

MBA NEWS

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**MBA UNVEILS THE LAWYERS ECO-CHALLENGE:
TASK FORCE TO OFFER GREEN GUIDELINES FOR PRACTITIONERS;
CONTEST FOR FIRMS TO REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION**

BOSTON, Mass. — Switch to energy efficient office equipment, shut down computers at the end of the day and turn off lights when walking out of rooms. That’s the message from Massachusetts Bar Association President David W. White Jr., who today unveils a yearlong initiative that urges lawyers to change the way they think and act while conducting business in order to conserve energy and resources.

The Lawyers Eco-Challenge - One Planet, One Pledge – begins at a time when concern over global warming and for the future of the environment and is at an all-time high. Gov. Deval Patrick declared 2007 “The Year of Energy Efficiency,” and has supported the use of renewable energy and asked state agencies to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by cutting their electricity consumption. The challenge also comes on the heels of a Sun Microsystems survey that says 73 percent of workers want their employers to be green. The MBA hopes its comprehensive program will spur similar proposals in other business sectors.

“Lawyers in Massachusetts will prove to be at the forefront of this important issue,” said White, a partner at Breakstone, White & Gluck PC in Boston. “We are asking people to begin by changing a few habits. It will make a difference.”

White is taking his own advice and has already made changes at his 2 Center Plaza office. Motion detector lights have been installed in the conference room and library, the refrigerator has been replaced with an Energy Star certified appliance, nonessential office equipment has been hooked up to switches that are easily turned off at the end of the day, and all light bulbs are now energy-efficient. All equipment upgrades will be Energy Star compliant.

“It’s easy to turn these words into meaningful action,” said White, who in his hometown, founded the non-profit Westwood Land Trust Inc. and has chaired the town’s Organization for the Preservation of the Environment and Nature.

The Energy and Environmental Task Force, chaired by attorney Nancy Reiner of the Boston-based, international law firm Brown Rudnick, will comprise a dozen attorneys from throughout the state. The task force will be developing “Green Guidelines” for law firms to be published later this fall. Other task force members include John Tener, a partner at Robinson & Cole LLP in Boston and a Newton resident; and Susan Crane, who lives and practices in Sudbury.

“Lawyers will be leaders in the fight against global warming,” said Reiner, a Lexington resident. “That fight starts in the office and at home, with a commitment to reduce energy usage and to recycle to the greatest extent possible.”

In total, lawyers across the United States go through 24 million trees annually. That’s because each year the average lawyer uses a ton of paper, the equivalent of 24 trees, according to Lawyers Accountable To The Earth, or LATTE, a group formed by task force member and Boston lawyer Jeffrey Glassman.

The task force will also be forging coalitions with business groups and environmental groups throughout the state.

The Eco-Challenge contest will begin in January, challenging lawyers and law firms to demonstrate reductions in energy use. In addition, tips will be posted on the MBA Web site (www.massbar.org) regularly and distributed to members through the MBA’s weekly electronic newsletter, *Lawyers e-Journal*.

“It’s important for the MBA, as the non-profit legal association with a mission to support the legal community and the larger community, to lead attorneys across the state in this important effort,” said MBA Executive Director Marilyn J. Wellington.

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.