




Class Act

School Recycling Program Newsletter — November 2009

Start thinking about an Earth Hero at School you'd like to [nominate](#). Earth Heroes will be honored in the spring of 2010.

Find King County Green Teams on Facebook

King County has a page on Facebook for Green Teams to post ideas, projects and photos, to ask questions and share concerns, and to learn about events in the Puget Sound area. A Green Team Specialist will check the site regularly for questions and content, and to help connect people and projects. Become a fan by searching on Facebook for King County Green Teams.



Elementary School Green Team Projects



Recalling a King County worm bin workshop he received when he was in elementary school, teacher Terry Thibodeux was inspired to invite a Green Team specialist to help his **Lake Youngs**

Elementary (Kent) class set up a worm bin. This Green Team also leads the Chip Bag and Drink Pouch Brigade. Students collect and send their empty drink pouches and chip bags to [TerraCycle](#) to be

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Greening Our Schools

Carnation Elementary School in the Riverview School District is recycling 47 percent of its solid waste, reducing paper use and engaging its students and staff in conserving resources. The Green Schools Program provided recycling containers and recycling stickers for the collection of paper, milk cartons, bottles and aluminum cans. Carnation's third-grade Green Schools Team and teacher Elizabeth Wing helped eliminate unwanted newspaper subscriptions and mail, made paper reuse trays for each classroom, and created a video promoting waste reduction and recycling. Students created colorful posters that included samples of recyclable materials, participated in recycling presentations around the community and also partnered with local organizations to promote conservation efforts within the Tolt River watershed.

Madrona Elementary School

recycled into products such as tote bags, pencil cases, flower pots and other useful items. For every item sent, the school receives two cents.

The **Cedar Valley Elementary** (Kent) Mean Green Recycling Team, led by fifth-grade teacher Michael Robinett, is coordinating with the PE teacher to develop a game to teach others about recycling basics. They also plan to set up a reuse bin in each classroom.

Cascade View Elementary (Snoqualmie) is working hard to reduce lunchroom waste. Elizabeth Johnson's Green Team has been selling reusable baggies (ReUsies) to raise funds for purchasing reusable bowls to replace the Styrofoam ones in the lunchroom. The Green Team also made posters for the school birthday party and signs for proper disposal of compostable plates and reusable cups. Next on their list is to put stickers on the light switches as reminders to turn off lights.

Students in Debbie Sells's fifth-grade class at **Martin Sortun Elementary** (Kent) are continuing their native plant garden project started last year, this time with a focus on environmentally friendly gardening. The students have been learning how hazardous household products affect the environment and that using native plants, mulching and weeding reduce or eliminate the need for fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals.

Secondary School Green Team Projects

The freshman social studies class at **Secondary Academy for Success** (Bothell) is planning a "garbage art" project. Students are collecting materials and will lead the school in creating art out of reused items. Plans are underway to hold an art walk to view student creations on display at the school and at a local café.

Green Team members at **Mill Creek Middle School** (Kent), led by advisor Julia Vasiliauskas, have been educating their peers on the new lunchroom recycling program. The Green Team kicked off the program with posters and volunteers to help other students properly separate the recyclables. They also have developed presentations and are visiting classrooms throughout the school to instruct students on why and how to participate.

Tina Talksalot, also known as Debbie Tully, one of King County's workshop presenters, visited the lunchroom to engage students in

in the Highline School District increased its recycling rate from 32 to 43 percent. The Green Schools Program provided lunchroom recycling containers to collect milk cartons, juice boxes, plastic bottles and aluminum cans. With increased recycling, the school cut its garbage by half and eliminated one of its garbage Dumpsters, reducing costs by \$589 per month. A team of students actively helps with the school's recycling efforts, and morning PA announcements and newsletter articles promote the program. Teacher Eve Kolakowski organized a "no paper day" to create awareness of paper consumption and its impacts on the environment. Staff eliminated unwanted newspaper subscriptions and mail by requesting removal from vendor mailing lists. The school instituted "reuse it" boxes for paper used on only one side.



Odle Middle School

in the Bellevue School District credits its Robotics Team with its conservation successes. The team weighed and assessed the school's garbage, then created a plan for reducing waste and increasing recycling. The school increased its recycling rate from 50 to 58 percent. A recycling container was placed next to each garbage container, and recycling pick-ups were increased from once to twice per week. The school started lunchtime food scrap recycling and science teachers taught a lesson on the history behind composting and what can and cannot be composted. Education and outreach included information about conservation practices in morning announcements, online PTSA newsletters, and posters.





discussions about recycling and help promote the school's new program. King

County is trying out the *What's 4R Lunch?* program in schools interested in this type of support in their recycling efforts. Contact a [Green Team specialist](#) for more information.



