

**SAN ANTONIO GREEN LIVING PROGRAM FINAL REPORT**

**SUBMITTED BY EMPOWERMENT INSTITUTE**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the City of San Antonio's commitment to sustainability and to serve as a positive role model for its citizens, the city offered Empowerment Institute's Green Living Program to its employees. The rationale was to help employees develop sustainability practices in their home—an environment with more learning opportunities and therefore a better chance for developing a sustainability ethic—and then transfer what they learned back to the workplace. Employees who were motivated would also be encouraged to share what they learned with the larger community.

The pilot was a collaboration between the City of San Antonio's Office of Environmental Policy and Empowerment Institute. It took place between March 29 and October 31, 2010 and included recruiting program managers from the city departments, a one-day training, and three subsequent 2-hour master classes. The training taught the program managers how to lead an information meeting, start and lead an EcoTeam (a peer support group of 5 to 8 co-workers), and provide coaching to team members.

The program consisted of seven bi-weekly meetings of 1.5 to 2 hours that occurred during lunch hours with actions taken at home between meetings. The Green Living Program covered six topics: solid waste reduction, water efficiency, energy efficiency, transportation efficiency, green purchasing and empowering others. It began with a team-building meeting to align the EcoTeam around a purpose statement, divide up meeting leadership, and establish a set of group practices to ensure success.

We had no idea what to expect given that this was voluntary program, would take time out of the workplace, required employees to invest a portion of their lunch hour and take green actions in their home. Further, nothing like this had ever been offered by the City of San Antonio to its employees before.

Whatever expectations we had were substantially exceeded. The program was enthusiastically embraced with over 50% of the city departments participating and 88% of city employees who attended informational meetings committing to participate. But what was most encouraging was the quality of their participation. Employees on average took 16 green living actions over the course of the 4-month program with one EcoTeam averaging 36 actions per person. Program participants consistently commented on how much they enjoyed the community building and benefitted from the EcoTeam in helping them take green actions they would not have taken without this support.

One aspect of the program that offers much promise was the results it was able to achieve in getting home owners to do energy retrofits. This includes insulation of windows, doors, attics, crawl spaces, and replacement of windows. This is particularly significant because the U.S. Department of Energy (the program's funder) has as one their major goals getting homeowners to do retrofits. They have invested millions of dollars to enable this but achieving it has proved to be quite elusive for many reasons. But the foremost challenge is getting homeowners to care enough to wish to engage in this type of activity.

Green Living Program's holistic focus in helping program participants develop green living practices in all the areas of their life created a sustainability ethic which combined with the peer support system enabled 41% of EcoTeam members to take one or more retrofit actions. And this was without any prompting. With more focus on this area these results could be enhanced.

Here are a few comments from EcoTeam Program Managers about the energy efficiency aspect of the program.

"Our team took an average of 8 energy efficiency actions per person and 44% of our team took one or more of the home retrofit actions. The team supported its members to take these actions by providing advice, particularly from those who completed the action, and sharing before and after results to encourage others to participate. As a group we also researched and provided helpful resources to help complete the actions."

-- *Jessica Shirley-Saenz, EcoTeam Program Manager, Information Technology Services*

"The energy efficiency section was one of the most popular. The topic leader demonstrated how to retrofit his home. Those who did not feel they had the skills to do this action were offered help by team members. People realized that this was not a strenuous task and most of the team did it."

-- *Omar Jacobo, EcoTeam Program Manager, Purchasing and General Services*

"Our utility, CPS, gave out free thermostats and most of us entered it to 78. The team was helpful to get people to do it. We also went to CPS as a team to take advantage of their retrofitting program around weather stripping our homes and putting in energy efficient windows. Most of our team has taken these actions as well."

-- *Frank Garcia, EcoTeam Program Manager, Police Department*

Another area of focus for the DOE grant and a great challenge for local governments and communities is getting residents to develop more sustainable transportation practices. Again through the program's ability to help participants establish a sustainability ethic and with the help of the EcoTeam members, most participants took actions to become more efficient in their transportation practices. The most popular were developing fuel efficient driving practices, car pooling, using public transportation, tuning up and properly maintaining your car, and combing trips.

