

Oregon Green Schools newsletter

Oregon Green Schools Newsletter

Volume 3, Number 2

Fall 2004

Welcome!

The Oregon Green Schools Association has created this newsletter to keep you informed about Green School happenings around the state. This new fall issue is full of resources that will help you start or improve your program.

Your contributions are welcomed! Please let us know about your events and activities so we can include them in a future newsletter.

What's inside?

Energize your Program

Notes from the Board

New Premier and Merit Green Schools

Save the date!

PPS Tackles Stormwater Management

Helpful web sites

Summit Sponsors

The mission of the Oregon Green Schools Association is to assist Oregon schools in setting up, maintaining and recognizing effective, permanent waste reduction and resource efficiency programs that improve the school environment and community.

Energize your conservation program!

by Alli Barra, Portland Public Schools

Oregon Green Schools have consistently led the way to bring waste reduction and resource conservation to students in fun and creative ways. By now, most schools realize that being "green" is about more than just reducing waste. Being a Green School is about raising awareness and reducing the impact of our schools on the earth by reducing waste AND conserving resources.

One of the easiest ways to bring resource conservation into your school is to start an energy conservation program. There are millions of things teachers, staff, and students can do to save energy. Much like waste reduction programs, energy conservation programs are fun for students and teachers and save valuable school resources. It might seem daunting to start something new so here is a list of resources and a "how to guide" to get you started. Have fun and get "energized"!

How to start an energy conservation program

Find out if your school district has a resource conservation specialist or resource conservation manager. This person might be able to give you support, point you in the right direction, and help you track your school's utility bills to follow your progress.

Talk to the science teachers and other staff in your school to see if they might want their students to be involved in an energy conservation project. If your school has an existing environmental club, talk to them too.



Sunnyside Environmental School Watt Watchers

Brainstorm with other staff and students as to what your project might be. Here are some ideas:

- Do an energy audit. Have students count lights, computers, and other electronic devices and see how much electricity your school currently uses.
- Have students make creative signs to hang near light switches, computers, copiers, and printers reminding everyone to conserve by turning things off.
- Create an energy patrol and join Watt Watchers (<http://p2.utep.edu/watts/>), a student-run energy monitoring program that encourages energy conservation by leaving reminders to those classrooms that don't turn off lights and thank you notes to those that do.
- Design an energy conservation awareness campaign. This is a great follow-up to an energy audit (then do an audit afterwards to see how your campaign worked).

Talk to your principal and other administrators to let them know what your plan is and to get support.

Start saving energy!

(more energy information on page 4)

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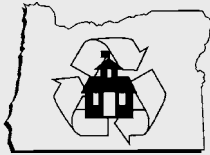
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Oregon Green Schools Association
P.O. Box 2186
Salem, OR 97308-2186
Phone (800) 527-7624
Fax: (503) 399-7784
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Master Recycler Program Seeks High School Students

The Master Recycler program is looking for a few high school students who would be interested in taking the Master Recycler course and applying their new skills and knowledge to school waste reduction projects.

A new Master Recycler course begins on Tuesday, October 5 at PCC's Rock Creek campus. The class will meet from 7-9:30 p.m. on eight Tuesdays in October and November and includes two half-day weekend field trips.

The Master Recycler program provides instruction in topics such as waste reduction, recycling processes, alternatives to hazardous household products, composting and green building. Courses are taught by a variety of private and public sector professionals who are working on innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

As part of the program, course graduates agree to donate 30 hours of volunteer time putting their new skills to work in the community helping others learn the importance of the 3 Rs: reducing the amount of solid waste generated, reusing material for the purpose

for which it was intended and recycling material that cannot be salvaged. Volunteer opportunities for Master Recyclers include staffing information booths at community events, making presentations and working on special projects with local organizations and agencies.

Advance registration for the fall course is required by September 24. High school students are encouraged to apply! Information and applications are available online at www.masterrecycler.org or by calling the Master Recycler program at 503.823.7530.

Over the past twelve years, more than 400 people have participated in the program, motivating people to reduce waste and increase recycling at home and on the job through outreach and education.

The Master Recycler program is supported by: Metro, the City of Portland, Washington and Clackamas counties, Recycling Advocates and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Notes from the Board:

New! Incentive Program

OGSA is developing an incentive program to encourage schools to start or improve their waste reduction programs. These \$300 incentive awards will be offered to schools in areas where there are no certified Green Schools. Contact your local coordinator to see if you're eligible for an award.

Web changes coming soon

This fall the GS web pages will take on a whole new look. We're working to make our web site user-friendly and to include more resources for teachers and coordinators. Watch for the changes and let us know what you think!

See your school in print!

We would like to hear about your school's accomplishments and are in search of photos for brochures, the

web site, the newsletter and the GS display. Send your profiles, stories and photos to Freda Sherburne at sherburnef@metro.dst.or.us.

