

CLARK COUNTY

GREEN TEAM

GUIDE

Create positive environmental change in your organization! This guide provides the steps you need to set up and maintain a successful green team.



CLARK COUNTY WASHINGTON
PUBLIC WORKS
SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

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DEFINE THE VALUE OF A GREEN TEAM

Before meeting with management, prepare a strong values statement

to articulate a green team's benefit to the organization. Your values' statement should define why being green is meaningful to the business and its employees.

Use examples that will resonate with all members of your organization and clearly define the benefits, such as:

- Cost savings associated with waste, energy, transportation and water.
- Attracting and retaining talent and increasing employee morale and satisfaction.
- Meeting or exceeding customer expectations for environmental stewardship.
- Meeting or exceeding regulatory compliance standards.
- Aligning practices with values.

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GAIN MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Management's support can ensure your green team has the resources it

needs to be successful. Be clear about how much time is needed, whether the time will be voluntary or paid, and define the role you see management playing. Include plans to communicate team goals, needs and successes.

Not every green team will have management support with a budget or endorsed initiatives. Even if members volunteer, a team can accomplish no-cost, easy actions such as setting up basic recycling and educating coworkers about behaviors that save energy or resources. A volunteer team that shows cost-savings may soon garner management support.

The Host BioEnergy Systems green team



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BUILD YOUR GREEN TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Recruit team members from all levels and departments of your company: operations, procurement, management and office managers. Look for team members who:

- Can regularly attend meetings.
- Will take on project work responsibilities.
- Are knowledgeable about their area of the organization.
- Can serve as an informational resource for others in the organization.
- Are enthusiastic about the green team's mission.

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HOLD YOUR FIRST MEETING

Writing a mission statement is a great way to engage your new Green Team members. Writing a mission statement will help all team members stay focused and emphasize the value of the team. To kick-off your first meeting and begin shaping your mission statement, you may want to discuss:

- The group's purpose, allowing each member to explain why they want to be part of the team, what they bring to the team, and what they hope the team will accomplish.
- Potential projects and priorities.
- How the team will collect baseline information on, say, energy and water use, transportation modes and garbage generation.

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SET GOALS

A good goal is specific, involves actions, and can be measured and accomplished in a reasonable timeframe.

- As a team, make a list of 15-20 goals.
- Combine similar goals.
- Ask each member to vote by writing down which goals on the list they would like to pursue. Allow each member the number of choices equal to at least one-third of the total number of goals.
- Reduce the list by eliminating goals with the fewest votes.
- Repeat the last two steps until a manageable number remains.
- Use the remaining goals to kick off your green team initiatives.



**CREATING
ENVIRONMENTAL
CHANGE
THROUGH
COLLABORATION**

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PLAN THE TEAM'S START

Write a simple plan that incorporates focus areas, baseline information, goals, prioritized action items and a method to track progress. The plan will be a good map for your green team. Focus areas may include waste prevention, recycling, composting, water, energy, community engagement, transportation and purchasing.

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FOLLOW THROUGH

Every team, no matter how diligent, can benefit from help with follow-through. You likely have some great ideas, but we'll share a few to get you started.

- **Rotate leadership.** Allow every member an opportunity to lead.
- **Form sub-committees.** These could be organized by areas of improvement such as energy, solid waste, paper use, water use, stormwater management and hazardous waste, or by tasks required to achieve improvements, such as interoffice communication, external communication, proposal and presentation, materials acquisition and interoffice recruitment.

- **Meet regularly.** Determine an appropriate frequency and be consistent.
- **Appreciation.** Recognize members for their work or consult management about how to recognize the team or certain members' accomplishments.
- **Paid time.** If possible, attain paid work time for participating in the green team's activities. Communicate the cost savings, marketing benefits and other assets of your team's effort.
- **Peer-to-peer networking.** Meet with other organizations' green teams to brainstorm and problem-solve.

Keep it simple and concrete. Provide the information multiple times and in multiple ways. Most people need to see, hear and do things several times before it becomes a comfortable habit.

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ENGAGE AND ENERGIZE

Engaging and energizing staff around green team initiatives is critical to your team's success. Here are some ways to

keep everyone moving in the same direction:

- **Staff meetings.** Give short updates at meetings to discuss latest projects, goals and accomplishments; mention upcoming lunchtime presentations or

educational opportunities.

- **Employee blog.** Use a blog to share ideas, new information and resources. Offer fresh content weekly on a variety of sustainability topics including:
 - What do the chasing arrows and numbers on plastic really mean?
 - Are compostable plastics really compostable?
 - How can we prevent stormwater pollution?
- **Employee website or staff bulletin board.** Post updates, best practices and helpful tips; show reports of waste and recovery over a year. Consider changing bulletins to follow seasonal themes. Identify green team members so employees know whom to contact with ideas or suggestions.
- **Employee newsletter.** Include a regular section for green team project updates or accomplishments.
- **Annual sustainability event.** Organize an annual event where you showcase accomplishments, educate and inspire staff, and recruit new people to the green team.
- **Build teamwork.** Volunteer at a community event.

CONGRATULATIONS

on starting your own
GREEN TEAM!

Contact Clark County Green Business with questions or to learn more about how we're here to support your new team.

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