

## ON THE NET

## Going green? Go online

Concerned about hospital or office waste? Worried about dioxin emissions? Looking for alternatives to PVC IV bags? Internet resources can provide information on all these issues, and much more.

Begin your search by visiting Health Care Without Harm ([www.noharm.org](http://www.noharm.org)), a collaborative campaign involving more than 270 member organizations, including 41 US hospitals. The HCWH search engine leads to well-researched review articles with topics ranging from the dangers posed by mercury thermometers and PVCs to the environmental implications of the health care sector itself.

Physicians interested in the Canadian perspective on the greening of health care should click on the site of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment site ([www.cape.ca](http://www.cape.ca)) or the Toronto Environmental Alliance ([www.torontoenvironment.org](http://www.torontoenvironment.org)), which is the Canadian coordinator for HCWH.

The alliance also lists Canadian distributors of medical devices made without PVC or mercury, but the bible for alter-

native products is the Sustainable Hospital Project ([www.uml.edu/centers/LCSP/hospitals/](http://www.uml.edu/centers/LCSP/hospitals/)), which provides sources for green products ranging from nonmercury sphygmomanometers to non-PVC patient ID bracelets. The site also has fact sheets on environmentally preferable purchasing and other topics, reputable basic references and a wealth of links to other scientific studies.

And just because you run an office practice, don't think you're off the environmental hook. A green guide to running your office is posted on the US National Association of Physicians for the Environment site ([www.napenet.org/](http://www.napenet.org/)), along with additional information.

If you're looking to save on energy costs, check out the Energy Innovators Project ([www.cchse.org](http://www.cchse.org)), sponsored by the Canadian College of Health Service Executives and Natural Resources Canada. Ninety-three Canadian health care institutions are now part of the project and are reporting savings of up to \$1.6 million annually.

For general scientific information on

health and environment, it's hard to beat the Centre for Health and the Global Environment at the Harvard School of Public Health ([www.med.harvard.edu/chge/](http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/)). And to gain an interna-



tional perspective see the International Society of Doctors for the Environment ([www.gn.apc.org/noharm/isde/index.htm](http://www.gn.apc.org/noharm/isde/index.htm)) or the WHO Health-promoting Hospitals Network ([www.univie.ac.at/hph/](http://www.univie.ac.at/hph/)). So far, hospitals in 50 countries have joined the network, resulting in models of best practices, cost savings and more. — *Barbara Sibbald, CMAJ*