Spring newsletter on the web

So sorry, the spring issue of the GS newsletter didn't go to print before the end of the school year. You can catch up on all the news by downloading it from the web.

Ashbrook Independent School receives Premier Green School certification!

It all began with a single teacher and a parent volunteer, blossoming into a school-wide program involving all of the student body. Receiving the Premier Green School award in February of 2004 was the culmination of five years of dedicated effort.

Ashbrook has developed a student recycling class that meets once a week. Students collect recycled materials from each



classroom, staff room and cafeteria and transport it to the outside collection bins. The class performs waste audits four times a year. Students summarize the results in the parent newsletter and share their ideas for reducing waste. One student-generated idea was to offer cloth napkins at lunch. The recycling class cut out the cloth napkins and the principal volunteered to sew the edges. The class makes post office-approved envelopes out of old calendars and magazines to sell at the annual school fundraiser. Last year they brought in \$100.00 to the school's budget.

The findings from Ashbrook's first cafeteria waste audit revealed 31 pounds of trash and 16 pounds of food. Four years later, they are averaging 13 pounds of trash and 2 pounds of food. The science teacher has taken on composting some of the food waste and the busy worms travel to each classroom via a red wagon. Classes take turn feeding the worms their food scraps, learning about the lives of worms and reducing waste at the same time.

The students are empowered to come up with creative solutions that energize the entire school. Plant a Row for the Hungry, recycle your toys, barter fair, crayon recycling, Nike tennis shoe recycling and Earth Day jeopardy are projects that have been fun and educational. Ashbrook's students have taken steps to become better stewards of our earth's resources by recycling, reducing and reusing materials.

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Gloria Wong, parent volunteer

Save the date:

Environmental Education Association of Oregon
Annual Conference - October 15-16, 2004
Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, OR
For more information or to register: www.eeao.org

•
2005 Oregon Green School Summit
Friday, March 11 at Reynolds High School
Troutdale, OR

•
Recycle Awareness Week - November 13-20, 2004
Activities for schools can be downloaded at:
www.deq.state.or.us/wmc/solwaste/education/raw.html

Congratulations to a new Merit Green School!

Obsidian Middle School received its Certificate of Merit Green School award in May of 2004. Led by teacher Kelly Madden, the 8th grade leadership students developed and maintained an excellent recycling plan at their school.

They put together recycling assemblies at their school as well as at nearby Lynch Elementary School. They will be pursuing their Premier



Green School Award this school year. Representatives from the leadership class appeared on the "Good Morning Central Oregon" television program and attended the Green School Summit.

Jessica Born, reSource

Energy web sites:

Watt Watchers: <http://p2utep.edu/watts/>

- Free program for schools to save energy and money, sponsored by the EPA

KEEP- Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program:

www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/keep/

- Lists of funding opportunities for energy projects
- Ideas for energy projects at your school
- Resources such as curriculum guides, etc.

Project Learning Tree: www.plt.org

- Curriculum and other materials available regarding Energy and Society, as well as other ee topics

The Alliance to Save Energy: www.ase.org

- Links to pages specifically designed for kids
- Free downloadable lesson plans

Energy For Keeps: www.energyforkeeps.org

- Resources on renewable energy
- Free resource book with lesson plans, activities, and background information, grades 6-12

NEED (National Energy Education Development):

www.need.org

- Free energy infobooks and activity guides for all grade levels; songbook with lyrics and music
- Ideas for planning an energy fair at your school

Energy Smart Schools: www.rebuild.org/index.asp

- Comprehensive list of resources for educators
- Order a free copy of a CD-Rom with activities and lesson plans for all grade levels

National Energy Foundation: www.nef1.org

- Order materials, such as posters, activity guides, etc. from this site or request a NEF catalog

PGE: www.pge.com

- Free classroom materials on energy awareness and safety; sample lesson plans

Bonneville Power Administration: www.bpa.gov

- Downloadable curricula and lesson plans
- Materials for sale, such as board games and posters

Oregon Department of Energy: www.energy.state.or.us/school/schlh.htm

- Lists programs and services offered by the ODOE, including energy loans for schools, conservation training, and more.
- List of web resources related to energy education

Solar Access: www.solaraccess.com/newsletter/weekly.html

- Online education on current renewable energy
- Comprehensive news and weekly topics on renewable energy.

Web sites with good resources to get your program rolling this year:

www.ClassroomEarth.org - Reviews of top environmental education curriculum materials and how to get them

www.sustainablefootprint.org - Curriculum for learning about lifestyle choices and impacts

www.bridgingthegap.org/atschoolActivities.htm - Environmental education curriculum ideas for teachers

www.ecoliteracy.org/pages/rethinking/rethinking-home.html - Rethinking School Lunch, part of a national effort to restore the connection of farms to communities, meals to culture, and health to environment. Great information on setting up sustainable school lunch programs.

www.kidsregen.org/gardens/index.shtml - Organic school garden contest

www.nwf.org/schoolyardhabitats/index.cfm - School yard habitats: how to get certified, educator resources, workshops

www.kidsgardening.com - School gardens: grants, curriculum and activity ideas

www.solv.org - Curriculum geared toward service-learning, helping student connect to their community and improve their environment. Grants are available for projects.