The main area for improvement, as voiced in the feedback, was around team members consistently attending meetings. While most of the EcoTeams overcame this issue, a stronger reinforcement from city leadership about the importance of this program would make the job of program manager a lot easier. To grow the program going forward will require the ongoing commitment from city leadership including regular communications about successes, recognition of the accomplishments of the EcoTeams and participating departments and strong management.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- Number of city departments reporting results: 19
- Number of EcoTeams formed: 27
- Number of participants on EcoTeams: 204
- Average number of participants on an EcoTeam: 7.5 people
- Percentage of people attending information meetings who joined an EcoTeam: 88%
- Total number of sustainable lifestyle actions taken by EcoTeam participants: 3,181
- Average number of sustainable lifestyle actions taken per person: 16.1
- Percentage of participants that did one or more energy actions to retrofit their home: 41.5%

## CITY DEPARTMENTS PROGRAM RESULTS

### Department of Community Initiatives – EcoTeam Program Manager, Erik Gomez

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 6
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 157
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 26.1
- Energy Section: The team took an average of 5 actions per person with 33% of team taking retrofit actions.

“The topic facilitator for the Energy Efficiency section rallied support and contextualized real-world impact for this section by coordinating a presentation with CPS Energy representative to discuss residential energy-saving tips. The representative outlined the financial impact and benefit of electricity conservation as reflected in real dollars/cents on utility bills, which impressed all EcoTeam members. At least one EcoTeam member had CPS-offered energy-saving thermostat installed at home by CPS technicians after the presentation.”

- Ten most popular actions: recycling, using a fan, driving more efficiently, purchasing a fuel efficient car, using cloth napkins, combining errands, purchasing recycled paper, using both sides of paper, washing dishes more efficiently, washing clothes more efficiently.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

Worked well:

1. Topic Facilitation by Team Members – Very popular and very effective in harnessing active participation by giving team members a personal stake in leading team education; also empowered team members in eyes of other team members.
2. Department facility for meeting (Little Carver Civic Center) and time slot (lunch hour plus work hour)
3. Special presentations by outside experts/guests pertaining to sustainability sections
4. Malleability of sustainability activities – could modify actions to suit different households/living situations of team members

Areas for improvement:

1. Need to find ways to increase participation (more members/more teams) from department as well as representative participation from each department division.
2. Adding component to handbook which allows/prompts EcoTeams to design own sustainability actions inspired by handbook activities (i.e., practiced at home/work) and share with team.
3. Increase length of EcoTeam meetings to allow for hands-on activities in conjunction with presentations and workbook review.
4. City could offer token incentives to employees who participate and show initiative in sustainability engagement or even prizes/awards which EcoTeams across departments could compete for based on degree/breadth of actions taken.

Information Technology Services Department – EcoTeam Program Manager, Jessica M. Shirley-Saenz

- Teams: 2
- Number of People: 9
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 145%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 326
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 36

- Energy Section: “Our team took an average of 8 energy efficiency actions per person and 44% of our team took one or more of the home retrofit actions. The team supported its members to take these actions by providing advice, particularly from those who completed the action, and sharing before and after results to encourage others to participate. As a group we also researched and provided helpful resources to help complete the actions.”
- Ten most popular actions: recycling, re-using bags, donating and/or selling used goods, drinking refrigerated water, using electricity more effectively, using fans to cool your home, doing more activities outside in nature, combining trips, taking environmental actions in the workplace, using both sides of paper.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:
 

“The group collectively agreed and noted since their involvement they've become motivated with the urge to pass on to as many more people the knowledge of going green. For most in the group the most significant change for all of us has been awareness and making those close to us more aware of the importance of our behaviors and their impact particularly to the environment. The experience has been positively impactful and educational.”

