



# Greening Your Volunteer Program

## Why go green?

### *Why recycle, reduce, and reuse?*

- ~ Americans' total yearly waste from 2008 would fill a convoy of garbage trucks long enough to wrap around the Earth six times and reach halfway to the moon.
- ~ It is estimated that 222 million tons of waste will be generated by Americans in 2009. At the consumption level of the average American, at least 4 additional planets worth of resources would be needed to support the planet's six billion inhabitants.
- ~ The U.S. Postal Service delivers over 87 billion pieces of advertising/promotional mail annually.

### *Why local food?*

- ~ The food we buy in the grocery store travels an average 1,300 miles from the farm to our table.

### *Why organic food and goods?*

- ~ Producing enough cotton for a single t-shirt requires 1/3 lb. of pesticides and fertilizers.
- ~ The World Health Organization estimates that 20,000 deaths annually and three million chronic health problems are associated with poisonings related to agricultural pesticide use. Research shows higher instances of brain cancer, leukemia, and birth defects in children with early exposure to pesticides.



*We need to be like plants, to sink roots and invest in the surrounding environment.*

Emilio Moran,  
Anthropologist

*Nothing is so contagious as an example.*

La Rochefoucauld



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### *Why fair trade?*

Fair trade certification ensures that producers receive fair wages and are free from abusive and dangerous labor practices. Fair trade products also undergo vigorous environmental and quality standards.

#### **Fair Trade principles include:**

- ~ **Fair prices:** Democratically organized farmer groups receive a guaranteed minimum floor price and an additional premium for certified organic products. Farmer organizations are also eligible for pre-harvest credit.
- ~ **Fair labor conditions:** Workers on Fair Trade farms enjoy freedom of association, safe working conditions, and living wages. Forced child labor is strictly prohibited.
- ~ **Direct trade:** With Fair Trade, importers purchase from Fair Trade producer groups as directly as possible, eliminating unnecessary middlemen and empowering farmers to develop the business capacity necessary to compete in the global marketplace.
- ~ **Democratic and transparent organizations:** Fair Trade farmers and farm workers decide democratically how to invest Fair Trade revenues.
- ~ **Community development:** Fair Trade farmers and farm workers invest Fair Trade premiums in social and business development projects like scholarship programs, quality improvement trainings, and organic certification.
- ~ **Environmental sustainability:** Harmful agrochemicals and GMOs are strictly prohibited in favor of environmentally sustainable farming methods that protect farmers' health and preserve valuable ecosystems for future generations.
- ~ Learn more about the importance of fair trade flowers at [www.transfairusa.org/content/flowers](http://www.transfairusa.org/content/flowers).

### *It benefits YOU too!*

- ~ You will be able to include volunteers in new ways, and, thus, attract new volunteers to your organization. For example, if you plant a garden outside your agency, you can now recruit volunteers interested in gardening.
- ~ Making efforts to “go green” is newsworthy! Tell the media what you are up to, and enjoy more publicity for your volunteer program.
- ~ You get to enjoy a volunteer program that you are truly proud of ☺
- ~ Re-using is very cost effective!
- ~ When you use *real* silverware, plates, and cups, volunteers feel that much more special.

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**Go**



**Green!**



| <i><b>Idea</b></i>   | <i><b>How?</b></i>  | <i><b>Who's Doing It Already!</b></i> |
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| <b>Reuse thematic décor for your recognition event by borrowing from others and sharing what you have.</b> | Contact churches (any church that hosts Vacation Bible School will be sure to have some treasures) and theatre programs (ex: Bloomington Playwrights Project, John Waldron, Bloomington High School South, etc.).   |                                       |
| <b>Buy fair trade flowers.</b>   | Bloomingfoods, Sahara Mart, and Sam's Club all offer fair trade flowers. You can actually order from Sam's online, and they will deliver right to your door. You can get 150 carnations (mixed colors) for \$100, shipping included. This is comparable to what Kroger charges for flowers that <i>aren't</i> fair trade. Go to <a href="http://www.samsclub.com">www.samsclub.com</a> for more info. |                                       |
| <b>Use double-sided paper.</b>   | Before you automatically press "print," you can do the following to print paper on both sides. This is an easy way to cut your paper use in half!<br>Go to <i>File</i> → <i>Print</i> → <i>Properties</i> → Under <i>document style</i> , click on <i>2 sided (book)</i> → Click <i>OK</i> → Voila!   |                                       |
| <b>Make notepads out of scrap paper or paper that has only been used on one side.</b>                      | Volunteers could be given the duty of going through the recycling bin to find reusable paper, cutting it to size, and stapling the pieces together. Better yet, encourage staff to set aside any paper that is still good on one side, and save the volunteers from having to go through the recycling bin.   |                                       |
| <b>Rather than recycling envelopes that come into your agency, save them and reuse them!</b>               | Simply keep all of the envelopes that appear reusable. Then, stamp your address in the corner or adhere a return label, and place an address label to cover up whatever print is already there. You could even create a special stamp to put somewhere on the envelope that reads something like "Here at _____, we reuse envelopes because we care about our planet."                                |                                       |
| <b>Begin, revive, or strengthen your recycling program...and utilize volunteers to make it happen!</b>     | Volunteers can make recycling bins or colorful signs for the existing ones. Place one in each office. During orientation/training, point out your recycling program. You can even include information about your recycling procedures in your volunteer manual. Aim to make it extremely <i>easy</i> for people in your office to recycle.  |                                       |

