



## SMITHFIELD STATION

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

### Smithfield Station Green

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#### 1. Overview

Smithfield Station is a privately owned restaurant, hotel and marina located on the Pagan River, in historic Smithfield, VA. We decided to “go green” in late 2006 as part of the expansion of the hotel at the property. The early decisions to “go green” were made in part because we felt it was not only an environmentally responsible thing to do, but soon many of these initiatives would not only be expected by our guests, but made in to law. It was not long in to this planning process however that we were able to realize that there would be a significant cost savings in terms of utilities with this program. When the new hotel opened in September 2007, and with a few modifications to the existing facility, Smithfield Station was able to apply for Virginia Green status and we were readily accepted. Further, the marina was named a Virginia Clean Marina by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in the spring of 2008. The waterfront has been vital to the success of our facility and it is with great pride that we show it the respect it deserves.

## **2. Program Establishment**

When Smithfield Station decided that we wanted to become a green property, we were unsure of what specifications would make us so. At this same time the Virginia Tourism and Hospitality Association released a set of guidelines that were a platform to follow to earn your green certification. They include everything from Energy Star appliances to creating natural lighting. The following are the processes we took to become Virginia Green.

- **OPTIONAL LINEN SERVICE**

Sheets and Towels are not automatically changed every day during the course of a guest's stay. Our policy is as follows: if a guest is a stay over, any towels or wash cloths that are left in the floor of the bathroom are to be exchanged for fresh ones. If the towel and/or wash cloth is left hanging up then the towel or wash cloth is not to be exchanged. Bed linens also should be inspected daily. Provided the linen is not soiled, the linen should be changed on every third day of the guest's stay or at checkout. This policy is aimed at decreasing the use of water, energy and harmful detergents. We have also purchased brand new energy star appliances and front loading washing machines to encourage water and energy conservation for the entire property.

- **RECYCLING**

Aside from the optional linen service, recycling is one of the Lodge's top priorities. Each guest room is supplied with a separate container that is labeled with the universal recycle logo. When housekeeping is in each room they will collect the recyclables and separate in to appropriate containers that will be taken to the recycling center. Recycling is further encouraged through the facility with a separate cardboard dumpster on premises as well as battery and oil recycling through our marina and restaurant. All paper products used in administrative functions are kept to a minimum and those that are used are recycled. Any paper that is feasible to do so is printed on both sides and all paper is a minimum 30% post consumer material.

- **WATER CONSERVATION**

Smithfield Station has invested quite a bit in water conservation efforts. We have recently purchased energy star front loading washing machines that are designed to reduce water usage by as much as 50 % per load. We have also replaced all shower heads with Kohler Water saver heads that minimize water while continuing to offer a pleasant showering experience as well as low flow lavatory faucets. Water usage is tracked monthly to monitor for leaks or spikes in usage. All floors that need to be mopped are done so with swiffers rather than water and in bathrooms, the floors are scrubbed by hand with a mixture of vinegar and water. We have just switched to

waterless urinals as well that are projected to save 40,000 gallons of water a year. Our entire parking lot is a pervious surface and water collected off of the roofs is funneled and strained through sand. We do not have an irrigation system and any plantings are watered naturally when at all possible. If plantings require water other than what is done naturally, they are watered with pitchers of water, one at a time. We feel that our property is one of the most water conservative of its nature using only approximately 23,750 gallons of water per month between 44 hotel rooms and 100 boat slips!

- **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Once again, Smithfield Station is in the front running in energy conservation thanks in large part to the completion of its recent renovations. All phone systems, computer systems, HVAC systems, laundry and other major electrical systems were upgraded to brand new energy star machines. The majority of all lighting has been replaced with fluorescent bulbs where appropriate and feasible. As existing bulbs burn out we are replacing them with fluorescent bulbs where appropriate and feasible as well. In our new construction, our buildings walls were spray foamed insulated effectively sealing ALL cracks and crevices before regular insulation was installed. All new windows are Anderson "E-Rated" thermal windows and the older windows are double paned thermal glass. This process has made for an extremely efficient heating and cooling of a 30,000 square foot building. All rooms have individual thermostats and 19 seer HVAC units while at the same time the many windows provide for enough natural lighting to make it unnecessary to turn on additional lighting during daylight hours. Our outdoor lighting for night time is all "dark sky" lighting that reflects the lighting on to desired paths rather than up in to the sky. These new implementations have managed to drop our overall electric bill nearly 40%! Our electric bill for 44 rooms, 7 retail shops, and 100 slip marina averages just shy of 15,000 kWh per month!

- **GREEN EVENTS PACKAGE**

By the sheer nature of our current practices, all of our packages, events and meetings are "green." Our events are hosted in a facility that uses all the recommended green practices. Recycling is not only available, but encouraged. Disposables are kept to a minimum and when necessary are made from recycled products and are recyclable themselves. We encourage the following to help maintain a green status:

- Conference information is provided electronically via e-mail.
- All Printed Materials are on Recycled-Content Paper that contains at least 30% post consumer material and is not chlorine bleached. Double-sided copying is a must when permissible!
- We contract with printers who utilize pollution prevention techniques (e.g., Soy-Based and other less hazardous inks, energy-efficient equipment, and waste reducing practices).

- Paper products used by the supplier (writing paper, toilet paper, and tissues) have not been bleached with chlorine and contain at least 30% post-consumer content.
- We try and obtain accurate attendance of our guests in order to reduce food and other conference wastes.
- We Incorporate requirements for environmentally preferable products into contracts with suppliers of conference materials.
- There is a training program in place to inform the workers of the facility's "greening" policies. Your green event needs to "*walk the green walk*".
- *Talk the Green Talk.* We let our participants know that we have made an effort to minimize the environmental impacts of their event.

### **3. Goals and Benchmarking**

One of the wonderful things about this program is that once in place, the program sustains itself. The policies we have implemented remain in place and the natural lighting cannot be taken away. So, how are we able to track the success of the program? The easiest way we have found to do this is by measuring utility billing. We have historical data on what we spent pre-green and we have our new utilities. We have reduced our power bill from \$4,500 per month monthly to approximately \$1,200 per month. Our water and sewage has been reduced from approximately 400,000 gallons per month to an amazing 23,750 gallons of water per month! These are savings that are unbelievable to us. The results of this program are used throughout our marketing campaign. We appeal to conventions that only want to meet at green convention centers and to boaters who only want to stay in environmentally responsible marinas. We use Virginia Green logos on our websites and emails.

### **4. Outcomes and Environmental Benefits**

Our program has provided the environment with a great reduction in negative impact on natural resources. We are saving on average 375,000 gallons of water a month, 4,500,000 gallons per year. This not only saves on the amount pulled from the reservoirs for consumption, but an equal amount that is returned to the sewage handling stations for treatment. We are using approximately 45,000 fewer kWhr per month of electricity or 540,000 kWhr per year reduction. It makes our facility more efficient and lowers the demand of the electric company. Anyone who is building a new facility can easily adapt the guidelines. Further, implementation in an existing facility is easy if you plan for it. It is simply a matter of devising the plan and implementing it as your equipment needs replacing.

## **5. Relevance to Traveler or Travel Industry**

It is difficult to show a direct affect to the travel industry as a whole. It is much easier to show the effect to the environment. However, it is a “warm fuzzy” for our guests to know they are staying in a facility that is an environmental steward. We have found all of our guests to be excited about the cleanliness the green feeling brings to the place as well as receptive to our recycling program. These things considered it is fair to say that the idea of a green facility resonates well throughout the travel industry.