

May 2006



Recycle 202 Workshop: Public Education



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Introduction



What is Public Education?

- Providing residents with information on “how” and “why” to recycle.
- Accomplished through combination of:
 - Education
 - Publicity
 - Outreach



Why is Public Education Important?

- Effective public education is a hallmark of successful recycling programs.
- Key to developing, expanding or maintaining a program.
- Success of recycling programs is directly related to the amount of participation the program receives.
- Can help yield increases in volume and quality of recyclable material.
- Promotes economically sustainable recycling program.



Establishing Goals & Objectives



- Planning ensures that appropriate audiences in the community are reached regularly and systematically.
- Need to clearly define:
 - Goals: What you want to accomplish.
 - Objectives: How you are going to accomplish it.
 - Who will do the work?
 - Who will hear the message?
 - What strategies will you use?



Examples of Common Goals & Objectives

- Create awareness and understanding
 - Possible objective: Provide presentations to student groups and community organizations
- Initiate a new recycling program
 - Possible objective: Develop press kits, initiate news articles and print ads in local publications



More Examples of Common Goals

- Expand a recycling program
- Provide residents with the knowledge to participate correctly
- Improve diversion
- Decrease contamination
- Increase participation and support
- Reinvigorate a program
- Reach new residents



Education is a Continual Process



- Goals will evolve over time as program grows and develops.
- Level of emphasis on different objectives will vary over time depending on type of program and current program goals.
- Communications must be sustained over the long-term in order to have desired impact.
- Adequate funding must be budgeted on an on-going basis.
 - Industry benchmark - \$1 per household per year
- Consistency is key to success.

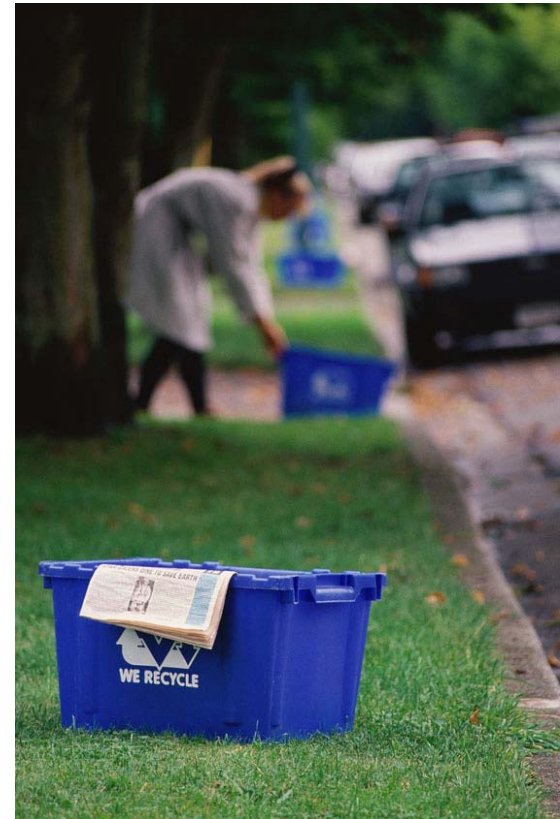


10 Steps to Developing an Education Campaign



Step 1: Involve Your Customers

- Customers more likely to support and participate in recycling programs if they feel they have had input into program development.
- Examples:
 - Type of collection
 - Materials to be collected
 - Education programs
 - Enforcement methods



Example: Customer Involvement

- City of Seattle, WA
 - Held recycling workshops with various groups during development of new recycling ordinance.
 - Separate workshops for:
 - Business associations and groups
 - Apartment managers
 - Citizen Advisory Committee



Step 2: Decide Who Will Do the Work

- Critical to have at least one person who will be responsible for overseeing recycling education.
 - Full-time recycling coordinator
 - Other local official may assume responsibility
 - Solid Waste Manager, Planner, Public Works Director
- Choose a credible spokesperson and train them to speak effectively with the media.



Deciding Who Will Do the Work



- Appoint a volunteer recycling committee
 - Helps ensure sufficient support for educational campaign.
 - May donate skills and resources.
 - Provides a link with business and civic groups.
 - Should provide a cross section of opinions and ideas that are representative of the community.



Deciding Who Will Do the Work



- If you have a public-private partnership for the collection and/or processing of recyclables, both the City and its partner should share public education responsibilities.



Step 3: Develop Your Message



- Message should be based on your community's specific programs, concerns and goals.
- Should directly reflect the needs and values of your community.



Developing Your Message

- Key information to include in all educational messages:
 - Why recycle?
 - Include environmental, economic and community benefits
 - How to recycle?
 - Include all relevant details of the program
 - What, Where, and How to recycle
- Messages should always be clear, concise and consistent.





