



King County

Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Solid Waste Division

Class Act

School Recycling Program Newsletter — February 2009

Green Team Report

Practicing the Rs

Waste reduction has been the focus of **Judy Ellis's** Green Team at the **Secondary Academy for Success** in Bothell. These freshmen students produced posters and a skit for the entire student body on the concepts of rethink, reduce and reuse. Observing that the school garbage was full of disposable coffee cups, they held an informative, school-wide discussion on the environmental value of purchasing a reusable cup. Throughout the year, they have continued to monitor and maintain the recycling program and now are preparing to pass the responsibility on to the individual homerooms.

Composting Cuts Lunch Waste

Students at **Benjamin Franklin Elementary** in Kirkland have reduced their daily lunch waste by two and a half garbage cans as a result of their Green Team food composting and other waste reduction efforts. Students Noah and John hold samples of their new reusable lunch bags.



ReUse Boxes Reduce Waste

Lisa Torres's sixth-grade Green Team at **Nautilus Elementary** in Federal Way made ReUse boxes for each classroom as well as the staff workroom. They will put their math skills to work and calculate how many cubic yards of dumpster space they are saving through this project.



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Opportunities

Nominations Due for Earth Heroes at Schools

King County honors teachers, students, staff, and others who conserve natural resources or make a difference in their school's natural environment. [Nominate](#) yourself or another earth hero from your school by February 27, 2009.



Beach Naturalists Needed!

Care about beaches? Good with people? Sign up to be a volunteer beach naturalist at a local beach this summer. Naturalists will receive training from marine and interpretative experts and then spend three summer weekend days educating visitors about beach ecology and beach etiquette at Carkeek Park (North Seattle), Constellation Park (West Seattle), Des Moines Beach Park, Golden Gardens (Seattle), Lincoln Park (West Seattle), Olympic Sculpture Park Beach (Seattle), Redondo Beach (Des Moines), Richmond Beach (Shoreline) and Seahurst Park (Burien). A program orientation will be held

Adopt a Classroom Project Improves Recycling

Kimberly Ralph's fifth-grade Green Team at **Endeavor Elementary** in Issaquah has adopted classrooms to foster better recycling. During each visit, Green Team members share a fact or idea on reducing waste or improving recycling. Classrooms that pass the recycle check receive a green sticker to put on a class poster. The school has seen an increased motivation to recycle and, as a consequence, an increased recycling rate.

Worms Eat Lunch Waste

The sixth-grade Green Teams of **Eli Mayer** and **Roseanne Esposito** at **Beverly Park Elementary** in the Highline School District set up and now maintain worm bins to compost food scraps from the cafeteria. Students are now more mindful of the amount of waste that goes to the landfill. They plan to use the compost in the school gardens.

“Stepping” into Stewardship at Martin Sortun

Debbie Sell's fourth graders and **Kathy Gundlach's** fifth and sixth graders from **Martin Sortun Elementary** school in Kent will replace weedy and unsightly planter beds around the school with native shrubs and groundcover. To help the school community understand the benefits of using native plants in conserving natural resources, they will include artistic and interpretive stepping stones that will highlight benefits of each plant species. They will also explain the importance of being good stewards of the Martin Sortun school grounds, which are part of the watershed that drains to nearby Clark Lake. The entire school community will have daily access to the garden and its stepping stones messages. The school gives special thanks to retired third-grade teacher Mrs. Beegle (of Redmond) for donating the plants from her property for the project.

Hazards on the Homefront News

Check the King County [web pages](#) for classroom resources and information on upcoming teacher trainings.

These teachers used their preparation from the Hazards on the Homefront teacher training to teach their students about household hazardous

Tuesday evening, March 31, 6:30-8:30 PM, at the Seattle Aquarium. To sign up or get more information, contact the program by [email](#) or phone 206-390-0429.

Plastic Trash in the Ocean

A huge volume of plastic trash is drifting in the oceans and affecting marine life. In 2008, staff from the Algalita Marine Research Foundation built a JUNKraft, a raft made from 15,000 plastic bottles, and sailed it from California to Hawaii in order to bring attention to this issue. During 2009, two Algalita staff will bicycle from Vancouver, Canada to Tijuana, Mexico to raise awareness among educators, organizations and legislators along the west coast of North America about the plastic debris in the Pacific. Students can learn more about this issue on the JUNKraft [web site](#).

Storming the Sound

Storming the Sound is a **FREE** one-day conference for environmental and sustainability educators in the Central Puget Sound region. It will be held on Friday, April 3 at Chief Sealth High School in West Seattle. The theme is Restoring Puget Sound: Taking Action through Education, Outreach and Service.

This is a great opportunity for teachers, environmental organizations with education programs, and students with an interest in a career in environmental education to

- learn about other Puget Sound environmental education programs.
- bring home practical strategies and tactics you can use.
- gain skills and insights with experts and capable peers.
- share insights and network with other educators.
- engage and grow in sessions where everyone is a participant.
- exchange ideas and experiences to develop new perspectives and approaches.

For more information, please email [Justine Asohmbom](#), Puget Sound Education Coordinator or call her at 425-649-7108.

Save the Date! Children's Environmental

products.

