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Expo features ways to help you 'go green'

By: Michael Carras

OAKS — With Earth Day approaching, you may be thinking extra hard about changes you could make at home or at work to do right by the planet.

A trade show coming to the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks April 16 to 18 promises to have plenty of green ideas for home and business owners.

The aptly named Go Green Expo, one of the nation's largest eco-friendly business and consumer lifestyle showcases, will be held Friday through Sunday at the large indoor expo facility located at 100 Station Ave., accessible via the Oaks exit off Route 422. The show stops in Montgomery County as part of a nationwide tour.

Touted as the area's largest one-stop shop for all things green, from gadgets to home supplies to food, Go Green Expo will offer something for everyone, "no matter what your shade of green," according to Bradford Rand, Go Green Expo founder and CEO.

This is the Go Green Expo's second year in the Philadelphia area. Last year's show was held in downtown Philadelphia. This year, the expo moved to the suburbs with hopes of attracting a greater number of attendees, according to Rand.

"We have no idea what kind of numbers to expect," he said. "We hope thousands."

More than 200 exhibitors will be on hand showcasing sustainable and eco-friendly products. Asked what some of the hot items would be at the show, Rand said the hottest thing these days is water filtration systems.

"With so many plastic bottles ending up in the landfill, it's enlightening to know these systems can save consumers and companies thousands in water bills."

Solar panels are also a popular item, he said. "The latest and greatest solar panels will be for sale at the expo."

You'll also see ways you can upgrade your home with eco-friendly lighting.

Eco-friendly fashions, food for people and pets, and business products will also be featured.

"There will be everything from bath tissue to hybrid cars and eco-friendly dentistry," Rand said.

The Good Housekeeping Research Institute On Tour — a major sponsor of the event — will be offering Go Green Expo visitors a unique in-the-lab experience.

"They will create a dome that will feature an array of eco-friendly products," Rand said.

Special guests include "green" racecar driver Leilani Munter, also known as the "Carbon Free Girl," who will be available to sign autographs at the GREENandSAVE.com booth. A keynote address will be offered by State Rep. Bryan Lentz (D-Delaware County).

Key exhibitors include Volkswagen and General Motors, who will showcase the latest cleaner-burning automotive technology, earth-friendly paper goods company Marcal and sustainable printing service Print Responsibly.

There will be panel discussions on topics including "Greening Your Home," "Eco-Fashion & Lifestyle," "Green Entrepreneurs," and "Sustainable Investing."

A special panel discussion about Eco-Entrepreneurism to be moderated by Leanne Krueger-Braneky, executive director of the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia. The panel will include Rand as well as members from Entrepreneurs Organization, one of the nation's premier business groups.

Friday is a Business-to-Business Expo geared toward trade professionals and corporate buyers. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are complimentary to trade professionals and corporate buyers (bring business card for admission).

Saturday and Sunday will be open to the public. Admission for both days is \$10 for adults or \$5 for students and seniors with proper ID. Children under age 12 will be admitted free. So if you pay for Saturday, you can return on Sunday at no additional cost. Saturday's hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday's are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To learn more, visit www.gogreenexpo.com. More information about the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center is available at www.phillyexpocenter.com or by calling 484-754-3976.

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