#### Best About the Program

1. Having on-site demonstrations for team members and any other employees interested.
2. The book provided a lot of examples that were useful.
3. The arrangement of a site visit to the recycling plant was helpful (employees learned and obtain a new awareness – e.g. some didn't know they didn't take styrofoam).
4. Communication amongst team members was beneficial (i.e. team members offered ideas on what they do at their homes and provided advice on approaches to take).
5. Collectively working as a team within our own department which provided flexibility and greater participation.

#### Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Collectively working with other departments specifically arranging site visits, take on an action project together (each department can take turns leading one).
2. Work on continuing on-site demonstrations from external and internal agencies (e.g. SAWS, CPS, etc...) to help educate and create awareness (dog and pony

shows across departments at their locations for convenience, departments can take turns on hosting demonstration, could take place quarterly or twice a year).

3. Would be helpful and encouraging to have a visit from an OEP member at beginning of program to offer more information about the department (a lot of associates unaware department existed and what they do and how they play a part in the program overall.

### Downtown Operations – EcoTeam Program Manager, Kelley Rafferty

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 9
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 180
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 20
- Energy Section: Team took an average of 5 actions per person with 50% taking retrofit actions.

“Our topic leader brought in all sorts of samples of different types of weather stripping and things that can be used to help make the home more energy efficient. Seeing these things makes it easier when going out to purchase them. He even gave the price of the items so you would know what to expect. That was extremely helpful.”

- Ten Most Popular Actions: re-using bags and bringing own bags to use at the store, recycling composting (offered a “how to” lunchtime class to all interested staff), reducing water use, switching from paper towels to cloth towels, lower set points on AC units, installed efficient lighting and motion lighting, buying earth friendly products. weatherizing house to conserve, using junk mail/envelopes as note pads at home.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“The things that I feel worked best about the program were the team members sharing information they may have seen on a website or on the news. This information was either shared in the meetings or via e-mail. This could have been a news story regarding how a couple aspired to be garbage free for a year or information on the new green Via buses.”

“I liked sharing our personal green actions when we first started the program and then comparing that with the green actions we learned and started utilizing

throughout the program. It was interesting seeing how we can all make a small change in our lives to make a large impact on our environment.”

“Meeting with team to discuss “go green” topics. Learning what works for others and how to implement them in our personal life.”

“Best: Regular meetings with committed team members. Improvement: At start of program, ask each member to commit to leading a chapter. This creates ownership and invites more team participation. Encourage the chapter lead to research other action items and/or local ideas for implementation.”

“I particularly liked the examples shared by the members about how they saved energy, water, resources, etc.... I would like to have somebody from Environmental Services give details about recycling and other green activities.”

“Everything I have initiated at my home and office has worked out great. The best part for me is that my husband has followed my example. My daughter is studying Environmental Science at UT so we share ideas.”

Actions implemented at work:

Installed motion sensors in the bathrooms, hallway corridor, conference room, work room and break room. In the past these lights were on all day and now are only on as needed. Non green team members have noticed and complemented the efforts.

Composting collection from our kitchen/break room. Items are kept frozen in the refrigerator until delivered to our compost site. When compost is ready, it will be used in a downtown park.

Arranged a “how to” compost class open all employees over a lunch hour. Class was administered by Solid Waste.

### Parks and Recreation – EcoTeam Program Manager, Gabriela Tello

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 8
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 44
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 5.5
- Energy Section: The team averaged 2 actions per person including taking actions to retrofit our homes.