Example: Message Development

- City of Seattle, WA
 - Needed to communicate how new recycling ordinance would affect different customers.
 - Residential and multi-family message:
 - Cannot throw away newspaper, mixed waste paper, cardboard, glass bottles and jars, plastic containers, or aluminum cans.
 - Business message:
 - Cannot throw away paper, cardboard or yard waste.



Step 4: Target Your Audience



- The nature and type of promotional materials you develop will depend on your intended audience.
- Target areas of your community that are critical to the success of your program and goals.



Targeting Your Audience

- Audiences can be identified by:
 - Age
 - Where they live
 - Type of residence
 - Membership in organizations
 - Profession
 - Place of employment
- Common target groups:
 - Homeowners
 - Apartment Dwellers
 - School Children
 - Civic Groups
 - Consumers
 - Employers / Employees
 - Senior Citizens
 - Tourists
 - General Public
 - Other Educators
 - Government



Step 5: Know Your Target Audience

- What are your audience's beliefs and awareness related to recycling?
 - Do they support the idea of a recycling program?
 - What do they see as the most important features of a program?
 - Are they aware of tangible benefits of recycling?
 - What do they find difficult or confusing about recycling currently?
 - What types of messages are effective/ineffective in motivating them to recycle?



Getting to Know Your Target Audience

- Data can be gathered using:
 - Surveys
 - Focus Groups
 - Workshops
- Utilize existing customer contact points to help you gather input.



Example: Getting to Know Your Audience

- City of Seattle, WA
 - Conducted survey and focus groups to examine:
 - Audience's beliefs and awareness about recycling
 - Types of messages connected with their target audience
 - Messages that resonated:
 - Recycle. It's Not Garbage Anymore!
 - Recycle. Why Waste a Good Thing?
 - Don't Be Left Behind- Recycle!
 - Messages combined with offers of assistance.
 - "Save the Earth" type ads were often a turn-off.



Step 6: Benchmarking



- Research what other communities and organizations have done.
- Borrow ideas for successful public education activities.



Step 7: Select an Educational Approach

- Based on your target audience, select the types of activities and messages that will most effectively reach them.
- Examples:
 - Homeowners – Newsletter insert in utility bill
 - Children – Develop environmental education curriculum in schools
 - Tourists – Point of contamination labels (trash and recycling bins)



Selecting an Educational Approach

- No matter what type of approach you decide to implement, the goal is to:
 - Capture the attention of the target audience(s)
 - Deliver effective messages in the target audience's own language
 - Provide short, simple and relevant information on how and why to recycle in a way the target audience can easily and quickly understand.
 - Motivate the audience to take action

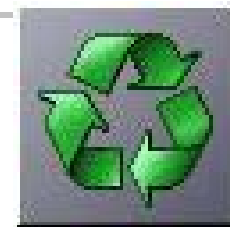


Example: Selecting an Educational Approach



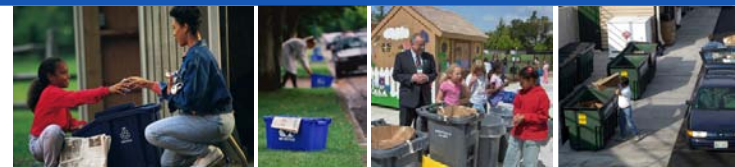
- City of Seattle, WA
 - Needed to get message out to apartment managers/owners and residents.
 - Developed a direct mail packet which included:
 - Official letter from the City
 - Recycling toolkit
 - Order form for educational materials available through the City to use in educating employees and tenants about the program.





Step 8: Develop a Feedback Loop

- Feedback is a critical part of recycling education.
- Provides opportunity to:
 - Reinforce positive behavior
 - Provide information that may help correct negative behavior
- Program should regularly highlight:
 - Amount of materials recovered
 - Money saved
 - Various successes of the program

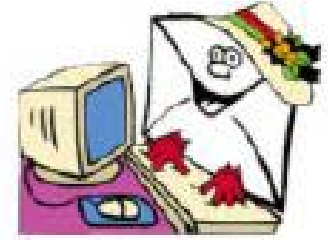


Developing a Feedback Loop

- Make citizens feel appreciated for their recycling efforts.
 - People like to hear when they are doing a good job.
 - Feedback helps reinforce commitment and encourages people to do more.



