

Advice from 2009 “Best Workplaces for Recycling” winners

North

- “Recycling is a simple step in the process of a day. We encourage everyone to live consciously and think before they put anything in the general garbage can.” *Alexa's Café and Catering Inc.*
- “Empower your employees to get better... and waste reduction saves money.” *In Harmony Sustainable Landscapes*
- “Communicate with all employees and value what your co-workers say. The opinions and suggestions of staff are very important in creating a well rounded program.” *Northshore Utility District*



South

- “It is a lot easier than it seems to protect the environment for future generations and all it takes is some investigating and planning. Helping the environment is a very large perk but I have found that it is also a way to save a great deal of money. In all of my efforts Applus Technologies has been able to cut costs especially by implementing the toner refill project and switching from inkjet printers to toner printers and buying the toner in bulk. The internet is a great resource for all of the planning and implementation without leaving a paper trail. The possibilities are endless in the effort to protect the environment and recycling.” *Applus Technologies*
- “The City of Kent believes that one key to success is to break recycling and food scraps diversion down into baby steps. They suggest promoting a different item or category every week and using signage with pictures or the actual items themselves. Recycling should be made convenient by having bins available wherever there is room. Collected materials or compostables diverted from the waste stream should be weighed and then the numbers advertised, giving praise to all who participated. Display photos of people doing the right thing. Also be sure to let people know they're making a difference.” *City of Kent*

- “Embed sustainability in the culture of your organization and increase emphasis on resource efficiency, particularly during times of economic downturn and rising concerns over climate change – do your part to improve the quality of life and earth.” *City of SeaTac*
- “Gain management support. It’s crucial to get the support from senior management to succeed. Choose a project manager who is enthusiastic, has great communication and organizational skills and is able to follow-through. Ask your employees about their ideas on how to make current processes and procedures “green”. If employees are engaged in making the company green, they will be more likely to follow the green initiatives of the company.” *Complete Office*
- “Place a colorful recyclables chart – with pictures – next to your main garbage / recycling sites. No one can say ‘I didn’t know it was recyclable!’” *Covington Water District*
- “Remain diligent in your pursuit to reduce and reuse for the betterment of the environment. Businesses should establish and incorporate policies focused on best practices for recycling and waste reduction. In addition, it is important to reach out to others in the community and share ideas. It takes the combined efforts of all to make the difference.” *Kenworth Truck Company*
- “To start a successful recycling program at any business, you really need to get support from Management! We also found we had more employee involvement when we made the recycling activities fun! We started a monthly recycling challenge and the winning work center is awarded at our monthly all plant meeting!” *LMI Aerospace, Inc.*
- “Businesses that plan to implement waste reduction and recycling strategies will benefit by securing upper-management support, designating an individual or group to manage program implementation and operation, and broadcasting updates to staff and participants to keep them informed and enthusiastic. Specific awareness of waste stream composition will allow business to take advantage of opportunities to divert more recyclable and compostable materials. Finally, develop close relationships with those individuals or groups that either procure materials or source separate recyclables from waste. Keep them informed and provide periodic training refreshers and updates regarding the latest diversion and recycling practices. The actions of these groups can have an enormous impact on program results.” *Port of Seattle – SeaTac Airport*

East

- “Pick one goal each month, quarter, or year and build upon each success. We just started a program to compost all of our paper towels, tissues, floral scraps and food waste. It takes time for everyone to remember to use the different bins now, but eventually it will be second nature and we will have almost no garbage at all. Also, let your vendors know that you value eco friendly options to purchase. Many more are now available and the quality is increasing while the price differential is closing.” *Accents Et cetera*
- “We suggest that businesses be persistence with recycling and be sure to have group involvement.” *Acosta Sales and Marketing*
- “By greening up 80 percent of our office supplies, we ended up saving money. Check out your green office supply options and you might be surprised.” *Allyis*
- “Establishing a Green Committee is essential to keep sustainability programs active and visible, provide continuous training and education on recycling programs and obtain buy-in and participation from the staff.” *CDM*
- “Small steps, multiplied by many CH2M HILL employees, add up to meaningful environmental impact reductions.” *CH2M Hill*
- “Keep employees engaged in the program and solicit their ideas; you will be amazed at how many advocates you have at your company.” *City of Bellevue*
- “We have found the key to successful waste reduction and recycling is clear and consistent communication about how to reduce waste, and what can be recycled, as well as offering the tools to make these activities accessible and easy.” *City of Redmond*
- “Recycling is very important to our environment, every business should provide means of recycling to their employees and to their customers; through recycling practices, Washington will remain the Evergreen State.” *Courtyard Marriot Bellevue Downtown*
- “Keep the program visible with frequent reminders, visible cues (like recycle bins), and enthusiasm. Make the program fun, simple, and convenient”. *David Evans and Associates, Inc.*
- “We recommend several things to help businesses promote recycling. The first is to appeal to diverse motivational triggers, speak to diverse learning styles, stay real by using humor, and never be preachy. We also suggest that you focus on progress you’ve made and not the daunting

challenge that's ahead of you. It is also important to remember that it's never too late to start a recycling or waste reduction program." *Drugstore.com*

