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## Triangle fast-food restaurants go green

Posted: Today at 7:50 a.m.  
 Updated: Today at 8:13 a.m.

**CHAPEL HILL, N.C.** — Two Triangle fast-food restaurants are trying out the theory that going green can save the environment and save money.



The Subway restaurant at Southern Village in Chapel Hill is North Carolina's first stand-alone restaurant to get a LEED certification. That designation comes from a national program that recognizes environmentally sustainable buildings.

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The regional manager of Subway, Tim Colburn, said the company picked the right spot to go green.

"This is southern Chapel Hill. The folks here care about the environment," Colburn said. "So, we knew we had the right location."

The Subway at Southern Village is North Carolina's first stand-alone restaurant to get a LEED certification. That designation comes from a national program that recognizes environmentally sustainable buildings.

Colburn said the Subway restaurant was designed on simple principles to make it environmentally friendly.

"Keep waste at a minimum. Keep from buying new stuff. Reusing what you can," he said. "It helps the environment."

The result was a building that's a green machine, from energy-efficient lights and water fixtures to recycled floor tiles.

For the Subway chain, the proof is in the numbers: Last month, a restaurant in Carrboro had an electric bill of about \$680. Meanwhile, the green restaurant, which is about 500 square feet larger, had an electric bill of \$350.

"Our office here in Chapel Hill is committed to three or four more stores in the next year, year and a half," Colburn said.

In Cary, Ric Richards recently opened North Carolina's first green McDonald's franchise. Richards is seeking LEED certification for the restaurant this fall.

Outside, there's an electric car charger. Inside, devices called solatubes use mirrors to funnel in sunlight.



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"During bright, sunny days, we're only using 3 percent of our lights," Richards said.

Even a new fryer bolsters the environmentally friendly mission by using less oil. "We can throw less oil away," he said. "It's very efficient, very effective."

And the fries? "Still taste the same," assured Richards.

Richards said the green design makes good environmental sense and good business sense.

"We are sort of a litmus test to see what's going to happen in the future, but so far, everything looks bright," he said.

**Reporter:** Brian Shrader  
**Web Editor:** Anne Johnson

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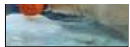
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