



## greening greene

Here at GFC, we pride ourselves on the strong, vibrant and healthy community that we create summer after summer. We also place a high value on being a place where children get to live in and interact with the natural world. It makes perfect sense for us to strive to bring sustainability into our practices & teachings here at camp; while we hope to experience the impact here at camp, we also hope that our campers will return home feeling empowered to do mitzvot, and armed with the tools to make the world a better place.

For several years now, as an institution we have been looking closely at our environmental impact, seeking out opportunities to reduce our “footprint.”

- Camper and staff living spaces have been equipped with passive solar hot water heaters. These reduce the amount of electricity used for the electric water heaters.
- Camper and staff living spaces have been equipped with solar tubes. These allow natural light into the cabins, reducing the need to turn on lights during the daylight hours.
- We have installed motion-sensor light switches throughout all of our new buildings and will retrofit others as possible.
- Compact fluorescent bulbs have replaced all “regular” bulbs where possible.
- A senior employee on our summer staff coordinates the sustainability program, bringing together camp operations and camper education.
- As part of the sustainability program, we operate an eco-farm and eco-garden. These increasingly emulate the programs at Kibbutz Lotan.
- We have initiated an aggressive recycling program and are about to begin composting.
- Our maintenance staff is stockpiling scrap wood and materials from projects in an effort to re-use these items in other projects.

**The area of biggest concern is our trash output.** In spite of our recycling program, we are looking to be pro-active in dramatically reducing the amount of trash we generate.

**The kitchen and dining hall are our biggest trash generators,** and so this is where we have focused the most attention.

- In recent summers, we have reduced food waste by encouraging campers to “eat what you take”, and expanding “best of the week” as a way to use up uneaten food before it goes bad and into the trash.
- This summer we will be launching a major composting program.
- We are striving to recycle as much of our cardboard as possible in landscaping and for programs.

We are very hopeful that with all of these steps, combined with a commitment from our camp community, we will significantly reduce the amount of trash coming out of the kitchen and dining hall.

**The second largest quantity of trash comes out of the camper cabins in the form of care package refuse. This is where we need your help.**

In our Family Information Packet, we state: "While the occasional care package (maybe once a week) is a nice treat for your camper, it is important that you, and friends and relatives who may also consider sending packages, show some restraint." We make what I believe is a very good argument for this request:

- Campers have told us that when one child in the cabin gets a lot of packages, it makes other campers feel uncomfortable. We work hard to create vibrant cabin communities; but that is hard to do when there is a sense that some are the "haves" while others are the "have-nots". The job of our counselors is challenging enough without the addition of "outside stressors" like package inequity.
- Campers are kept very busy while at Camp; their only real down-time is during rest hour, when we hope they will take the opportunity to rest. They just don't need a lot of extra stuff to have a good time.
- This year we are adding a third argument, one that we believe is also very compelling: **Sending fewer, and smaller packages is good for the planet!**

We know that today's enthusiasm for "going green" is more than just a fad. Today's global challenges demand that we think and act differently, and our young people are leading the charge for change. We think cutting down on the quantity and size of packages will make a real difference, and hope you will partner with us – and your children – in reducing our trash output.

We encourage you to have a discussion with your camper about our greening efforts & how packages play into them, and to model for your camper your commitment to this value. We also hope you will enjoy the cost savings and aggravation-reduction that will come with cutting back on packages!

Jewish tradition places a high value on Tikkun Olam, repairing the world. At camp we teach and model this value in many ways. We believe that our efforts to "go green" will serve as another great example to our campers, our camp community, and the community-at-large.