

# Maryland H2E News

## ~ Special Edition ~

Summer 2008



## Developing and Operating a Hospital Green Team

This "Special Edition" newsletter provides useful tools, tips and resources for developing a Green Team at your facility. This information was compiled from current Green Teams and from the MD H2E meeting on "How to Develop a Hospital Green Team" at Good Samaritan Hospital on June 24th. We hope you find this information useful and look forward to your feedback.

### What is a Green Team?

Environmental Management Team (EMT), Green Team (GT), Sustainability Committee (ST), Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC). The names and the acronyms may be different but their raison d'être is the same regardless of whether you are setting out to address waste management or hazardous materials containment issues, energy and water consumption, the procurement of non-toxic or environmentally friendly goods or managing your facility's fleet. A hospital **Green Team (GT)** is a group of employees from a variety of departments and units who work together to prioritize and implement environmentally sustainable initiatives at their hospital.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of people in United States healthcare facilities have been involved in achieving these results. From the maintenance engineer who initiated the steam trap cleaning project and the secretary who closes down her computer and monitor every night before shutting off her office light to the laundry truck driver who adopted a 'no idle' policy long before being asked to do so. From the grounds-keeper who no longer uses hazardous pesticides on the lawn or the nurses who take it upon themselves to phone in and report the leaking taps, to the housekeeping and food services staff who take care to sort every piece of recyclable into its proper bin. **Green Team, Continued on Page 4**

### Hospitals & Health Systems with Green Teams in Maryland

- Anne Arundel Medical Center
  - Carroll Hospital Center
  - Franklin Square Hospital Center
  - Good Samaritan Hospital
  - Harbor Hospital Center
  - Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
  - Johns Hopkins Hospital
  - Lifebridge Health System (Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center, Northwest Hospital Ctr & Sinai Hospital)
  - Mercy Medical Center
  - Montgomery General Hospital
  - Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
  - Springfield Hospital Center
  - St. Mary's Hospital
  - University of Maryland Medical Center
  - Western Maryland Health System
- > **Below are some of the Green Team Logos!**

### Who is on the Hospital Green Team ?

Implementing sustainable and institutional programs requires participation from a wide variety of individuals and departments, from senior leadership to front-line workers. MD H2E asked participating hospitals: **What departments are represented on your hospital's green team?** Below is a listing of what we heard. Also, check out the listing on Page 2 of this Newsletter — you can see the departments represented at the MD H2E Share and Learn session on Green Team Development.

- |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Administration         | • Laboratory                     |
| • Clergy                 | • Marketing                      |
| • Clinical Staff         | • Material Management/Purchasing |
| • Food Services          | • Nursing                        |
| • Environmental Services | • Pharmacy                       |
| • Engineering            | • Radiology                      |
| • Facilities             | • Safety                         |



## Overwhelming Turnout for Green Team Session!

**Did you know that 25% of Maryland hospitals have Green Teams?** That amounts to 35% of hospitals by bed-size. Nationally, there is no other state with as many Green Teams (percentage wise) as in Maryland.

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, over 50 MD H2E participants gathered at Good Samaritan Hospital to share and learn about developing and maintaining a hospital Green Team (GT). Participants from Allegheny, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, Howard and Montgomery Counties as well as Baltimore City and the District of Columbia enjoyed a lively discussion preceded by a warm welcome from Good Samaritan Hospital's Chief Operating Officer, Jeffery Matton. Food was provided compliments of Morrison Foods.

Join your peers in healthcare's quest to go green — attendees to our meeting included the following departments:

- Administration
- Campus services
- Clinical laboratory
- Engineering
- Environmental services
- Facility management
- Food services
- Information technology
- Materials management
- Peri-operative
- Plant operations
- Purchasing
- Safety
- Surgical services
- Waste management

Here is a summary of how the various Green Teams started and what they've learned so far:

**The GTs in MD Hospitals typically started** small and got bigger as folks caught on; all meet regularly. The key driver is motivation from employees. In several hospitals, nurses started the GT and often went unit by unit to engage others. One hospital started around cost and operational issues; once they saved money, they even hired a Sustainability Coordinator. To get started, conduct a facility assessment — you will likely find your facility is already doing “green” programming.

**Executive level support is important but not necessary since** cost can prompt a negative response by CEOs. Finding a project with a payback is a good start since it is difficult to quantify employee paybacks. One hospital executive said “As a hospital, it is the right thing to do”. Another facility, experienced a \$15,000 cost savings from electricity costs from a “turning off lights program.”

Since employees generally like green programs, executive level folks are happy about this. One executive indicated

there are huge political risks to not start a GT. And peer pressure exists; show executives what other hospitals are doing. Baltimore-based philanthropic groups are now making “green” a condition for donations – this will get the ear of the executive! Finally, hospitals have an obligation to the community as part of community benefit programs.

