

SPRINGFIELD AREA GREEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: OVERVIEW

About the Program

Welcome to the *Springfield Area Green Leadership Program*. This is a recognition program that encourages area businesses, institutions and organizations to integrate environmentally sustainable practices throughout their facilities, operations, culture and products.

The goal of the recognition program is to promote a wide range of sustainable practices, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, water conservation, renewable energy and green purchasing. These practices not only benefit the environment, but are also good for the bottom line.

The *Green Leadership Program* offers three levels of participation: **BRONZE**, **SILVER** and **GOLD**. Your business or institution may enroll at any recognition level - each with its own prescribed environmental sustainability requirements. You may remain at that level or apply for higher recognition at any time.

The benefits of becoming a *Green Leadership* member include:

- Recognition at local awards ceremony
- Listing on an online directory
- Certificates for display at your facility
- Silver Level and Gold Level members receive a window emblem indicating their standing for display and promotional purposes
- Gold Level members will receive additional publicity through press releases and success story articles

The program is open to all types of businesses, institutions or organizations, including manufacturing, retail and office businesses; services industries; health care facilities; educational institutions; local and state governments; congregations and non-profit organizations. There is no cost to join and participation is simple.

The *Green Leadership Program* operates on a year-round basis. There is no enrollment or application deadline to be accepted into the program.

Below are checklists that cover general requirements for the three participation levels. The checklists are composed of simple actions your business or institution can take to integrate environmental sustainability throughout its facilities and operations. The practices are organized by topic area and may include links to relevant external resources. New initiatives are encouraged to fulfil these measures, though businesses and institutions will be credited for recent or ongoing initiatives.

To start on your way to recognition, [download the application form here](#). Please review the membership requirements outlined below before applying for recognition.

If you have any questions about the *Green Leadership Program*, please contact awards@sustainable.springfield.org

Membership Requirements

BRONZE LEVEL. To receive recognition at this level, the business or institution must achieve all of the following practices and at least two (2) measures in the electives category.

- Designate an individual, team or committee to coordinate sustainability efforts at your facility (For tips on how to build a green team, see 10 Best Practices for Supporting Green Teams at: <https://www.triplepundit.com/2009/12/10-best-practices-for-supporting-green-teams/>).
- Notify your employees, customers or members about your sustainability program (e.g., posting information online, providing informational materials and offering facility tours).
- Create opportunities for employees to offer sustainability recommendations (e.g., through employee orientation, staff meetings, training or incentives).
- Look at your garbage dumpster or waste containers quarterly to see if there are items that could be reduced, reused or recycled.
- Conduct an annual walkthrough or assessment of your facility to identify opportunities to reduce waste, save energy and conserve water.
- Monitor your utility bills monthly to track energy and water use over time.
- **Electives Category.** Implement at least two (2) of the measures listed below:
 - Send staff to a class/seminar/training (local or online) on sustainability practices, tools or resources.
 - Provide support for a local community sustainability project or event (e.g., sponsorship, volunteers and materials).
 - Educate your employees or members on opportunities to be more sustainable in their daily activities.
 - Notify suppliers of your sustainability program.

SILVER LEVEL. To receive recognition at this level, the business or institution must:

- Implement the measures specified in the Bronze Level category.
- Achieve the requirements in three (3) of the sustainability categories listed below.

GOLD LEVEL. To receive recognition at this level, the business or institution must:

- Implement the measures specified in the Bronze Level category.
- Set environmental sustainability objectives or targets (including a timeframe for meeting the objectives) for three or more significant environmental impacts. Be practical, know your businesses or institutions limitations and don't over commit (See the sample environmental impacts worksheet at: https://mde.maryland.gov/marylandgreen/Documents/mdgreen/Sample_Environmental_Worksheet.pdf).
 - Example environmental sustainability objectives:
 - Reduce energy consumption by 5% per year every year through December 31, 2025.
 - Reduce paper usage by 15% by December 31, 2021 (based on 2019 baseline).
 - 25% of electricity to be provided by renewable energy resources by December 31, 2022.
 - Increase recycling rates by 10% from 2019 levels by December 31, 2021.
 - Set aside 15% of the landscape or grounds as natural habitat or green space by December 31, 2024.
 - Develop environmental education materials for staff and customers by March 1, 2020.
 - Purchase at least five (5) new environmentally-preferable products by March 1, 2020.
- Achieve the requirements in five (5) of the environmental sustainability categories listed below.

Environmental Sustainability Categories

- ✓ Waste Reduction
- ✓ Energy Efficiency
- ✓ Water Conservation
- ✓ Green Products/Services
- ✓ Vehicle Emissions
- ✓ Renewable Energy
- ✓ Biodiversity

WASTE REDUCTION

- Create a program to recycle at least three (3) of the following items: paper, glass bottles, metal cans, plastic containers, used motor oil, dry cell batteries, compact fluorescent bulbs, electronics, or cardboard (For a list of local recycling/reuse vendors, visit the Sustain Springfield Green Map web site at: <http://www.ilcc.edu/career-training/green-center/local-resources/sustain-springfield/>). In addition, implement at least three (3) measures from the list below.