- Ten Most Popular Actions: recycling, using both sides of paper, composting, mulching grass, reducing junk mail, using cloth instead of paper napkins, cleaning up after your dog, finding water leaks in your home, using electricity more efficiently, plugging your electricity leaks, turning off appliances all the way
- EcoTeam Member Feedback

“Since the program started I have enjoyed the following: Getting together and helping each other understand how we can all do a better job at recycling and learning how to do such. I have kept up with the poop scoop which really has made a tremendous change for me and my babies. I am now only watering my lawn once every week and by half. I have saved a great deal on my water bill. I still only turn my computer on once a week to check for emails, other than that, the computer is always turned off. Great electric savings! I have also been doing the following to save more...washing clothing and dishes after 6:00 pm. Recycling all bottles and cans, boxes etc., having my A/C between 76-77 degrees (auto), keeping all lights off when in or not in the room if not needed. Making sure my vehicle is always serviced properly to include proper air in the tires.”

“I enjoyed the projects in the sustainability book. I think it would be a great thing if one day the majority of households would become “zero garbage household”. Can you imagine... ☺. Thank you for the opportunity, I learned many new projects to share with my family and friends.”

“The Green Living Handbook was informative and provided great recipes to create an environmentally sustainable lifestyle. Some of the activities were great and others were a little challenging since you definitely have to change the systematic household habits that you are used to.

“The Green Living Handbook has been a great guide and my family has already incorporated many of the suggestions into our lifestyle at home.”

I am proud of our EcoTeam members for joining the program, giving great feedback on activities/savings (either at the meetings or via e-mail) and turning in tangible information from their activities.”

“Our Team Purpose Statement was: becoming better neighbors by reducing our environmental footprint. For the most part, as you can see from the feedback, we are continuing to follow the team purpose statement in our own ways as well as following the book’s activities. However, one of the challenges for our EcoTeam was attendance.”

“I have really enjoyed reading the book and trying many of the great ideas. I take my bags into stores more often, my recycling has really picked up as have my composting efforts. I have been buying from a farmer's market for this latest challenge and for the most part it is ok. The price is always good and usually the

veggies are fresher. I find this especially true for Naegelin farms. If you have never been to Pearl Brewery market (open on Saturday mornings), it is quite the experience in shopping - the usual and even some exotic vegetables, lavender products, fresh baked breads and croissants.”

“Overall, I am glad for this opportunity and to be chosen as the appointed liaison for the Green Living Program for our department. I see where improvements /tweaking can be made in leading the meetings and I even have some great ideas for the next team! I firmly believe this program can be successful but it definitely needs commitment, encouragement, support and accountability from everyone inside and outside of the EcoTeam!”

#### Office of Cultural Affairs – EcoTeam Program Manager, Victoria S. Garcia

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 4
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 50%
- Total Number of Actions: 141
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 35
- Energy Section: Team took an average of 8.5 actions person and 75% of team members did retrofit actions.
- Ten most popular actions: recycling, reusing bags, reusing containers to buy take-out food, using cloth instead of paper, repairing instead of throwing away, installing energy efficient lighting, washing and drying clothes efficiently, using fans to cool your home, walking and biking to destinations, using public transportation.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“Great program, great reading materials. I can’t think of any improvements.”

“This program is great way to engage City employees in environmental best practices, recognizing that we as stewards of this earth have a long road ahead in reaching the common goal. The ‘cartoon format’ I sense was used to make this user friendly but at times it was kind of cluttered, and the program was a bit overwhelming for some of the team members at times. But overall, I enjoyed the opportunity to interact with my fellow employees. That was great.”

#### Convention and Visitors Bureau – EcoTeam Program Manager, Leticia Gonzales

- Teams: 1

- Number of People: 7
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 65
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 9.3
- Energy Section: 75% of our team took one or more retrofit actions. The team provided support by sharing the ideas that worked best in their homes.
- Ten Most Popular Actions: recycle, use cloth bags, reuse items, turn off lights, wear clothes longer before washing, car pool, use cloth napkins, wash dishes more efficiently, wash clothes more efficiently.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:
 

“Our team liked the program because the steps were easy to follow; the group meetings brought new thoughts or added ideas to some of the steps: and liked including family members to assist in the changes so that it does not fall on just one family member.”

