

10 **Outreach, Education, and Training**

Outreach, education, and training are all vital to ensuring that your waste reduction programs and activities are successful. All the planning in the world will not make up for a lack of participation by employees. Motivated employees who understand the program goals may have helpful insights about how to expand and improve the program.

It also helps to let the public know about your efforts to be a responsible corporate citizen. Do your part to educate the public whenever the opportunity arises. For example, if your business has a carpool program, let customers or clients know about it and your commitment to addressing air quality issues. Let customers know that they can make a difference too by carpooling or plugging in during cold weather.

Tips for In-house Training and Education

- Make sure employees are aware of and familiar with all company waste reduction programs, policies, and objectives. Keep them informed and involved in the planning process. Involvement creates a sense of ownership that leads to more successful waste reduction efforts.
- Develop and disseminate a waste reduction policy stating your business' commitment to reducing waste.
- Provide monthly or quarterly reports to managers reflecting energy use, water use, and waste disposal to encourage continued reduction efforts and to highlight successes. These reports also should include associated costs.
- Provide training for employees whose participation can affect the success of waste reduction activities, and explain recycling procedures. Minimizing contamination in recyclables will increase the value of the materials. Training should be periodic so new employees receive information and everyone gets a refresher.
- Ask for employee input at all stages of the program. Employees know the most about the details of the jobs and often have innovative suggestions. They can best indicate what can and cannot be done to reduce waste effectively, and how the ideas presented in this guidebook might be most efficiently integrated into the workplace.
- Provide incentives for participating in waste reduction programs. Reward employees whose input leads to waste reduction achievements.

GREEN STARS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

- Disseminates Green News email newsletter about recycling and waste prevention issues to its employees.
- Holds Annual Spring Clean-up Event, which includes trash pick-up, recycling, and donation of reusables.

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

- Hosts monthly fun events for employees to learn about waste prevention and recycling.

- Provide continuous feedback to employees about program successes. Regular updates will encourage employees to continue and to improve results.

Tips For Customer and Public Outreach and Education

- Keep customers and the general public informed about your waste prevention and recycling efforts, programs, and successes.
- Display signs and posters in lobbies and other public areas describing your waste reduction programs.
- Provide information along with customer mailings and advertise your efforts as part of your regular advertising campaigns.
- Earn a Green Star Award. Post the Green Star logo prominently and provide a flyer explaining your efforts as part of Green Star.
- Post information about your programs on your Web site.
- Post information for customers about waste reduction activities in which they can participate.
- Provide clear labeling and instructions on recycling bins in public areas of your facility.
- Offer reduced-price refills for beverages if customers bring a reusable mug.
- Install bike racks in your parking lots for bicycle commuters and customers.

Did You Know . . .

- People can only process about 3 to 7 different concepts or inputs at one time. This is called the “5 +/-2 rule.” If we receive more information than that, our attention becomes fatigued. We begin to limit our attention and direct it only toward things that are important to us. Messages that may be clear and obvious in some circumstances become lost or ignored.
- Messages that are demanding or give the perception of limiting freedom may cause people to ignore your message or do the opposite of what was intended. This is known as “psychological reactance.” Use positive language in your outreach and signs. For example - “Keep our Beaches Clean” is a more effective message than “Don’t Litter.”
- Modeling, or showing people the behavior you want from them by doing it yourself, is a very effective way to teach people. This creates a norm that people will emulate.