

The Green question:

Like many other individuals and businesses, Minerva's is increasingly aware of the need to be mindful of our "footprint" in the use of the world's resources.

So we try to balance the goals of 1) making your vacation comfortable, safe, and restorative, 2) doing our part in conserving the "stuff" that all our grandchildren will need, and 3) managing our own finite budget (and thereby keeping our rates modest.) So balancing those three goals, here's what we are doing so far (we'll hope to do more in the future):

We use a fuel-efficient vehicle, and we "bundle" our errands

We purchase a majority of our produce from local suppliers

We try to choose products that produce minimal waste in packaging, and we bring home our purchases in re-usable bags.

We compost at least 50% of our food waste, and we understand that by using our garbage disposal for the remainder, we allow the sanitation folks to turn it into fertilizer

We are using recycled furniture for some of the furnishings in Minerva's (this reduces the number of trees that need to be destroyed to make new furniture; it also reduces the used furniture that goes into landfills; and reduces Minerva's guests' exposure to the low-level gas emissions that come from the glues and finishes on new furniture). The floor carpeting, which is original to the building, is not our favorite color or style, but it is in fine shape, so we cleaned it instead of replacing it. However, **ALL THE BEDS AND BEDDING ARE NEW.**

We use cloth napkins, and/or non-bleached paper products, and of course we recycle paper, plastic, and aluminum

We have installed energy-efficient light bulbs, low-flow showers, and low-volume toilets (and we regularly check for water-wasting leaks)

We have installed Energy-Star appliances and controls, including front-load clothes washers which draw less water

We use "green" products for cleaning

The soaps and shampoo in our guest rooms are from Greenwich Bay Soaps, which produces gentle, natural, non-animal-tested products, and has a long-standing policy of environmental-awareness.

We use high-efficiency detergent for our laundry; and we offer our guests the option to re-use towels; we purchase high-quality cotton linens, which release stains so they do not have to be discarded so frequently. But we **DO** choose to protect our guests' health and safety by using **HOT** water to wash bedding and table linens

We run the dishwasher only when it's full

The building is well-insulated, and your rooms have windows that *open*, so artificially-heated or cooled air can be used as little as possible. Our automatic thermostats further conserve heating/cooling energy

We welcome your suggestions for further steps we might take, even if we may or may not be in a position to implement every suggestion.