Convention, Sports and Entertainment Facilities Department – EcoTeam Program  
Manager, Wanda Williams

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 10
- Recruitment Rate: 8%
- Total Number of Actions: 357
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 36
- Energy Section: Team took an average of 12 actions per person with 80% of the team taking retrofit actions. The energy section had the most participation for our team. Many actions were adopted or will be adopted in the future such as making water heaters more efficient, changing to a programmable thermostat, turning down the thermostat, adding insulation to doors and windows, and adding weather stripping.
- Ten most popular actions: using both sides of paper, mulching grass, reduction of water used for personal care, reduction of water used for gardening/lawn care, using electricity more efficiently – unplugging and turning off appliances, washing/drying clothes more efficiently, using fans to cool in conjunction with air conditioning unit,

combining trips for various errands, buying recycled paper products, etc., reducing use of toxic pesticides, fertilizers, etc.

- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“Most members believe the program should be implemented in the workplace (City buildings). Suggest that each section be done for one month so that behavior is really learned/changed. All thought the book was a good source of material.”

Office of the City Auditor – EcoTeam Program Manager, Elsa Smithwick

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 10
- Recruitment Rate: 33%
- Total Number of Actions: 174
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 17.4
- Energy Section: Team took an average of 3.3 actions per person with 20% of team taking retrofit actions.
- Ten Most Popular Actions: recycling, re-using bags, using both sides of paper, donating or selling used goods, using electricity more effectively, using fans to cool your home, combining trips, developing fuel-efficient driving habits, identifying and plugging oil leaks on your vehicle, tune-ups and maintenance for your car
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:  

“The group discussions were lively and entertaining and we learned from one another.”

Capital Improvements Management Services – EcoTeam Program Manager, William Hensley

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 18
- Information Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 303
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 17

- Energy Section: Team took an average of 3 actions per person with 22% of team taking retrofit actions.
- Most Popular Actions: recycling, water consumption, turning electricity off, combining trips, avoiding impulse shopping, purchasing earth friendly products.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:
 

“There should probably be a reporting mechanism for items we believe in or support but because of one circumstance or another cannot complete. As an apartment dweller there are items such as cutting grass high and planting trees or home owner items that I would otherwise commit to should my living arrangements be different. One became very enthusiastic about trying to get all apartments in San Antonio to install digital programmable thermostats, instead of the inaccurate mercury ones.”

Office of the City Clerk – EcoTeam Program Manager, Rosalinda Diaz

- Teams: 2
- Number of People: 16
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 91%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 233
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 14.5
- Energy Section: Team took an average of 2.4 actions per person with 25% of team taking retrofit actions.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:
 

“Everyone in the program was already doing some form of environmentally friendly process in their home and work environment. Many felt that the book provided great information and suggestions to become more Earth friendly. A few co-workers saw savings in their electric and water bills after performing some actions provided in the book.”

“Many felt there was not enough time between topics to absorb the information provided at the meetings, finding it difficult to implement the actions they had selected. Some also felt the information overload could discourage a person from completing the program.”

Purchasing and General Services – EcoTeam Program Manager, Omar Jacobo

- Teams: 1

- Number of People: 8
- Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions: 79
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 9.8
- Energy Section: 75% of the team took retrofit actions.

“The Energy efficiency section was one of the most popular. The Topic leader demonstrated how to retrofit his home. Those who did not feel they had the skills to do this action were offered help by team members. People realized that this was not a strenuous task and the majority of the team did it.”

- Ten Most Popular Actions: adjusting thermostats, recycling – (in addition to what most members were already doing), installing energy efficient light bulbs, installing low flow fixtures, hot water heater temperature adjustment, adjusting hot water heater settings, mulching grass, finding water leaks. donating or selling used items, check refrigerator door seal
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“The feedback from group members explaining specific actions they took encouraged others to consider taking on the same action.”

Solid Waste Management Department – EcoTeam Program Manager, Sandy Redmond

- Teams: 2
- Number of People: 14
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 56
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 4
- Energy Section: No data reported
- Most Popular Actions: Composting; trying to use to-go containers; water dam, and taking the bus.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“I believe this program is good in a grass roots environment, but in a large organization such as COSA it may be hard to be implemented with the time

constraints of work. We regularly scheduled meetings that were sometimes hard to attend.”