**Nursing and clinical representation is** key to implementing greening initiatives. Nurses should have a voice and a role on committees to address sustainability, from initiating GTs to product selection committees.

**Here is an inventory of some projects at local hospitals:**

- ⇒ Closed onsite incinerator
- ⇒ Sited onsite sterilizer system w/shredder and compactor
- ⇒ Sited onsite Rotoclave
- ⇒ Removed RMW cans from patients room
- ⇒ Recycling xylene, alcohols and formalin
- ⇒ Eliminated mercury
- ⇒ Recycling batteries
- ⇒ Recycling fluorescent bulbs and ballasts
- ⇒ Using Green Seal approved products for housekeeping chemicals
- ⇒ Utilizing microfiber mops
- ⇒ Recycling cardboard, paper, bottles, cans, food waste, blue wrap, saline bottles, sharps containers
- ⇒ Purchasing local and sustainable foods

**Save the Date: November 12th,  
2008**

**~ Environmental Excellence in Healthcare ~  
Promoting Healthy Patients, Employees, and  
Communities in Maryland**

**Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>**

**University of Maryland School of Nursing  
655 W. Lombard Street, Baltimore, MD**

This full day session will provide peer to peer learning opportunities as well as networking with vendors.  
If you are interested in presenting details on green activities at your hospital

**Contact Joan at 410-706-2107 or  
plisko@son.umaryland.edu for more information.**

## University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) Sustainability Principles

Recognizing that sustaining a healthy environment is essential to maintaining both personal and public health, UMMC commits to promote healthy patients and communities locally and globally by safeguarding the environment.

UMMC provides healthcare to the community in a safe and healthy manner and fulfills its obligation to protect and preserve the earth's resources by seeking innovative ways to conserve, reduce, reuse and recycle by its own actions and through partnerships with others.

Realization of these principles will be achieved by full participation and the sustained commitment of all our employees, medical staff and vendors.

- ⇒ We will strive to meet or exceed all environmental laws and regulations.
- ⇒ We support and encourage recycling of materials used within the hospital.
- ⇒ We minimize wastage and the use of hazardous materials. We ensure that wastes are disposed of in a safe and responsible manner.
- ⇒ We seek out and use renewable resources and pursue conservation of non-renewable resources through careful planning and cost-effective measures.
- ⇒ We use pollution prevention initiatives to reduce negative environmental impact.
- ⇒ When possible we purchase products which contain recycled materials and are recyclable or reusable.
- ⇒ We will offer sustainable food options for our patients, family members, visitors, and employees.
- ⇒ We will use financial resources well and integrate sustainability criteria into our relationship with suppliers to improve their social and environmental performance.
- ⇒ We will actively participate with government, education, business and the public to encourage environmental values and practices.



## Western Maryland Health System is Fighting War on Waste (WOW)



On April 22, Earth Day 2008, the Western Maryland Health System officially kicked off "Going Green," with a refocused emphasis on recycling, conserving energy and resources, and reducing trash. The War on Waste (WOW) initiatives include:

- New vehicles purchased for WMHS are hybrids.
- "Green" paper and plasticware are purchased for use in cafeterias.
- Furniture and other items purchased now contain a portion of recycled materials.
- Paper towels and other like disposables also contain a portion of recycled materials.

## FY 2008 Environmental Goals and Objectives for Mercy Medical Center



**Goal:** Advance the "Have Mercy on the Earth" program by further reducing the amount of waste being disposed of.

**Objectives:**

1. Reduce RMW to 20% of overall waste stream.
2. Train 90% of staff and develop/offer the training in multiple formats.
3. Reduce solid waste by removing and recycling beverage containers, food waste (via composting), batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs.
4. Increase recycling from the FY 2007 baseline of 14%.
5. Reduce hazardous waste off site disposal by implementing a formalin neutralization/sanitary drain disposal procedure.
6. Conduct a feasibility study for the conversion from a disposable to a reusable sharps container program.

**Goal:** Communicate "Have Mercy on the Earth" program successes and recognize the efforts of employees.

**Objectives:**

1. Apply for the 2008 H2E Partners for Change Award.
2. Create a "Have Mercy on the Earth" web site.
3. Create an annual newsletter to recognize employee and/or departmental achievements in support of the program.
4. Investigate opportunities for an employee recognition, incentive, and rewards program.

## Tips for Successful Teamwork

**Be inclusive.** Green Team leaders stressed that involving stakeholders who may be directly affected by green initiatives (e.g. facilities or purchasing) in the early planning phases is very important for success of any initiative.

