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**You Don't Know Jack  
Environmental Sustainability Efforts**

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## Letter From Executive Producer

10/19/09

There is a growing movement in the film and television industry to address climate change. It is encouraging to see an increasing number of green vendors in our industry, and more cast and crew who are having the experience of working on green productions.

We were the first HBO Films production to strive for carbon neutrality, and HBO was very supportive of our commitment to alter production procedures to reduce our carbon footprint. *YOU DON'T KNOW JACK*, was directed by Barry Levinson and our talent included Al Pacino, Susan Sarandon, John Goodman, and Danny Huston. We filmed 34 location days in New York City's outer boroughs, two location days in Detroit, and 4 days on stage at Hollywood East in

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the Sunset Park area of Brooklyn.

HBO approved a Green Steward/Production Assistant as a line item in our production budget. Jeremy Albucher fulfilled this role and his job description included circulating educational information, doing vendor research, helping departments create a specific green plan, and monitoring the constantly changing landscape of our location filming requirements. He also physically pitched in and supported those who needed extra help to achieve their goals, and assumed tasks that fell into gray areas of responsibility when a pro-active response needed more elbow grease.

We estimate that within our production, we had about an 80% general willingness from the cast and crew to be a part of running a green set; about 50% exhibited real initiative in making the necessary changes to run a 'greener' department; about 30% were willing to be corralled; and about 20% were.. uh... challenging.

When greening a movie, you don't know in advance where your percentages and concentration of pro-activeness will fall, and which departments will be in each camp, but identifying the challenges up front, deciding how to prioritize your focus, and isolating achievable goals, are all part of making a successful plan. Studio support is essential, and hopefully pro-environment practices will ultimately mandated from the top.

We found it helpful to do a self-evaluation a couple of weeks into the process. Informally polling the crew identified a few cracks, many of which were shored up. Mid-way through shooting, we published a memo detailing the extent of our green efforts, which was met with great interest, feedback and increased awareness amongst departments.

In this report we talk about how it all went down. Thanks for taking the time to read about our experiences!

Lydia Dean Pilcher  
Executive Producer  
Greening The Office

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## Recycling

- Recycling bins were set up all around the office, and we were able to utilize the NYC recycling program.
- All of our confidential documents were destroyed by Code Shred, which recycles all of its shredded paper.
- We provided recycling bins for ink and toner cartridges.

## Paper & Electronic Production Documents

- From memos to scripts, cost reports to call sheets; all of our paperwork was either printed on at least 30% post consumer recycled paper or distributed electronically.
- Approximately 40% of our crew agreed to electronic-only versions of the script & script revisions.
- We utilized a secure online database for creating and editing our call sheets and production reports. This allowed for real-time revisions between the office and set.
- Our Accounting Department revamped the Production Policies Signoff into a single page form and did report checking electronically saving us an estimated 70+ reams of paper over the course of production.

## Office Lunch & Craft Service

- We created an electronic lunch order form for our office, eliminating the need for multiple menus & order forms.
- When ordering delivery we asked restaurants to leave out plastic utensils.
- We stocked our kitchen with real plates, bowls, cups, & silverware, encouraging our office staff to reuse kitchenware.

## Efficiency

- Office runs were done via public transportation as much as possible.
- Eco-friendly/recyclable bags were used to transport materials on our runs.

## Transportation & Biodiesel

- Approximately 44% of the vehicles we rented for our production were either hybrid or fuel efficient vehicles.
- We ran our base camp & electric truck generators off of a B5 mixture of biodiesel made from a combination of low sulfur diesel and recycled cooking oil. Biodiesel is domestically produced, and using it in our generators lessened our CO<sub>2</sub> output by nearly 15%.
- We asked our director and principal actors (including three Oscar winners) to waive their star trailer precedents to support our commitment to running a green set. They worked out of two-banger trailers, which halved the amount of trailers we had to transport and power for the show.

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- Our call sheets provided information on how to reach the location via public transportation

## Recycling & Eliminating Plastic On Set

- On set, we completely eliminated the presence of plastic water bottles, cups, food ware, & cutlery.
- We provided our crew with 100% recyclable stainless steel water bottles.
- Water stations were set up around each location. Typically we would have coolers set up:
  - By the set
  - At the craft service table
  - By camper/truck parking
  - In extras holding
  - In the hair/makeup trailer
  - In the wardrobe truck
- At every location we set up garbage & recycling stations, separating our trash by:
  - Paper
  - Cans, Bottles, Plastic, Foils
  - Garbage
- In addition to the ClearStream recycling containers, we also utilized Rubbermaid recycling bins, cutting holes in the top to help separate our trash efficiently.
- Both our craft service & caterer provided compostable/biodegradable cups, plates, bowls, & utensils.
- Our caterer also offered ceramic plates and metal silverware, which were cleaned & reused daily.
- Our carting company brought all of our location waste to a facility that further sorted our recyclables. The materials were placed onto a conveyor belt and then sorted to keep the end product as clean as possible.

