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Nonprofits invited to town hall

The Center for Nonprofit Management will host "Groundwork 2012: Legislative Impact on Nonprofits," a free town hall to discuss and prepare for the challenges that nonprofit groups will face in light of unprecedented budget cuts. The session will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. June 24 at **Communities Foundation of Texas** at 5500 Caruth Haven Lane.

Funding for the session is provided by **Citi Foundation**.

"With the special session of the 82nd Texas Legislature now under way, it is important for nonprofits to understand what effect the impending budget cuts will have on funding and the need for services," said **Cynthia B. Nunn**, president of the Center for Nonprofit Management, who will moderate the discussion.

"History tells us that when government has withdrawn programs and funding, the nonprofit sector is often left to pick up the slack and fill in the gaps left behind."

The town hall session will provide information about upcoming changes and allow for questions and answers from attendees.

The panel will include representation from:

The Legislature: Texas Sen. **Royce West**, D-Dallas.

The philanthropic community: **Brent Christopher**, president and CEO of the Communities Foundation of Texas.

The business community: **Debbie Taylor**, Southwest regional director and Texas director of community development for Citi.

Nonprofits: **Jason Sabo**, senior vice president of public policy, **United Ways of Texas**.

The public: **Larry James**, president and CEO of **City-Square**.

For more information or to register for the event, visit www.cnmdallas.org or call

Small Business Buzz

A weekly report on small business owners and entrepreneurs in North Texas.



QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? Staff writer Sheryl Jean wants to hear your ideas and suggestions about our small business coverage. E-mail her at sjean@dallasnews.com.

THE FIVE

A local expert provides five recommendations each week on a topic useful to small business owners. This week, Dallas green consultant Anna Clark talked to staff writer Sheryl Jean about five ways to make your building more efficient.



1. Get an energy audit

An energy audit is the starting point for getting the maximum return on investment from your company's sustainability program. A professional auditor's recommendations can guide business owners toward the best ways to reduce operating costs and/or their carbon footprint. Such improvements can also lead to better worker productivity, potential tax benefits and competitive advantages from green marketing initiatives.



2. Improve your energy behavior

Small steps, such as installing a programmable thermostat, can often make big strides in lowering energy bills. In a small building, turning down the thermostat 10 degrees to 15 degrees for eight hours can save as much as 1 percent per degree on your heating bill.



3. Participate in Energy Star

The federal program Energy Star offers free tools and marketing materials to spread the word to employees and gain recognition for being a smart energy-saver. Its website, www.energystar.gov, offers guidelines, tips and a list of service providers to help companies become more energy-efficient and save money.



4. Become an empowered consumer

Small business owners should find out what their electric provider offers in the way of programs, rebates and other incentives. All investor-owned utilities in Texas are required to offer a minimum of programs. Many municipally owned utilities have programs in place.



5. Lease greener space

If you lease office space, try to influence your building manager or owner to make changes and pass the savings to the tenants. If that doesn't work, seek greener pastures elsewhere when your lease expires. Find a building that's LEED-certified by the U.S. Green Building Council and has access to public transportation for the ultimate sustainable workplace.

Before starting her company EarthPeople in 2005, Clark was the Dallas vice president of BlabberMouth PR (now Penman PR). She has 16 years of experience in public relations, management consulting, corporate training, market research and sales. Clark walks the talk: She lives in a platinum LEED-certified house in Dallas and last year wrote the book *Green, American Style*.