“Overall, I like the concept of the Tupperware party type grassroots effort to encourage awareness and action. However, I’m not sure how effective it is. Based on comments during our last meeting, it didn’t seem like many group members were going to change their habits at all. Maybe it needs the empowerment section spread out more throughout the book, who knows.

#### Police Department – EcoTeam Program Manager, Frank Garcia

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 14
- Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions: 336
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 24
- Energy Section: The team took an average of 4 actions per person with 50% of team taking retrofit actions.

“Our utility, CPS, gave out free thermostats and most of us entered it to 78. The team was helpful to get people to do it. We also went to CPS as a team to take advantage of their retrofitting program around weather stripping our homes and putting in Energy Efficient windows. Most of our team has taken these actions as well.”

- Ten Most Popular Actions: recycling, using cloth bags when shopping, composting, reducing water used for toilet flushing, reducing water used in personal care, using electricity more efficiently, installing energy efficient lighting, turning down the thermostat, cooling your house more efficiently, using public transportation.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“We discussed each topic in each chapter, with all team members having an input to the subject including how each person would benefit. This included using their own experiences that have worked and how it helped them.”

“One team member has started a recycling team at church by collecting cans for children that have diabetes. She reports that all funds that are generated by the collection of the cans go to the Church children’s diabetes program. This is one way to help people in need with items that sometimes are dumped in the trash.”

“As a whole the team would like to extend a challenge to all the other members of the city departments that have not participated in this program to recycle at home to reduce trash going into our land fields and reduce the cost of buying land. Each team member has committed their household to this task.”

#### Airport System – EcoTeam Program Manager, Steve Southers

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 7
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: no data reported
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: no data reported
- Energy Section: Actions taken included using electricity more efficiently, installing energy efficient lighting, insulating windows and doors.
- Ten most popular actions: recycling, re-using grocery bags, donating or selling used goods, mulching grass, reducing the number of toilet flushes, reducing the use of shower and bath water, reducing water used in personal care, reducing the use of weed killers and fertilizers, buying recycled paper products.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback: no data reported

#### Public Library – EcoTeam Program Manager, Amy Thorne

- Teams: 4
- Number of People: 28
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 336 (estimate)
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 12 actions (estimate).
- Energy Section: Incomplete data. Representative actions.

“Bought more CFL bulbs and two Energy Star appliances and applied for CPS rebate.”

“I had CPS install a programmable thermostat and I purchased an Energy-Star rated window AC unit.”

- Most Popular Actions: Incomplete data but garbage and energy actions were most popular.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“Loved the discussions and having people from different departments and different levels of awareness. Also sharing our guilt and failures.”

“Participating in Green Living was a worthwhile experience and I appreciated the chance to learn from and be inspired by others. I truly enjoyed getting together every couple of weeks. The main area for improvement is the Handbook was I found it cumbersome to switch to different sections of the book when dealing with a single topic.”

“Our team held its last session this past Wednesday. One idea that came up was the creation of a libguide (online guides for various subjects) related to sustainable living. The libguide would be available to the public, of course. We work directly with the community, and I think that the library as a whole and individual branches would be happy to do what we can to spread green living awareness (we can usually provide a place to meet, for example). I cannot speak for the library system, but approaching the local libraries is definitely something community leaders should consider when adopting green practices.”

“All together we have had a great experience with this project. We have made many of the changes suggested in the Action Log in a move towards better stewardship and sustainability. Many of us have plans for how we can “Do more, try harder” in the coming days and years and gained a better understanding of the impact we can make (how empowering!).”

“This process can make people feel a little defensive about their habits. The discussions that occurred both during our group meetings and on the side gave us the opportunity to think more broadly about why we do what we do and how to find solutions for those things that keep us from trying “greener” tactics. As we move on to empower others, and as new teams form, it is essential to have an open and accepting attitude that invites change.”