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| <p><b>Use green cleaning products.</b></p>   | <p>You can purchase natural cleaning products at places like Bloomingfoods and Sahara Mart. However, you can make your own <i>very</i> easily. For example, a nontoxic all purpose cleaner that is much healthier for both your staff/volunteers <i>and</i> the environment is:<br/> <i>All-Purpose Cleaner: Mix 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/4 cup baking soda (or 2 teaspoons borax) into 1/2 gallon (2 liters) water. Store and keep. Use for removal of water deposit stains on shower stall panels, bathroom chrome fixtures, windows, bathroom mirrors, etc.</i><br/> Go to <a href="http://www.eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm">www.eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm</a> for various economical and ecological cleaning solutions. They are made with easy to find ingredients and only take minutes to make.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Purchase natural and organic foods, local foods, and food that comes in bulk containers. When you go shopping, remember to bring your own bags!</b></p>  | <p>Most grocery stores supply organic products (organic = no pesticides). The farmer’s market, Sahara Mart, and Bloomingfoods all supply local foods as well (local = saves the 1300 miles food typically travels to reach you).</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Plant a garden, and grow food right outside your agency.</b></p>   | <p>Recruit volunteers to make it happen!</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Reuse or recycle printer cartridges.</b></p>   | <p>Rather than purchasing brand new ink <i>and</i> cartridges for your printer, you can go to Cartridge World (located at 114 S. College Ave.) and they will simply fill it for you. You save up to 50% off the price of a new cartridge.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Buy green items for giveaways and recognition gifts. Even if it’s not “green” (i.e. made from recycled materials), try to find practical items that volunteers can really use, to avoid them throwing the items out.</b></p> | <p>Here are some websites for businesses with green products. There are MANY more! In fact, it is becoming so popular to go green that most imprint places now offer eco-friendly options.<br/> <a href="http://www.printglobe.com">www.printglobe.com</a> (click on “Eco-friendly products”)<br/> <a href="http://www.4imprint.com">www.4imprint.com</a> (click on “Eco-friendly promotional items”)<br/> <a href="http://www.epromos.com/category/20402.html">www.epromos.com/category/20402.html</a><br/> <a href="http://www.iaspromotes.com">www.iaspromotes.com</a> (click on “Eco-friendly items”)<br/><br/> Ideas for “usable” items include things like plants, movie tickets, canvas bags, USB memory stick, etc.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Compost!</b></p>   | <p>Compost is what you get when yard and garden debris, kitchen scraps and other organic materials have completely broken down into a rich, dark, crumbly material. Gardeners call it “black gold,” because it is so rich in nutrients and adds so much value you when add it to your soil. Composting is actually a very easy process. Learn everything you need to know at <a href="http://compostinstructions.com">http://compostinstructions.com</a>. Recruit volunteers to make composting happen! If your agency doesn’t have a garden, you could invite the volunteers to take the compost home (once it is ready) for their own gardens.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Send an e-newsletter, rather than a paper copy.</b></p>  | <p>Make your newsletter as you usually would. Then, instead of printing it up, convert it to a pdf file and email it. You can download a FREE pdf converter at <a href="http://www.cutepdf.com">www.cutepdf.com</a>.</p>   |  |

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| <p><b>Practice integrated pest management.</b></p>   | <p>Integrated Pest Management is a system of pest control that utilizes a variety of measures before resorting to chemical sprays. Keep areas where food and water are available clean. Keep storage areas as uncluttered as possible; utilize door sweeps, screens and other blocks where pests may attempt to enter a building; and use sticky traps to see what pests are coexisting and what further steps are needed. Use a toxic chemical spray only as a last resort.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Rather than using disposables, purchase some inexpensive plates, cups, silverware, tablecloths, etc. that you can reuse again and again.</b></p>   | <p>Ask volunteers to help with this. You could develop a system where people simply wash their own dish after they are done. You could also have volunteers specifically in charge of the dishes or taking the linens home to wash. For larger events, recruit volunteers to help with dishes. At Area 10, we always use “real” silverware, cups, and plates, and volunteers make it possible and easy. Our events look much nicer as a result! If you don’t have enough of these items, call around and ask to borrow them from others. Offer to give the business marketing opportunities in return.</p> |  |
| <p><b>If you are going to use disposable tableware, go for biodegradable or items made from recycled materials.</b></p>  | <p>Many grocery stores now have these items available. They <i>do</i> typically cost more money, but their vital importance to the health of our planet is <i>invaluable!</i></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Make good use of volunteers’ time when they are there (maximizing time = less car trips). Listen to their ideas for how to make their volunteer duties more ecologically friendly.</b></p> | <p>Sit down with your volunteers and ask them if they feel like their time is well spent. If not, brainstorm about how to improve this. Be creative! Get their ideas for how you can “green” their volunteer position. Volunteers like to have their ideas heard and to feel invested in your mission.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Recruit a volunteer to cancel catalogs that your agency doesn’t even read or could read online.</b></p>  | <p>Perhaps this is a volunteer activity that you could add to a position already in existence. It doesn’t take long and can literally save <u>hundreds</u> of trees over time.</p>   |  |
|  | <p><b>~ BELOW ARE IDEAS GENERATED BY<br/>THE JULY VIP MEETING ~</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>Collect reused items from community members who might otherwise throw them away. Put these items to good use!</b></p>  | <p>One example of this is MCUM. They collect used grocery bags for their food pantry.</p>  |  |

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| <b>Provide tap water, rather than bottled water. You could even provide nice reusable water bottles to new volunteers when they sign on...and then ask them to bring their water bottles with them when they volunteer.</b> | Keep chilled tap water in a pitcher in the fridge. |  |
| <b>In your email signature, include a line about thinking twice before printing.</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Take computers to meetings, to save yourself from transcribing notes on paper and then transferring to your computer. This also saves time and effort!</b>   |  |  |
| <b>Buy recycling bins with lids that make it easy to distinguish which items go into which bins.</b>  |  |  |