

# Protecting Our Environment

## Luxury Goes Green

(NAPSA)—From homes made entirely from recycled materials to designer shoes that boast a small carbon footprint, being green no longer means sacrificing luxury.

Last year alone, consumers saw the launch of the first all-green, business-class-only airline, a high-end vodka bottled in recycled glass with a label made from water-based ink and the introduction of “sustainable caviar”—and experts expect this year to be no different.

Indeed, marketing and advertising firm WPP Group estimated that spending on green products in 2008 would hit \$500 billion.

### A Green Standard

Perhaps the most highly visible sect of the luxury green market—cars—have made their mark as well. For instance, the first luxury hybrid, the Lexus RX hybrid, has sold more than 50,000 units since its launch in 2005, helping the company become a leader in the hybrid field. Today, the company offers three luxury hybrid vehicles, including an all-new RX 450h, and plans to debut a fourth in 2009.

But the cars, which run on both gasoline and electric power, don't just save fuel—they also use some recycled materials, saving room in landfills.

In fact, every one of the company's manufacturing sites maintains near zero-landfill status, meaning that 98 percent of waste resulting from manufacturing is recycled, repurposed or used to generate additional energy.

When one of the car's seat cushions, floor mats or roof liners is made, for instance, the leftover bits and trimmings are used as sound insulation in the doors, roof, floors and chassis.



**A number of luxury items, including vehicles, can help cut your carbon footprint.**

Additionally, company engineers developed a plastic called TSOP that does not deteriorate. Used in the bumpers, interior panels, trim and parts of the dash and console, it can be recycled indefinitely rather than discarded as waste after a single use. Even the batteries used in Lexus' hybrids are designed to last the life of the vehicle and are then recycled, helping to keep them out of landfills.

Any waste products that are produced making the cars that cannot be recycled end up in a specialized incinerator with 85 percent thermal efficiency. Burning the waste generates electricity and steam that is redirected back into the manufacturing process.

### A Growing Trend

The manufacturer's approach has gained accolades from consumers across the country, with Web sites such as Lexus Hybrid Living ([www.lexus.com/hybridliving](http://www.lexus.com/hybridliving)) now gaining popularity. It features a collection of people, products, services and compa-

nies that embrace both luxury and sustainability.

The site offers tours of cities across the country spotlighting Lexus Hybrid Living Partners, as well as focusing on influential people in various industries who are incorporating sustainability in meaningful ways. The site also sponsors events across the country introducing environmentally aware customers to other facets of sustainability.

There are even programs, such as the Lexus Eco Challenge, geared toward boosting environmental awareness. Last year, more than 3,500 middle and high school students participated and tackled a wide range of issues from recycling, water pollution and vampire electronics to alternative energy, reducing emissions and enhancing forests. This year's program will award 48 \$10,000 prizes, 14 \$30,000 prizes and 2 \$50,000 grand prizes.

For more information, visit [www.lexus.com](http://www.lexus.com).