



King County Green Schools Program

Success Story

Reduce • Reuse • Recycle • Rethink

Scenic Hill Elementary School

School district: Kent

School location: Kent

Began participating in the Green Schools Program:
January 2009

Level One of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in June 2009

Level Two of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in June 2010

Level Three of the Green Schools Program:
Achieved in November 2010

General

- Scenic Hill Elementary was the first school in King County to complete Level Three of the Green Schools Program.
- A suggestion box for conservation practices such as waste reduction, recycling, energy and water conservation was placed in the lunchroom for students and staff. Custodian Ginger Ott reviewed and considered all suggestions with the student Green Team. Students and staff received recognition for their suggestions.

Waste Reduction and Recycling (Level One)

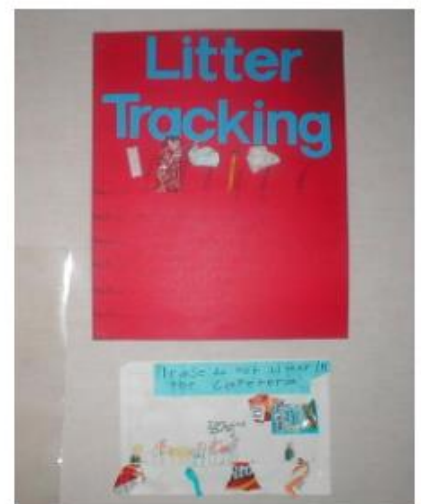
- Scenic Hill increased its recycling rate from 12% to 48%.
- Thanks to the school's recycling success, the size of the outdoor recycling dumpster was increased and frequency of garbage collection was decreased, resulting in a monthly savings of approximately \$190.



Scenic Hill students recycle milk cartons



Ginger Ott along with students and other staff receive the King County award in April 2011.



Students track litter and share results as part of anti-litter campaign



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- Recycling and garbage bins were placed side by side throughout the school.
- Efforts included educating students about recycling, reducing lunchtime garbage volume, and expanding milk carton recycling.
- Recycling bins from the Green Schools Program were placed in the lunchroom for milk cartons, plastic bottles, and aluminum cans. Recycling stickers from the Green Schools Program showing what can be recycled were placed on all recycling bins.
- In 2008-09, Scenic Hill student leadership team created 3-dimensional posters with actual examples of plastic bottles, milk cartons, and paper attached to them. In 2009-10, students created new posters which were hung throughout the school.
- In 2009-10, student volunteers helped with recycling at breakfast and created paper reuse bins for every classroom so the blank side of paper could be used for notes.
- The school received the King County recycling assembly in fall 2009 and had follow-up classroom workshops about waste reduction and recycling.
- Each day, fourth-grade students helped kindergarten classes with lunch recycling. Other student volunteers helped at garbage and recycling bins at breakfast.
- As of Nov. 2010, the school recycled approximately 230 juice and cereal containers and 760 milk cartons per day.
- Fourth-grade students taught first graders how and why worm bins are used, and students placed their lunch food scraps in worm bins.
- The school used worm bins to compost small amounts of food scraps. Custodian Ott supplied worm bins. Four Scenic Hill teachers involved their classes in worm bin composting. A group of students participated in a King County Green Team worm bin workshop to learn the basics of composting with worms.
- In fall 2010, the school started two small outdoor on-site composting bins. Students used the bins to compost their vegetable and fruit scraps.

Energy Conservation (Level Two)

- In 2009-10, Scenic Hill reduced its energy use by 16% and saved approximately \$3,600 in energy costs compared to 2008-09. Comparing September and October 2010 with September and October 2009, Scenic Hill reduced its energy use by 37%.
- To save energy and heat, after-hours activities were centralized into common areas.



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- Students conducted spot checks in classrooms to make sure lights were turned off in empty classrooms.
- Lights were kept off or reduced when daylight was sufficient.
- In fall 2010, students created The Power is in your Hands posters which were hung next to all light switches throughout the school.

Water Conservation (Level Three)

- Green Team students tracked Scenic Hill's monthly water use and reported results on the Green Team bulletin board. The students made weekly "water smarts" video announcements to promote water conservation practices.
- In fall 2010, Green Team students created water conservation posters for restrooms and created a water conservation pledge. The pledge form was placed in the lunchroom and many students and staff signed it.
- Scenic Hill started an Every Drip Counts program to inspect for leaks. Staff and students spotted and reported leaks to custodian Ginger Ott.
- Rain collected in rain barrels in the school's courtyard was used to irrigate plants and to wash garbage bins.
- Drought-tolerant plants were selected for new plantings on school grounds.

Litter Reduction

- Students wrote a school anti-litter policy focused on student responsibility for litter prevention and cleanup. The policy was included in the 2010-11 student handbook.
- A student volunteer litter cleanup group patrolled the school grounds weekly.
- An anti-litter campaign included posters showing playground litter, a sandwich board with anti-litter messages, and announcements reminding students and staff to put garbage and recyclable materials in the correct bins.
- Litter at Scenic Hill was reduced from 150 items to 65 items per weekly pickup.

Award



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Ginger Ott, head custodian, and the Scenic Hill conservation program received a King County Earth Hero at School award in April 2011.