on Twitter. To follow my postings, go to <http://twitter.com/greenlodging>. Be sure to add Green Lodging News to those tweets that you follow. Green Lodging News now has 181 Twitter followers.

As always, I can be reached at editor@greenlodgingnews.com.



[Home](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Advertising/Media Kit](#) | [RSS](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © 2009 Green Lodging News. All Rights Reserved.

Green Lodging News is a [Hasek Communications L.L.C.](#) publication.