## Construction/Set Dressing

- All salvageable construction materials & set pieces (flats, windows, doors, etc.) were diverted from dumpsters & donated to Build It Green NYC.
- All of our leftover paints were condensed to full canisters & donated to Build It Green NYC.
- We used Filco Carting for all of our construction waste. They deconstruct set pieces for salvageable construction supplies, and turn unsalvageable construction waste into wood chips for mulch.

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- Set dressing materials were donated to Film Biz Recycling, The Salvation Army, and Materials For The Arts.

### **Little Things. Big Difference.**

- Despite the stampede of hungry crew members to catering for lunch, there is still leftover food. Everyday we donated the leftovers to a local homeless shelter through a non-profit program called Rock & Wrap It Up. They would contact a local agency, in the community where we were shooting, that would then come and pick up the donation.
- Batteries that wind up in landfills are a major contributor to soil pollution and water contamination. Over the course of our production we diverted over 1000 batteries from landfills. Our sound department took the lead in collecting used batteries from other departments to store them in one Green Box.
- Our production cameras shot on 3-perf film, which means each frame is 3 perforations long, allowing us to get over 25% more screen time with the same amount of film stock. This also means we used 25% less chemicals to process our film.
- Our main stage set was built on metal scaffolding, as opposed to the conventional wooden platforms, reducing the amount of construction waste we accumulated.
- We protected all of our locations with corrugated cardboard manufactured from previously recycled cardboard.
- All of the lumber that we purchased for construction was through Le Noble Lumber, a Forest Stewardship Council certified vendor.
- We utilized the Pix System, a secure high-speed network delivery system for our dailies, eliminating the need to make multiple DVD copies for key crew & executives.
- Our wardrobe department employed an eco-friendly dry cleaner that uses hydrocarbon machines and eco-friendly cleaning products. They also recycle all of their hangers & poly bags.
- We hung green-facts around our office to intrigue our team about issues surrounding sustainability.

### **Carbon Offset**

Toward the end of our production we worked with Native Energy, a climate solutions innovator and leader in the US carbon market. Native Energy offers services that reduce carbon pollution through carbon offsets and renewable energy credits.

We decided to offset our emissions associated with Facilities, Energy Use, Travel and Transportation, Accommodations, Waste, and Freight. Working with Native Energy we generally estimated our carbon footprint calculation to be 653 Co2 short tons.

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The project we propose to purchase our offsets through is Clinton County, New York Landfill Methane Destruction System. This sanitary landfill, 360 miles north of New York City, began accepting waste in 1977 and covers almost 70 acres in the county. Currently the landfill receives approximately 175,000 metric tons of waste each year. In 2005 they voluntarily built a landfill methane gas collection and destruction system. This system includes vertical and horizontal gas wells, collection laterals, blower, and a flare to combust the gas. The project, in addition to producing electricity for the local community, traps and destroys landfill gas otherwise emitted from the landfill.

When food goes to landfills and is sealed without oxygen, organic materials release methane, a potent heat-trapped gas, as they decompose. The Clinton County project is expected to eliminate methane emissions equivalent to 100,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. This action is comparable to the climate benefits of reducing more than 223,000,000 auto miles per year.

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## Educating Our Team

Our Green Steward, Jeremy Albucher, distributed weekly emails educating & informing our crew on green practices. Below are some examples of the emails.

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## Lessons/Goals For Next Time

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- Using bio diesel is still new territory, and presenting research when hiring vendors needs to be a more pro-active part of the process and negotiation. We would like to have used bio diesel in our entire fleet, however we were not always successful in getting truck rental companies to agree. If the Transport Captain is not pro-active, production needs to be aggressive in the problem solving.
  - Even though the Teamster Captain was supportive and spoke to the drivers about not idling—this proved to be an ongoing difficult area to control. A studio mandate here is needed.
  - Our prep crew & swing gang felt a little out of the loop on the green front. They need to be given equal attention/consideration when greening a production, especially in terms of water and waste removal. For off-set crew this often requires self-regulation, and a strong joint effort between the location department and the crew, is essential.
  - We ordered stainless steel water bottles for our crew, and for those who could hang them on their belts or working carts, this worked well. A substantial part of the crew preferred to use our compostable cups at the cooling stations. Next time we'll put more emphasis up front on the re-useable bottles when they are given out.
  - Many crew have longstanding relationships with vendors, and when there is resistance to green practices, changing behavior is tough. Production can encourage a vendor to adopt green practices where they may not exist, or mandate that a green vendor be hired. This has to happen right in the beginning. Once a path is chosen it's very difficult to reverse.
  - The scenics did not use Low or no-Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) paints even though they had agreed to do so up front. This escaped us and we were disappointed in the end to realize they had defaulted. The stated concern was compromising the aesthetic. We probably could have gotten the production designer to mandate, and a studio mandate here is needed.
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## Vendor List

TRI-STATE BIODIESEL  
646.432.5759

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36 E 23rd Street 9th Floor

NY, NY 10010

[www.nyc.tristatebiodiesel.com](http://www.nyc.tristatebiodiesel.com)

Services: Provides & delivers biodiesel

About: Dedicated to providing the New York City area with clean, renewable Biodiesel fuel made from recycled cooking oil.