Triva/Fun facts:

www.ilacsd.org/recycle/trivia.html - From "I Love a Clean SanDiego"

www.metro-region.org/wastefacts - From Metro - almost every recycling-related fact you could want

www.ci.holland.mi.us/health/reuse/recyclingtrivia.stm - from City of Holland, MI

www.convert-me.com - Jessica Born (reSource) uses this one to convert gallons to tons, yards, etc.

www.school-funding-center.com/index.asp - Free monthly newsletter provides information and alerts on grants available to public, private, pre-K-12 schools in the U.S.

Thanks to Alli Barra of Portland Public Schools for compiling all the energy conservation web sites and to Jessica Born of reSource for the cool trivia web sites!

Portland Public Schools tackle stormwater management

Portland's sewage system was designed as a combined sewer/stormwater pipe system, so that when it rains the runoff goes through the same pipes as the sewage causing regular discharges into the Willamette River. The conventional way to manage the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) is to build bigger pipes. However, the city is actively seeking alternatives to that expensive option. Managing rainwater on-site reduces the need for larger pipes and allows the water to filter through the ground recharging underground streams and aquifers. Slowing the flow of water and filtering the water before it hits the pipes are the two primary objectives in managing stormwater. Many Portland Public Schools have disconnected downspouts allowing the roof runoff to be absorbed into the ground. Some schools have done some exciting and innovative things with their stormwater.

DaVinci Middle School students, under the direction of science teacher Dan Evans, converted an abandoned tennis court into a stormwater garden. The roof runoff from adjacent portable classrooms was diverted into a large cistern. The water flows from the cistern into a pond that supports small fish and amphibians. From there, the water winds through a meandering streambed into a wetland area. The water path is surrounded by native plant gardens, an amphitheater, a small cob-sided gazebo, and artwork throughout the garden. The garden has become a bird and insect habitat, and draws visitors from around the city. This year the garden will add photovoltaic solar panels to power the pump in the cistern! Visit the garden at 2508 NE Everett.

Glencoe Elementary School has three main components of their stormwater management system. A bioswale runs the length of the parking lot, capturing all the runoff from that large impervious area, and allowing it to infiltrate through three large holding areas. Secondly, the street runoff from two streets is diverted into a beautifully designed, semi-circular shaped raingarden. Most of the water infiltrates through the soils, never making it into the CSO pipes. The



water that eventually might make it to the pipes has been substantially slowed down and filtered. Thirdly, runoff from a portable classroom is diverted through downspout disconnects into a bioswale in the outdoor classroom, an area planted with native plants and designed with a large gathering area for students. The three pieces together have helped eliminate a long-standing problem of basement flooding in neighborhood homes during large rain events. The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services designed and installed the parking lot bioswale and the large raingarden, and is working with the school district to maintain them.

The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services received grant money from the EPA this year for the "Innovative Wet Weather School Project." Eight PPS sites will have stormwater management systems installed, ranging from parking lot bioswales to downspout disconnects to a large planter box capturing roof runoff where we will monitor the flow rate and volume of water.

These projects have multiple benefits. They help students and staff connect with stormwater as a resource and an environmental asset. They keep stormwater out of the pipes, serving to reduce the need for larger pipes while increasing and improving habitat. They provide an opportunity for the public to learn innovative and productive ways to manage stormwater. And the projects help us remember that our actions impact our environment.

Visit the Bureau of Environmental Services website at <http://www.portlandonline.com/bes/> to read more about stormwater projects.

Other helpful water conservation web sites:
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/kids/index.html
www.projectwetusa.org

Nancy Bond, Portland Public Schools



Left: Glencoe parking lot bioswale

Far left: Glencoe raingarden

Many thanks to our Summit 2004 sponsors and supporters!!!

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- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Weyerhaeuser
- Far West Fibers
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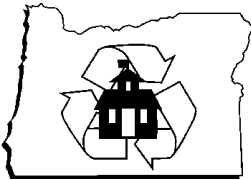
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- B & J Garbage Company
- Capitol Recycling and Disposal
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- D & O Garbage Service
- Gladstone Disposal
- Gresham Sanitary Service

Door prizes and in-kind donations

- Starbucks Coffee
- Patagonia
- Norm Thompson
- Resource Revival
- Sustain Ability International

BE A FRIEND TO OREGON GREEN SCHOOLS!



The Oregon Green Schools Association is dedicated to improving the school environment and community through waste reduction assistance and recognition. Your contribution helps to provide educational displays and recognition materials for schools and supports the annual Green Schools Summit.

Yes! I want to become a Friend of Oregon Green Schools.
Enclosed is my contribution for:

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