Developing a Feedback Loop



- Provide ample opportunities for citizens to provide feedback about the program.
 - Ask questions and receive answers
 - Make recommendations
 - Register complaints
 - Request information and materials



Example: Developing a Feedback Loop

- Seattle, WA
 - Needed to provide convenient opportunities for residents to ask questions and receive timely answers on their recycling questions.
 - Developed “Ask Evelyn the Envelope” column
 - Started recycling hotline - (206) RECYCLE



Step 9: Define Success For Your Program

- As you begin to implementation, establish measurable goals for your activities.
- Should be objective markers or milestones that track progress and effectiveness.
- Each goal should contain the following components:
 - Activity to be completed
 - Person(s) who will complete the activity
 - Schedule or completion date
 - Quantifiable benchmark to measure progress toward goal



Example: Defining Success



- City of Seattle, WA
 - Used follow-up surveys and focus groups to monitor progress.
 - Awareness: Up 50% to 82%
 - Support: Up 25% to 82%



Step 10: Evaluate Your Program

- Periodically review the effectiveness of your activities.
 - Surveys
 - Tonnage reports
 - Contamination levels
 - Citizen feedback



Evaluating Your Program

- Questions to ask:
 - Is your message being received?
 - Has participation increased?
 - Are people confused?
 - Do they need more or different information?
 - Does the approach warrant the time and money being spent?
- Use the answers to update and improve communication with your customers.



Example: Evaluating Your Program



- City of Seattle, WA
 - Tracked recyclable tonnage as a measure of success.
 - Residents recycled 5.8 million more lbs of recyclables in 2005 than in 2004. City's garbage tonnage was the lowest in 10 years.



Effectiveness of Various Outreach Methods



Public Education & Outreach Tools

Outreach Tools	Examples
Media Publicity	press kits/news, seminars, annual reports, editorial space, public service announcements, feature columns
Special Events	contests, games, sweepstakes, fairs and trade shows, exhibits, kick-off events
Advertising	print ads (newspaper, magazine, periodicals, trade journals, billboards), broadcast ads (radio, television, cable), packaging inserts
Non-Media Publicity	brochures, booklets, bill stuffers, school curricula, newsletters, incentives, educational flyers, directories, posters and leaflets, premiums (stickers, buttons, magnets, t-shirts, pens)
Direct Contact	presentations, sales meetings, telemarketing, incentive programs, fairs and trade shows, door-to-door canvassing, block leader programs, school assemblies, speakers bureaus



Effectiveness of Various Outreach Tools

- Effectiveness of different outreach methods is heavily dependent on the specific characteristics of your program and target audience.
- Most important factor in selecting effective communication methods is knowing your audience.



Effectiveness of Various Outreach Tools

- Recycling coordinators generally report greatest satisfaction with:
 - Print media
 - Recycling toolkits / handbooks
 - Bill stuffers
 - Newspaper ads / articles
 - Billboards
 - Direct marketing
 - Workshops
 - Direct mail
 - Recycling hotline
 - Business and multi-family presentations
 - Community events



Relative Costs of Outreach Tools

Low Cost	Medium Cost	High Cost
<p>News releases</p> <p>News advisories</p> <p>PSAs</p> <p>Community calendar announcements</p> <p>Letters to the editor</p> <p>News articles</p> <p>Newsletter articles</p> <p>Speeches</p> <p>Guest spots on TV, radio</p> <p>Poster contests</p> <p>Church bulletin notices</p>	<p>Flyers</p> <p>Posters</p> <p>Fact sheets</p> <p>Briefing papers</p> <p>Media events</p> <p>Slide shows</p>	<p>Commercials (TV, radio)</p> <p>Billboards</p> <p>Media events</p> <p>Calendars</p> <p>Advertisements</p> <p>Public relations firm</p>



Strategies for Overcoming Common Obstacles



Educating Hard to Reach Audiences

- Developing outreach methods that effectively communicate your message to everyone served by the program can be very difficult.
- Depending on demographics of your area, you may need to design educational materials and programs to specifically target hard-to-reach audiences.
 - Examples: limited English, low literacy skills, culturally appropriate messaging, etc...



Educating Hard to Reach Audiences

- Get to know your audience
 - Recycling Committee
 - Workshops
 - Focus Groups
 - Surveys
 - Demographic research
 - www.census.gov



Educating Hard to Reach Audiences

- Census website tutorial

The screenshot shows the American FactFinder website. At the top, it says "U.S. Census Bureau" and "American FactFinder". Below the header is a navigation menu with options like "Main", "Search", "Feedback", "Fast Access to Information", "Population Finder", "Fact Sheet", "People", "Housing", "Business and Government", "About the Data", "Data Sets", "Download Center", "Maps", and "Tools and References".

