

MINNESOTA WASTE WISE
FACT SHEET
GREEN TEAMS

OVERVIEW

- Gain support of business owner or upper management
- Represent as many departments as possible
- Select a leader who will bring enthusiasm to the team
- To start, set easily attainable goals that are likely to succeed and gain support
- Educate employees
- Monitor your successes!

RESOURCES

Need help starting or facilitating a Green Team? Contact Minnesota Waste Wise at (651) 292-4650 for more information.

WHAT IS A GREEN TEAM?

A Green Team is a dedicated group of employees, at all levels, formal or informal, working together to promote waste reduction, recycling, responsible purchasing in their workplace, and improve the bottom line. Green Teams are communities which learn and practice knowledge sharing, creation, and innovation fostering sustainability. Every Green Team will be unique as they have their own process, challenges, successes, and history. Successful Green Teams are “place-based” as they choose to work on issues that are meaningful to their specific community. However, a Green Team who is focused on environmental sustainability as a whole can reinforce the importance of tacking all areas together, to see the broader picture of what environmental sustainability means.

CREATING A GREEN TEAM

To start off any environmental initiative, employees should gain the support of the business owner or upper management. Since Green Teams generally work with upper management, gaining the support from the owner or upper management will help the Green Team implement new policies and/or programs. The size of a Green Team should be related to the size of your organization and be representative of as many departments or operations as possible. A team should designate an enthusiastic team leader as a coordinator. Choosing a committed coordinator is vital to starting a successful Green Team. Once a coordinator/team leader(s) is identified, the Green Team will need to set some easily attainable preliminary goals. There are a lot of great ideas out there, but a Green Team should start with small projects that have a high likelihood of success to gain additional support and credibility, as well as encourage continued involvement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GREEN TEAM

General responsibilities of a Green Team can include:

- Working with company management to set goals and create a policy
- Gather information to design and implement a program
- Integrating all aspects of environmental sustainability into programs and initiatives
- Promoting the program to employees
- Educating employees about the program
- Monitoring the progress of the program
- Reporting to management about the program
- Marketing the success of the program, and the facility as environmentally friendly

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND

Make sure your green team continues to look for ways to save money and help the environment. Continue to expand the Green Team efforts by dealing with other areas outside of basic recycling and waste reduction. Areas Green Teams have explored and expanded include: purchasing programs, environmentally preferable cleaners and janitorial services, energy efficiency, fluorescent bulb recycling, food waste or composting (organics recycling) programs, green landscaping, and carpooling or bike-to-work programs.

MINNESOTA
WASTE WISE

400 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
www.mnwastewise.org