#### THE BIG GREEN BOX

877.461.2345 [www.biggreenbox.com](http://www.biggreenbox.com)

125 E. Commercial Street, Suite A

Anaheim, CA 92801

Services: Convenient Battery Recycling

About: The Big Green Box is a low cost and easy way to provide electronics and battery recycling. The purchase includes all shipping, handling and disposal fees.

Pricing: \$63/ 1 box, \$120/ 2 boxes; \$290/5 boxes

#### FILCO CARTING

718.456.8292

111 Gardner Ave

Brooklyn, NY 11237

[www.filcocarting.com](http://www.filcocarting.com)

Contact: John Oken

Services: Waste Removal, Recycling, Composting & Elimination of Food Waste, Construction Recycling, Dumpsters, Confidential Document Destruction

#### LE NOBLE LUMBER

212.246.0150

38-20 Review Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

[www.lenoblelumber.com](http://www.lenoblelumber.com)

Services: FSC Certified Scenic & Construction Materials

About: FSC certified means that all the lumber is acquired from responsibly managed forests, not attributing to deforestation.

#### BUILD IT GREEN NYC

718.777.0132

3-17 26TH AVE.

ASTORIA, NY 11102

[www.bignyc.org](http://www.bignyc.org)

Services: Non-profit retail outlet for salvaged and surplus building materials

About: Proceeds help support CEC's environmental education program on Solar energy.

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**FILM BIZ RECYCLING**

917.648.5267

43-26 12th Street 2nd Floor

Long Island City, New York 11101

[www.filmbizrecycling.com](http://www.filmbizrecycling.com)

Services: Full service prop house, picture-lock storage clean out, lateral diversion & donation consultation

About: Film Biz Recycling is a not-for-profit organization devoted to reducing, reusing and redirecting waste from the film and television industry in New York City.

**GREEN TO GO (International Coffee Systems)**

212.643.9200

613 Berriman Street

Brooklyn, NY 11208

[www.greentogoics.com](http://www.greentogoics.com)

Services: Coffees, teas, cold beverages, snacks, water, juices, paper goods, plastic items, and various soaps and cleansers

About: Green to Go redefines the term “disposable” for commonly used office and pantry items. When you dispose of them, they are either recycled again or they biodegrade and are reclaimed back into our Earth’s ecosystems.

**ROCK & WRAP IT UP**

[www.rockandwrapitup.org](http://www.rockandwrapitup.org)

516.295.5686 (Diane Mandlebaum)

Services: Non-profit organization that establishes contacts with local shelters for food donations.

**RESOURCEFUL BAG & TAG, INC.**

800.872.8241

6420 W. 127th Street Unit 212

Palos Heights, IL 60463

[www.resourceful-1.com](http://www.resourceful-1.com)

Services: Provide recycling & trash receptacles and bags

Pricing: \$250/ 5 recyclemax setups

**NEW WAVE ENVIRO**

800.592.8371

P.O. Box 4146

Englewood, CO 80155

[www.newwaveenviro.com](http://www.newwaveenviro.com)

Services: Stainless Steel Water Bottles

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Pricing: \$4.77-5.30/bottle

About: New Wave Enviro manufactures and distributes reusable water bottles and water filtration systems, which produce high quality, inexpensive purified water from your own Tap.

MINERVA CLEANERS

718.676.7095

780 EAST 134TH Street

joeminerva@gmail.com

Services: Eco-Friendly Dry Cleaning

About: Brand new eco-friendly facility, which uses hydrocarbon dry cleaning machines. All chemicals & cleaning products are green certified. They recycle all of their hangers & poly bags.

MATERIALS FOR THE ARTS

718.729.3001

33-00 Northern Boulevard

Long Island City, NY 11101

info@mfta.nyc.gov

About: Materials for the Arts is a program that provides companies and individual's supplies they need to run and expand their programs. Materials are gathered from companies and individuals that no longer need them and redistributed to the artists and educators that do. In the process, hundreds of tons are removed from the waste stream every year and kept out of landfills.

PIX SYSTEM

415.357.9720

221 Pine St.

San Francisco, CA 94104

info@pixsystem.com

Services: Electronic Dailies Delivery System

About: Pix provides a secure high speed data delivery service for collaborating and managing all phases of production.

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