The main content area is titled "Your source for population, housing, economic, and geographic data". It features a "Fast Access to Information" section with a "Get a Fact Sheet for your community..." form. The form has input fields for "city/ town, county, or zip" and "state" (with a dropdown menu), and a "GO" button. Below the form is a link: "or select a state using a map »".

There are three main content columns on the right:

- Population Data**: Includes "Population Finder" (Use the [Population Finder](#) to view population trends for your community.) and "U.S. Population Clock" (19:44 GMT (EST+5) May 18, 2006; **298,769,640**; more [population clocks »](#)).
- What's New**: Includes "Updates to American FactFinder released April 20, 2006." (more [»](#)), "2005 Population Estimates for counties now available from the [Data Sets](#) page.", and "2004 American Community Survey (ACS) tables, including Population Profiles for race, Hispanic origin, and ancestry groups have".

At the bottom left of the screenshot, there is an "Address Search..." section with the text: "Enter a [street address](#) to find Census 2000 data". Below this are links for "Browser Notes", "Confidentiality", and "Citing FactFinder".



Tips for Educating Hard to Reach Audiences

- Involve community leaders as a starting point.
- Consider hiring appropriate staff (or soliciting volunteers) to help with education program.
- Present information personally or through someone who is a trusted source in the community.
- Develop promotional materials in appropriate languages and consider cultural sensitivities.



Tips for Educating Hard to Reach Audiences



- Keep messages simple and clear.
- Place targeted ads in minority newspapers, grocery stores, and restaurants.
- Provide program information through minority radio stations and television.
- Ensure that feedback and recognition efforts are applicable to these audiences.



Keeping Momentum



- Keep residents interested and excited about the program by providing feedback on a regular basis.
- Important to recognize and reward participants and the community for their progress and achievements.





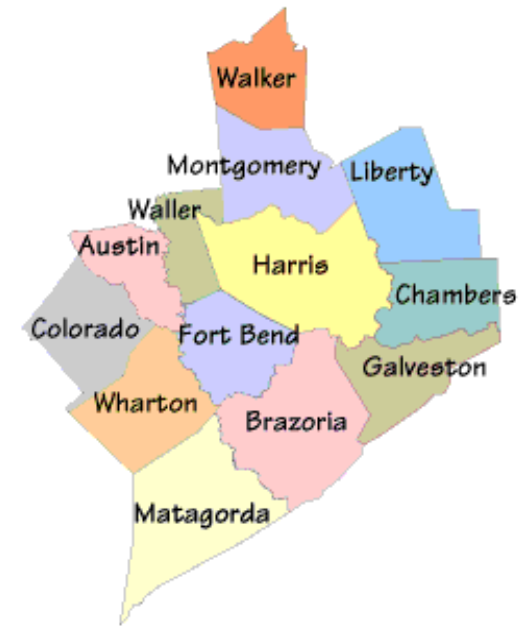
Ideas for Keeping Momentum

- Highlight achievements and milestones through:
 - Monthly or quarterly reports and newsletters
 - Letter from a public official (i.e. mayor)
 - Press releases and news articles that highlight program milestones
 - Ongoing public speaking engagements
 - Rewards to the community for participation
 - Block leader programs
 - Weather channel/public access ads (reach all areas within the region)
 - Movie theater PSAs (reach good demographic mix)
 - Signs at recycling centers that promote accomplishments



Leveraging Resources

- Communities may benefit greatly by entering into partnerships with:
 - Other communities
 - Governmental entities
 - Non-profits
 - Citizen Groups
 - Private Companies
 - Media
- www.cleanup.org
 - Excellent resource for finding information about other programs in your region.



Ideas for Leveraging Program Funds

- Draw on local expertise.
- Solicit volunteers to help develop materials and promote the program.
- Seek contributions from local businesses and organizations.
- Take advantage of local media including newspapers, radio and TV.
- Make use of materials, information and expertise available through other organizations.
- Become familiar with sources of grant funding and utilize them (see handout).



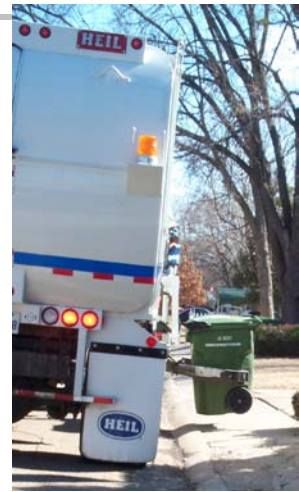
Benefits of Leveraging Resources

- Cost savings – share costs of developing and delivering educational materials and programs
- Exchange of ideas, skills and experiences
- Enhanced ability to use mass media
- Consistent educational messaging
- May reduce duplication of topics and tasks by hosting regional workshops



Notifying Residents of Changes in Service

- Public outreach is very important when:
 - Implementing a new program
 - Making changes to an existing program
 - Change in collection days, hours
 - Change in location
 - Change in materials collected
- If program is new or very different from existing program
 - Begin education campaign approximately 1 year in advance
- If making more minor adjustments to existing program
 - Begin education approximately 3 months in advance



Notifying Residents of Changes in Service

- Need to provide alternative recycling opportunities when implementing changes to your program.
- Understand that there will be an adjustment period for customers.
- Anticipate potential implementation problems.
- Be proactive in developing communications that will be effective in correcting those problems.