- If copiers and printers have duplex printing capability (double-sided copying), enable duplex printing.
- Reuse paper or plastic packaging materials in your shipments.
- Reduce unnecessary packaging by buying in bulk or only what is needed.
- Request that suppliers or vendors use reusable containers instead of disposable items.
- Donate or use an equipment resale program allowing another business or institution to make use of your unwanted items
(<https://www.springfield.il.us/Departments/PublicWorks/Documents/RoomtoRoomGuide1016.pdf>).
- Offer employees alternatives to individual bottled water (<http://www.container-recycling.org/index.php/zero-beverage-container-waste/62-issues/zero-waste/336-bottled-water-alternatives->).
- Offer incentives for staff or customers who bring their own reusable bags, coffee mugs, etc. (See Fun Ways to Get Employees to Recycle at Work at: https://business.officedepot.com/a/content/articles/recycleatwork/%3Fcm_sp%3Dgreener-articles-fun_ways-to_get_employees_to_recycle_at_work).
- Sell products made with recycled content material.
- Centralize purchasing where feasible to eliminate unnecessary purchases.
- Keep a set of washable cups, glasses, plates and utensils in the break room or kitchen.
- For office meetings or gatherings and workshops, use re-usable cups, plates and utensils.
- Arrange for compostable items for, and from, special events (food scraps, food-soiled paper, compostable food service ware, etc.) to be collected for composting.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- Implement at least three (3) measures from the list below:
 - Institute a policy that all electronic devices and lighting fixtures are turned off when not in use and place signs near light switches to remind staff to turn off when not in use (<https://www.constellation.com/solutions/for-your-small-business/goals/employee-engagement-ideas-for-the-office-that-save-energy.html>).
 - Use power management features on computers and printers (https://www.energystar.gov/products/low_carbon_it_campaign/put_your_computers_sleep).
 - Have your HVAC (heating, ventilation & air conditioning) equipment checked by a professional yearly. If you do not control energy, solicit cooperation of your property manager to conserve energy.
 - Purchase products (e.g., computers, monitors, lighting, appliances, windows, heating and cooling, ceiling fans and other equipment) that have earned the U.S. DOE designated-Energy Star label and meet specifications for energy efficiency and performance (<https://www.energystar.gov/>).

- Use energy efficient lighting, such as T-8, T-5 or light-emitting diodes (LED) fixtures with electronic ballasts (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/lighting-choices-save-you-money>).
- Use LED light bulbs for desk lamps.
- Remove unnecessary lamps (de-lamp) in over-lit areas.
- Use task lighting instead of lighting an entire area to focus the light where you need it in work areas.
- Coordinate with vending machine vendor to turn off advertising lights.
- Open or close blinds to make the best use of natural daylight and take advantage of skylights or other natural daylight sources to reduce lighting during daytime hours.
- Use lighting controls (e.g., dimmers, motion sensors and occupancy sensors) to automatically turn lights on and off as needed (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/save-electricity-and-fuel/lighting-choices-save-you-money/lighting-controls>).
- Plug electronics into a "smart" power strip that let you designate which electronics should always be on, and which ones do not need power when they're not in use (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/articles/choose-right-advanced-power-strip-you>).
- Set back the thermostat in the evenings and other times when the building isn't occupied.
- Seal your heating and cooling ducts (https://www.energystar.gov/ia/products/heat_cool/ducts/ES_Duct_Sealing_flyer.pdf).
- Get help with saving energy by utilizing City Water, Light & Power's technical assistance and/or equipment rebate programs (<https://www.cwlp.com/ConservationHome/ConservationInformation/EnergyAudits.aspx> and <https://www.cwlp.com/ServicesHome/ServicesInformation/AllRebates.aspx>).

WATER CONSERVATION

- Implement at least three (3) measures from the list below:
 - Ensure that leaks are checked for regularly and repaired promptly. You can obtain tablets to detect leaks in toilets can be from CWLP or use food coloring (For more information see: <https://www.conserveh2o.org/water-lost-toilet-leaks>).
 - Post signage to encourage water conservation in restroom and kitchen facilities (e.g., *Stop Water Waste; Observe Water Leaks and Report Them; Think Water Conservation, and Finished? Turn Off Tap and Conserve Water*).
 - Use smart watering techniques for plants (e.g., limit overspray, water around plant bases, group plants according to their water needs, use drip irrigation and water during early morning hours).
 - If you have an irrigation system, adjust irrigation schedules to account for seasonal rain variation or use rain sensors.

- Use products (e.g., toilets, showerheads, urinals, irrigation controllers and pre-rinse spray valves) that have earned the U.S. EPA-designated Water Sense label and meet specifications for water efficiency and performance (www.epa.gov/watersense/product-search).
- Use only dry methods to clean outdoor hard surfaces. Indoors, use dry floor cleaning methods, followed by damp mopping, rather than spraying or hosing with water.
- Evaluate feasibility of rainwater harvesting (<https://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/homeowners/130516.html>).
- Install water-efficient shrubs, trees, ground cover, cobblestones, brick or mulch in place of turf grass (See Conservation Foundation, Earth Friendly Landscaping at: <http://www.theconservationfoundation.org/page.php?PageID=47> and Wild Ones, Native Plants, Natural Landscapes at: <https://illinoisprairie.wildones.org/resources/handouts-and-guides/>).
- Apply at least three (3) inches of mulch in non-turf areas, preferably with recycled wood chips (<http://www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-and-plant-advice/horticulture-care/mulching-trees-and-shrubs>).