- **Joel Black** at **Choice Alternative School** in Burien incorporated household hazardous product information into his units on chemical compositions and environmental stewardship. His students learned about advertising and product label requirements, studied reactive properties of household hazardous products, and discussed the effects hazardous products have on humans and the environment. Mr. Black even shared information on safer pest management with his wife's gardening club.
- **Betty Lybeck's** independent living students at **Evergreen Junior High** in Redmond learned how to read product labels and choose safer alternatives for cleaning their kitchens. Students also completed home cleaning assignments with safer alternatives.
- While teaching her special education students at **ORCA K-8 School** in Seattle that oil and water don't mix, **Royce MacGinnitie** included information on hazardous car oil in our waterways. She also shared safer cleaning and deodorizing alternatives with her co-workers.

Hidden Hazards of the Arts

This new three-hour workshop for art teachers has already inspired participants to take some significant steps to make their art classrooms safer. King County is in the process of scheduling workshops in east and south King County. Art teachers interested in learning more about these opportunities can notify us by [email](#). Clock hours are available and teachers who complete a follow-up survey describing how they improved their classroom practices as a result of the workshop receive a stipend.

Here are some examples of how some of the 2008 participants removed hazards from their classrooms.

- **Diana Sparks** at **Evergreen Junior High** in Redmond properly disposed of all the old paints, solvents, and glazes that she inherited from previous instructors, mops high-travel areas of her classroom, wears a quality dust mask when working with clay and other products, and taught her students safety procedures when using art chemicals.
- **Mark Rayder** at the **International Community School** in Kirkland properly disposed of hazardous glazes even if they were brand new and he no longer accepts donated glazes from the public to avoid receiving any that contain lead. He also disposed any fritted materials which contain lead. He now stores every product in labeled jars and has eliminated all spray paints, glues and fixatives. He orders all product labels from the manufacturers so he knows exactly what is in all the products his students will use.
- **Rebecca Sokolow** at **Wedgewood Elementary** in Seattle

Health Forum and Fair

Scheduled for October 1-3, 2009 in Tukwila, this forum and fair will feature a Science and Policy Forum on Thursday and Friday, followed by a free community fair on Saturday. The Forum and Fair is organized by the Children's Environmental Health Working Group of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment 95 Washington (CHE-WA). [The group](#) is now inviting sponsors and exhibitors.

Get Ready for National Healthy Schools Day

Celebrate National Healthy Schools Day on Monday, April 27, 2009 and throughout the week with an activity or event that promotes indoor air quality and children's environmental health. See the [planning guide](#) for suggestions on activities and events you can set up to bring much needed attention to the issue of indoor air quality. Participate in an orientation conference call on Tuesday, February 24. For call-in information for the conference call, email [Mollie Coleman](#) or call 518-462-0632.

Greening Our Schools

Web Site Address Change

On January 2009, the URL for the King County Green Schools Program web site changed to www.kingcounty.gov/GreenSchools. Please include this URL in your list of "favorites." On the Web site, you will find a description of the program, resources and tools for each of the program categories (Waste Reduction & Recycling, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation, Transportation Choices, etc.), success stories about past participants, and school and school district application forms.

Green Schools Best Practices Workshop

The King County Green Schools Program will present a free half-day "Best Green Schools Practices" workshop for current Green Schools Program participants on Thursday, May 21 from 1:00-4:30 pm. The workshop is targeted to adult leaders of Green School teams, such as teachers and custodians. Presentations and discussions will feature best practices related to

- increasing waste reduction and recycling, including how to reduce

checked to see if her classroom materials have the Certified Product (CP) or Approved Product (AP) Seal of the Arts and Crafts Materials Institute, and no longer accepts donated chemicals without checking them first for hazards and proper labels. She also started mopping her clay room instead of sweeping to reduce dust and discontinued classroom use of permanent markers that contain toxic substances.

- **Sarah VanAlstyne at Inglewood Junior High** in Kirkland removed all tempera paint due to the powder released when dried and replaced rubber cement with Yes! Paste for her classroom. She also tagged old chemicals (rubber cement thinner, lacquer, turpentine) for disposal.

polystyrene use and how to recycle food scraps and other compostable materials.

- integrating environmental education into your Green School.
- improving energy conservation practices and other green practices.

Email invitations will be sent to current program participants. Limited substitute reimbursement will be available. For more information, contact Dale Alekel, Program Manager, by [email](#) or call her at 206-296-8457.

Find Articles and Lessons on Environmental Health

Download articles and find science and interdisciplinary lessons based on news and research articles published in [Environmental Health Perspectives](#). Lessons advance critical basic skills through important current topics.

IPM for Gardeners

Gardeners can now easily practice integrated pest management and green gardening with the new online resource center [IPMopedia](#)! Brought to you by [Toxipedia](#), IPMopedia provides gardeners with the knowledge and advice necessary to create sustainable landscapes and control pests while dramatically reducing their use of harmful chemicals and pesticides. In addition to its regularly updated content, the site retains a number of local [gardening experts](#) to assist users with specific problems. IPMopedia is funded in part by the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program in King County and partnered with organizations such as Seattle Tilth and the Washington Toxics Coalition.



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