



## EARTH DAY 2015 GREEN STEWARD FAQ TWEET CHAT

The goal of the Green Production Guide Green Stewart FAQ Tweet Chat is to create a library of FAQs arising from sustainable and low-impact film and TV production practices as a resource for directors, PAs, producers and anybody interested in green production best practices.

Our Earth Day 2015 Panelists include [Earth Angel](#) Eco Supervisor, [Emellie O'Brien](#) and [Cine Mosaic](#) Producer, [Lydia Dean Pilcher](#).

### FAQ: PANELIST BIOS



#### Emellie O'Brien

Emellie O'Brien is a production Eco Supervisor and the Founder of Earth Angel NYC, a NY-based environmental consultancy and sustainability contractor. She has managed sustainability on the sets of *Noah*, *Annie*, *Elementary*, HBO's upcoming "rock and roll," and *Money Monster*. Her work on *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* helped it to become the most eco-friendly blockbuster in Sony Pictures' history. She is the author of the PGA Green report "Going Green & Saving Green," as well as the recipient of the 2014 Toyota/Net Impact Personal Impact Award and a 2014 Film Biz Recycling Golden Dumpster Award. She also delivered the keynote address at the 2014 Netherlands Film Festival Green Filmmaking Masterclass in Utrecht. Emellie graduated with honors from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts with a B.F.A. in Film & Television.



#### Lydia Dean Pilcher

Lydia Dean Pilcher is an American film and television producer and founder of Cine Mosaic, a production company committed to producing feature films with an energetic focus on promoting social, cultural and political diversity. Pilcher has produced numerous award-winning independent feature films, specializing in international co-production, and film finance based on studio and independent models. Most recently, in 2013 she produced *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, (IFC Films) based on the highly acclaimed novel by Mohsin Hamid, starring Riz Ahmed, Kate Hudson, Kiefer Sutherland, Liev Schreiber, and directed by Mira Nair (winner of 2013 German Film Award for Peace); Academy Award nominated *Cutie & The Boxer*, (Radius-TWC) directed by Zachary Heinzerling (winner of 2013 Sundance Directing Award); and *The Lunchbox*, (Sony Classics) directed by Ritesh Batra (winner of 2013 Critics Week Viewers Choice Award at Cannes Film Festival).

Pilcher is a Founder and Chair of PGA Green, an active committee of the Producers Guild of America since 2006, dedicated to supporting sustainability in the entertainment industry, and winner of the 2011 EMA Green Production Award.

## EMELLIE O'BRIEN GREEN SET FAQs AND ANSWERS

Note: The views expressed in this FAQs and Answer were provided by Emellie O'Brien and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Green Production Guide or any of our associate studio partners.

### 1. **Question: Isn't using compostable cups just as wasteful as using plastic water bottles?**

Answer: Compostable cups are derived from renewable resources – i.e. plant starch, corn resin, fiber bagasse, etc. – that are manufactured to biodegrade. Plastic water bottles are a petroleum product and typically require three times the amount of water that is actually in the bottle to manufacture. While plastic beverage bottles are recyclable, they more often end up in landfills or as roadside or ocean litter. Most plastic beverage bottles are also manufactured overseas and require fossil fuels to ship, whereas many compostable cup brands are made in



the U.S.A.

**2. Question: Is there a way to recover and donate the leftover food without the production company being liable if someone gets sick?**

Answer: Rock and Wrap it Up! is a non-profit organization that facilitates food recovery on film and television productions throughout the New York City area. They find and vet partner agencies who need and can share these resources with the poor. Their partners are protected by the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act (Pub. L. No 104-210, 110 Stat. 3011(1996)) as long as safe food handling is used. It's important to establish a food recovery system with the caterers early on. If you're looking for a food donation service in your area I recommend using the Green Production Guide.

**3. Question: Why is recycling on set different than recycling at home?**

Answer: Waste stream handling in North America is severely lacking in uniformity. Recycling policies differ by municipality and in commercial vs. residential waste hauling. Film and TV productions contract private hauling companies whose policies vary widely. One of the major responsibilities of the Eco Supervisor is to find and vet a waste hauler who is compliant in the production's sustainability policies, and then subsequently educate the crew as to the proper waste separation protocol.

**4. Question: Why is it important to track the carbon footprint of a film set?**

Answer: You manage what you measure. In order for the film and television industry to effectively reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, we first have to understand what the emissions are and where they are coming from. Because of the transient, circus-like nature of film production, it is a bit more complicated for us to track this data than for other industries with more permanent facilities...but not impossible! Accumulating and understanding that data leads to benchmarks and benchmarks lead to better reduction strategies, which lead to tangible results. This carbon calculator is a great tool to help you get started.

**5. Question: Are there tax incentives for running a sustainable film set?**

Answer: Unfortunately there are currently no tax incentives for sustainable efforts on entertainment productions in the United States. Nevertheless, productions often realize a direct cost savings from going green as a financial incentive.

**6. Question: What's the best way to get crew members on board with the production's sustainability policies?**

Answer: Affecting behavioral change is one of the most difficult aspects of being an Eco Supervisor. I always tell the crew that I'm a resource not an enforcer, and that I'm here to help ease the transition into a sustainable set. That being said, successfully running a sustainable set requires everyone's cooperation, so I like to offer incentives like the GCOW (Green Crewmember of the Week) award each week.

**7. Question: How long does it take for the compostable dishware items to actually biodegrade?** Answer: It varies by brand and item type, but I typically use World Centric products which take anywhere from 3 months to 24 months to fully biodegrade.

**8. Question: What's the best way to recycle sets and why aren't more shows recycling their sets?**

Answer: Recycling sets is a process that first involves studio approval to ensure that the items are not considered assets or sensitive proprietary items. Storage is extremely expensive in New York City, so a lot of shows revert to the alternative...a dumpster. But as an Eco Supervisor, I communicate with departments to help coordinate the recovery of these materials and place them with local organizations for reuse as often as possible.

**9. Question: Who makes the decision to run a film or television set sustainably?**

Answer: It varies by production, some studios have line items for sustainability efforts in their budgets while others do not. In my experience, it's always been a Producer or Director who is dedicated to environmentalism who decides they are going to make the effort to run a sustainable show.

**10. Question: How can lower budget independent productions without budget for an eco supervisor also run a green set?**

Answer: Due to the project scale, smaller productions are inherently lower impact. Nevertheless, by reducing paper waste, eliminating plastic water bottles, donating leftovers and recycling any production can reduce its footprint. The important thing is communication – production needs to establish their sustainability goals early on so that everyone is on the same page.