Einstein Middle School (Shoreline) has begun a campus-wide Edible Schoolyard Project modeled after King Middle School's Edible Schoolyard in Berkeley, California. Students have

constructed raised garden beds and will soon plant their first gardens. Next year more students will be involved as the program becomes integrated with academic curricula. Project objectives include learning

- safer methods of gardening that reduce contaminants in the ground water in Shoreline and in Puget Sound.
- water is a limited resource and educating the community on how to conserve it.
- the satisfaction and physical benefits of working a garden and consuming fresh produce.

The school received two grants to support their project: \$500 from King County's *Hazards on the Homefront* program for buying tools and seeds, and \$5000 from the City of Shoreline to purchase the raised beds structural materials and the garden soil to fill the beds. The school has also received donations from Sky Nursery and is seeking additional grants or donations for tools and plants.

King County Green Schools — 42 Schools Receive Assistance and Recognition

During the last school year, [42 King County schools](#) received recognition for completing level one of the King County Green Schools Program. Since the program began in 2003, it has assisted 300 schools to initiate and maintain conservation improvements. Unlike online programs, the King County program provides on-site visits and tailored assistance. The program offers

Montessori Children's Home, a private school in Redmond, increased its recycling rate from 34 to 48 percent in just four months. The school also reduced its waste through conversion to an electronic parent newsletter, reuse of yogurt and applesauce cups for seed containers and art projects, and a reuse box for paper in each classroom and office. In classrooms and at parent events and staff meetings, durable instead of single-use drink and dishware is used. Grass clippings are left on lawns. Most of the school's food scraps are fed to goats and chickens that live on the school property and the rest is put into on-site composters. Food scraps that cannot be handled by the methods described above are placed in a yard waste collection container for off-site composting. A battery disposal and printer cartridge exchange box was set up in the office. The Green Schools Team provided information about waste reduction and recycling via e-mails to staff and parents, the school's Web site and campus white boards. (photo: 027 waste free lunches.JPG)

Resources and Events

Take-home surveys

Take-home surveys that encourage students and their families to discuss garbage, recycling, and food scrap composting are available for download on the King County Web site. Elementary and middle school students can take the [4R Home Survey](#) and advanced middle and high school students can take the [Waste Prevention Survey](#). Be sure to check out the [other activities and resources](#).

Get resources, information, coloring sheets, coupons, and links to local contacts and events about why and how to protect [Puget Sound](#).

King County School Programs Support Your Environmental Efforts

[Educational resources](#)

- **hands-on assistance** to assess current conservation practices, provide tailored recommendations, and involve the whole school in learning about conservation, setting up new or improved practices, and measuring and promoting successes.
- **recycling containers (up to \$200 worth) and stickers** for each container.
- **recognition**, including a “We are a King County Green School” banner, a certificate, a press release and a full page on the program Web site, upon completion of a program level.

The program also assists school district staff working on district-wide conservation projects, and helps to connect schools to the right people in the district.

All schools and districts begin with level one - Waste Reduction and Recycling. Level two includes Energy Conservation and one additional category that schools select from the following: Environmental Education, Environmental Purchasing, Green Building, Hazardous Materials Management, Litter Reduction, and Transportation Choices. Level three includes Water Conservation and one additional category from the list above. Schools and districts may receive assistance outside of the established criteria, and are not required to progress to levels two or three.

To take advantage of the support provided by the King County Green Schools Program, complete the short application [form](#). Contact [Dale Alekel](#) at 206-296-8457 with questions.

- Elementary school assembly program
- Classroom workshops for grades 1-12
- Teacher workshops on household hazardous waste
- Resources and Events

[Student Green Team assistance](#)

- Workshops and guidance for student green teams
- Mini-grant up to \$500 to support green team projects

[Green Schools Program assistance](#)

- Hands-on assistance including site visits, assessments, recommendations, and help to improve school-wide conservation practices, conduct outreach and promote successes
- Recycling containers (up to \$200 worth) and stickers for each container
- Recognition, including a banner, a certificate, a press release and a success story on the Web site

[Poem](#)

Christna Saong was one of several Foster High School students who wrote and presented poems at the Children’s Environmental Health Forum that took place in Tukwila in early October.

Read his poem [When...](#)