“Lots of great feedback from participants. All 10 of us had a great time doing this, learned a lot, and all report doing more to live sustainably than before we started.”

“I think the best thing about the program (or at least our version of it) was that it felt more like a discussion group rather than a training program. My one suggestion would be in regards to the initial formation of the teams. I don't think many of us expected to be drafted to an EcoTeam. I think going forward it should be made clear from the beginning to those who plan on attending the info session.”

Health Department – EcoTeam Program Manager, Doug Eckhart

- Teams: 3
- Number of People: 21
- Information Meeting Recruitment Rate: 70%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 315
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 15
- Energy Section: Each team member took an average of 3 energy efficiency actions and reacted in a very positive manner to this topic.
- Most Popular Actions: recycling, cloth bags, recyclable takeout containers, using both sides of paper, installing water efficient appliances, checking for water leaks, turning off unused lights, insulating windows and doors.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:
 

“It is difficult to start and continue meetings during the summer due to vacations and we did not have an ample supply of handbooks. We also need info as to what items the city recycles, these seemed to change during the program. Everyone is very positive about recycling! Thanks.”

Office of Environmental Policy – EcoTeam Program Manager, Bill Barker

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 5
- Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions: 14
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 2.8
- Energy Section: 40% of the team took retrofit actions.
 

Team members discussed the thermostat setting that they use, protocol used in using computers more efficiently and experience with insulating windows/doors.
- Ten Most Popular Actions: reducing junk mail, donating or selling used goods, reusable party products, installing toilet dam, turning off computer when not in use, installing programmable thermostat, installing windows and doors, walking or biking, car maintenance to become more transportation efficient, meatless meals.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“Team members enjoyed the social interaction and getting to know each other better. Schedule demands made it difficult to have everyone regularly meet at the same time.”

Grants Monitoring & Administration – EcoTeam Program Manager, Nancy Williams  
(only applied to workplace)

- Teams: 1
- Number of People: 4
- Recruitment Rate: 100%
- Total Number of Actions Taken: 20
- Average Number of Actions Taken Per Person: 5
- Energy Section: All four members ensured that lights were turned off in the break room and file room if they were not being used at that time and at the end of the day made sure all lights were turned off.
- Most Popular Actions: Increasing recycling productivity among staff members, turning off lights to save on energy, parking lot trash pickup.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“We ensured each person in the office received a recycling day reminder each Tuesday. We then brought the blue recycling bin in the office on Tuesday so that it would be more convenient for staff members to empty their cubicle/office bins. We then did a quick audit of what was considered recyclable material and got rid of items that were actual trash. We then made sure that the blue bin was outside and available for pick up. All four members picked up any paper or plastic in the parking lot and made sure to place in the proper recycling bin. This process cleaned the parking lot and at the same time was good for the environment.”

“EcoTeam members felt like this was another duty on their ever growing workloads at first but then we all realized that we were working together not only as a team of four but as a department. We noticed that the recycling process continued weekly and each week more staff members who had not recycled in the past were participating.”

Intergovernmental Relations Department – EcoTeam Program Manager, Stephanie Johns  
(only applied to workplace)

- Teams: 1

- Number of People: 6
- Recruitment Rate: 83%
- Total Number of Actions: 45
- Average Number of Actions Per Person: 9
- Energy Section: The IGR team was in full support of taking actions to conserve energy and the actions taken include: turning off office lights and lamps, turning off televisions, radios, computer monitors and speakers when leaving the office for the day.
- Most Popular Actions: Recycling paper, bringing our own reusable bags, the use of reusable bottles or glasses for beverages, the purchase and use of biodegradable paper products, turning off lights and electronic devices when leaving the office for any length of time.
- EcoTeam Member Feedback:

“EcoTeam members were encouraged to start an EcoTeam within their homes and to share this information with their friends and neighbors and all team members committed to do this.”