GREEN PRODUCTS/SERVICES

- Implement at least three (3) measures from the list below:
 - Reduce both your organization's and your customers' environmental impact through your goods or services.
 - Use low toxic cleaning products, such as those that are Green Seal certified (www.greenseal.org), SF Approved (www.sfapproved.org) and Safer Choice (<https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>).
 - "Close the loop" by buying two or more of products made with at least 25% post-consumer recycled content, such as paper towels; printer paper; envelopes/folders, letterhead or business cards; garbage bags; and toilet paper (<https://www.epa.gov/smm/comprehensive-procurement-guideline-cpg-program>).
 - Purchase EPEAT certified (www.EPEAT.net) computers, laptops and monitors.
 - Use refilled or remanufactured laser and copier toner cartridges (<https://www.epa.gov/fec/presentation-reducing-paper-ink-and-toner-usage>).
 - Use low-emissions building materials, carpeting, or furniture (Visit U.S. EPA's Sustainable Marketplace at: <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts>).
 - Use locally grown food for events and support eco-friendly caterers (<https://www.ilstewards.org/local-food-promotion/buy-fresh-buy-local-central-illinois/>).
 - Utilize a pest control service that prioritizes non-toxic and least toxic pest control measures (<https://www.epa.gov/managing-pests-schools/introduction-integrated-pest-management>).

VEHICLE EMISSIONS

- Implement at least three (3) measures from the list below:
 - Establish no-idling zones to help protect people where they may collect (<http://www.onestl.org/toolkit/practice/no-idling-zone>).
 - Provide bicycle parking or storage for employees and customers (<https://www.americantrails.org/files/pdf/bikerack.pdf>).
 - Provide information or incentives for employees to bike, carpool or use public transit (<http://thecityfix.com/blog/seven-ways-encourage-sustainable-transport-workplace-employers-active-bike-commute-health-alyssa-fischer/>).
 - Use phone, video and Web conferencing and training capabilities instead of travel where appropriate.
 - Install a workplace charging station for electric vehicles of employees and visitors (https://www.greencarreports.com/news/1098401_electric-car-charging-the-basics-you-need-to-know).
 - Convert vehicle fleet to electric, hybrid, and/or alternative fuel vehicles (<https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles>).
 - For goods and services, plan your routes to minimize the number of trips.
 - Encourage or incentivize employees to carpool to meetings and events.
 - Utilize services close to your facility (food/catering, copy center, etc.).

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Implement at least one (1) measure from the list below:
 - Generate renewable energy onsite, such as solar panels and geothermal systems (<https://www.illinoissolar.org/Commercial-Industrial-Developers> and <https://www.gaoi.org/>).
 - Purchase renewable energy credits from a local utility such as the CWLP Renewable Choice Program (<https://www.cwlp.com/ServicesHome/ServicesInformation/RenewableChoice.aspx>).
 - Subscribe or purchase a portion of your electricity through a shared solar project or community solar farm (<https://citizensutilityboard.org/community-solar-illinois/>).

BIODIVERSITY

- Implement at least three (3) measures from the list below:
 - Create and maintain a wildlife habitat on your property, such as a prairie, green roof and rain garden (<http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/prairie/htmls/ga.html>, <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/pages/plantlistroof.aspx> and <https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-rain-gardens>).
 - Incorporate native plants into existing landscaping that attract butterflies and pollinators (To find out which plants are appropriate for your landscaping, visit

the Illinois Native Plant Society web site at:

<http://wn.inhs.illinois.edu/~kenr/prairienativelinks.html>. Also see 10 Ways to Add Biodiversity to Your Garden at:

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/visual-guides/adding-biodiversity-to-your-garden.aspx>).

- Use potted plants to add greenery and habitat to hard surface areas, choosing plants that will attract pollinators and other beneficial insects (<https://sustainablespringfield.org/2018/03/21/attracting-pollinators/>).
- Plant one or more trees on your property or donate to a tree planting project in the community (<https://sustainablespringfield.org/proposal-for-urban-tree-canopy-program/>).
- Attract birds by installing nesting boxes, bird baths and feeding stations (<https://blog.nwf.org/2011/01/for-beginners-four-cant-miss-ways-to-attract-birds-to-your-yard-or-deck/>).
- Reduce the need for pesticides and chemical fertilizers on your property (<https://cfpub.epa.gov/npstbx/files/reducewastepesticides.pdf>).
- Arrange for employees to volunteer in a community project that helps restore habitat for native species and eliminates invasive species (For a list of local habitat restoration workdays and events, visit Friends of the Sangamon Valley at: <https://fosvdotorg.wordpress.com/workdays-and-events/>).