Ideas from Successful Programs



City of Plano, TX – Focus on Student Education

- **Target Audience: Students in local school districts**
- **Message: Introduce concepts of**
 - Composting
 - Household chemical safety
 - Litter awareness and prevention
 - Organics
 - Single-stream recycling
 - Solid waste management and recycling
 - Water education and conservation
- **Educational Approach**
 - Partner with schools and area PTA groups to teach environmental concepts through fun, interactive presentations, games, discovery boxes, puppet shows, tours and award programs.



City of Plano, TX – Environmental Education Programs

- Environmental Discovery Garden
 - Offers hands-on field trip program that meets environmental education curriculum needs for teachers.
- Environmental chair workshops
- Environmental clubs
- School environmental weeks and fairs
- Environmental community awards



City of Plano, TX – Environmental Education Programs



- Residential Recycling Incentive Program (RRIP)
- Secondary In-School Recycling Incentive Program (SIRIP)
- Recycling programs in PISD schools
 - Single stream and organic
 - Marketing, training and support materials provided by the City.



City of Plano, TX – Environmental Education Programs



RECYCLE ORGANICS
RECICLE LOS PRODUCTOS ORGANICOS

Yes. Sí

- Fruits and Vegetables (Frutas y Verduras)
- Snack Foods (Los Meriendas (all brands))
- Mexican Paper Drink Containers (Resquenes de Papel Encasado para Bebidas)
- Paper Baking Items (Artículos de Papel para Hornear y Cocinar)
- Meat, Fish and Bones (Carne, Peces y Huesos)
- Grass Clippings, Leaves and Plant Material (Recortes de Hierba, Hojas y Material Vegetal)
- Bread (Pan)

No

- Plastic and Foil Packaging (Embalajes Plásticos y Papel de Aluminio)
- Plastic and Styrofoam Food Containers (Recipientes para Alimentos de Plástico y de Estireno de Poliestireno)
- Styrofoam Plates (Platos y Tazas de Estireno de Poliestireno)
- Plastic Bags (Bolsas de Plástico)
- Plastic Straws (Pajitas de Plástico)
- Plastic and Metal Lids (Lidículos de Plástico y Metal)
- Plastic, Metal and Glass Items (Artículos de Plástico, Metal y Vidrio)

www.cioplano.org/recycle



Boone County, KY – Environmental Education Programs

- Target audience: Primary school children
 - Message: Create awareness about recycling, what materials are recyclable, and why recycling matters.
 - Educational Approach: Coloring calendar contest
- Target audience: Secondary school students (teenagers)
 - Message: Encourage teenagers to find out more about recycling and its benefits.
 - Educational Approach: Button bombardment



Boone County, KY – Environmental Education Programs



City of Seattle, WA – Strategies for Specific Target Audiences



- Target audience: Homeowners
 - Bill insert newsletter
- Target audience: Apartment dwellers
 - Friends of Recycling Program
- Target audience: Businesses
 - Resource Venture



City of Seattle, WA – Recycling Education Programs

- Other general outreach methods:
 - IQ Game (website)
 - Point of Contamination Labels
 - Recycling mascots
 - Solid Waste Citizen Advisory Committee
 - Transfer station signage
 - Guidelines and brochures
 - Educational tagging



City of Seattle, WA – Recycling Education Programs



City of Seattle, WA – Recycling Education Programs

- Heavily utilize direct marketing through:
 - Newsletters
 - Direct Mail- Recycling Toolkit
 - Recycling Hotline
 - Business and Multi-family Presentations
 - Community Events
 - Recycling IQ Flyer, Game



City of Seattle, WA – Recycling Education Programs

- Advertising through:
 - Newspaper Ads
 - Radio Ads
 - News Stories
 - Inspection Media Tours
 - Regional Television Ads



Final Tips for Successful Education and Outreach

- Capture the attention of target audience(s).
- Deliver effective message in target audience's own language.
- Motivate audience to take action.
- Provide feedback to reinforce behavior.
- Receive feedback from program participants.
- Consistency is key (programming, funding and staff).



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