- "Our advice to other businesses is to have all staff develop a vested interest in the environmental well-being of their work place. The Evergreen Healthcare Green Team is working on the premise that all employees are part of the Green Team and are involved in the 'greening' of Evergreen. This attitude was very noticeable at Evergreen's first Earth Day event held this year where staff's environmental enthusiasm was seen to bubble over during the event." *Evergreen Healthcare*
- "Find the people that are passionate about sustainability and enable them to promote reduction of waste and recycling by changing basic office processes." *HDR Engineering*
- "Starting recycling projects and programs takes time, energy and cooperation from many people. An additional challenge is to keep the recycling and waste reduction programs energized and functional year after year. Utilizing King County Green Schools Program has helped maintain quality recycling programs in our schools each year." *Issaquah School District*
- "Tracking utility bills makes it easy to monitor progress and find specific ways to improve. Waste reduction, recycling and composting projects are most successful when you can show that they are cost-effective. Active support and participation of students is crucial, and responsibilities should be delegated to them as much as possible." *Lake Washington School District*
- "MulvannyG2 would suggest getting educated, connecting with the EPA, and forming a good relationship with building property management, janitorial staff, and City to ensure tangible results. Above all, keep it simple, educational, and fun!" *MulvannyG2 Architecture*
- "Start small with basic recycling, anything a company can do will help. Also, consider forming a Green committee to oversee and initiate programs. The committee can help to interpret the feedback and advice from other staff members. If possible, try replacing all of your everyday office supplies with eco-friendly products and recycled products. Use the internet as your source for recycling ideas. It's never too late to start recycling." *Noetix Corporation*
- "To those considering a recycling program, a great way to begin is to designate a 'Go Green Team,' or nominate an individual to help the organization take some first steps. Embed environmental responsibility

into the corporate culture. Employees want to be part of an organization that cares, and too many, going green feels like more of an employee benefit than a chore.” *Outsource Marketing*

- “It is an on-going effort to educate and assist people in seeking out the value a sustainability program provides. They encourage any company to take this on and build it one leg at a time.” *Overlake Hospital Medical Center*
- “Research local resources and programs to partner with to increase recycling and waste reduction efforts. Green practices can benefit many different types of businesses.” *Pacific Software Publishing, Inc.*
- “Key success factors include strong support from management and direct communication with employees. We have found that as we roll out our new campaigns, it is critical to present step-by-step plans that are easy to implement, follow, test and refine.” *PACCAR*
- “Find ways to simplify processes, using existing operations and equipment, and get management support. Make sure goals are set and status reports with cost savings are then provided back to management.” *Philips Oral Healthcare*
- “Small changes made at your workplace can make a big difference in the future of the environment and we recommend printing your office stationery items, brochures, promotional materials and any other printed material you use on a paper which is FSC certified and contains as high of a recycled content as possible. Please feel free to contact us and we can recommend some options to help meet your needs.” *Printex Press*
- “Never assume that green practices will bust your budget. We’re hoping that our recycling practices coupled with composting will allow us to downgrade our garbage service, which will save money. Paper products like cups for the water cooler are actually pretty expensive, and we hope to eventually eliminate the use of these. Be creative. We’ve created an “Eco Wall of Shame” so that all of our staff can see which recyclable items are often thrown away. The item is retrieved from the trash and displayed on the wall. We have also started a “Mark it and Park It” campaign – we adhere magic markers to the base of our water coolers, so that anyone using a paper cup will be more likely to reuse it.” *Reprographics Northwest*
- “Engage your employees every step of the way. Getting buy-in from everyone involved ensures your efforts will be successful.” *Roth Hill Engineering Partners, LLC*

- “Recycling begins when you make purchases. Look for items that are made with recycled content and before you buy anything, check to see if it can be recycled when you’re through. Choose products with minimal packaging, preferably packaging made from recycled materials.” *Rowley Properties, Inc*
- “Create a position or team to champion the program and provide support for all recycling needs. Recycling is more easily achieved when the company sets goals and policies to work towards, as well as adding recycling practices into orientation materials.” *Summit at Snoqualmie*
- “Keep your employees engaged in recycling. Solicit their ideas and implement them. It is your best method for success.” *Symetra Financial*
- “By supporting local businesses and using the great resources our community provides us to recycle, compost and purchase recycled and used office supplies and furniture, we can all afford to do business more simply and cut down on waste.” *Thinkspace, LLC*
- “The ultimate goal of a recycling/conservation program is to ingrain it in the corporate culture. This sounds like a daunting task but it starts with the small things that are very easy to do. For instance, installing comingled recycling bins at people’s desks. As long as you consistently roll out new programs, keeping Earth consciousness in the minds of employees, whether that be by signage in key areas, emails, meetings, or online forums you will see increasingly positive results. Working closely with building management, and getting a firm commitment from company leadership will also pay huge dividends.” *Waggener Edstrom*