**Choose projects wisely.** It's important to tackle projects that are most impactful and whose success can be quantitatively measured.

**Make green goals part of the job.** Participating in Green Team efforts is often an opportunity for the employee to develop and enhance leadership and teamwork skills. Having Green Team goals written into team member's quarterly goals will help support the employee in their development process.

**Bigger is better for green teams.** Since teams are mostly voluntary and time availability will vary with members depending on what work projects are going on, engaging a wider network of people to do activities is a key factor in keeping the momentum going.

**Make sure communication channels are appropriate.** As teams grow in size, email distribution lists may become unmanageable and teams should consider using other communication technologies such as blogs, digital dashboards, wikis and other tech tools to share info.

**Small-scale focus can lead to more productivity.** Having a single group when your company is dispersed nationally or internationally is unwieldy. Local issues will vary (for instance, water conservation for the Southwest) and different countries will have different practices. It's good to have local teams for each region and then an overarching team structure that unites local teams together for company wide initiatives.

**Making it fun works to engage people in Green Team initiatives.** Among the successful goals some teams have used to energize their companies include: Giving away fun incentives like CFL bulbs, free mugs, or gift certificates is an effective way to recruit new members and keep the energy fun amongst existing members; Sustainability Movie Nights; Funky Mug Contests; Office competitions to spur impact, for instance measuring how much each project team is actually recycling vs. throwing away trash with a free local food party reward for the winning team.

(Source: Corporate Green Teams: Sustainable Business From the Bottom Up, Green Biz.com, June 8, 2008)

## Green Team, Continued from Page 1

Healthcare staff at all levels and in all departments are getting involved to clean up their environment and reduce operating costs. The Green Team plays a key role in approving and accomplishing yearly environmental targets and objectives: reduction in biomedical waste, increase in recyclables, the initiation of a white paper recycling program, spill response training for key Housekeeping, Stores, Maintenance and Security personnel, mercury spill response training, and so on.

Every good team deserves a good leader. The successful candidate should be able to: plan and budget, liaise with upper management including various government and regulatory bodies, chair meetings, coordinate the development and delivery of activities and training such as environmental awareness week, conduct energy management and waste reduction workshops, seek out and build partnerships with other stakeholders.

Take every opportunity to publicize your Green Team: its mandates, where and when it meets, recent successes, and upcoming events/activities. Encourage non-members to attend and participate. You want as many people as possible knowing of your Team's existence, accomplishments and mandate. New building or old, acute care site or long-term care home, a Green Team is an essential part of every responsible healthcare facility.

Source: Kent Waddington, Responsible Team Approach to Environmental Management, Hospital News, Feb 2003.

## Who is Maryland H2E?



Maryland H2E is a technical assistance and networking initiative that promotes environmental sustainability in health-care. Participants include hospital, clinics, nursing homes, and other ancillary health care providers in Maryland. Our Staff Includes:

- ◆ Joan Plisko, PhD, Technical Director, [plisko@son.umaryland.edu](mailto:plisko@son.umaryland.edu)
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## Sustainable Food Newsletter



Here is the link to MD H2E's Spring Food Newsletter:  
[www.h2e-online.org/docs/mdh2e/MDH2EFoodNewsletterSpring2008.pdf](http://www.h2e-online.org/docs/mdh2e/MDH2EFoodNewsletterSpring2008.pdf)



## Nursing Outreach Resources Available

The Nursing Outreach Team at MD H2E has created three nurse recruitment tools to help increase participation in your Green Team: a short article for your hospital newsletter, a brief recruitment email that can be sent to all nursing staff, and a flier that can be posted within your facility. These tools are meant to be generic templates that you can insert your hospital name and use as is, or use them as a starting point to create your own documents. Contact Nicole Killion, RN, Nursing Coordinator, at [nicole.killion@yahoo.com](mailto:nicole.killion@yahoo.com) for more information.



Healthcare purchasing habits are changing, and policies and processes are changing as executives prove their commitment to environmental issues. EverGreen magazine is an important resource to the healthcare industry for information and news regarding environmentally preferred purchasing. EverGreen is the first and only healthcare industry magazine focused on green procurement and sustainable environmental practices. The bi-monthly magazine has a qualified subscriber base of more than 50,000 healthcare executives and supply chain management decision makers, making it the third largest publication in the healthcare field.

For more information, go to <http://www.evergreen-magazine.com/>

**Congratulations** to Denise Choiniere for being named Baltimore Magazines's Top 40 Under 40. Denise's roles as (1) the Environmental Health Nurse at the University of Maryland Medical Center, (2) a Nursing Coordinator at Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment and (3) a graduate student at the University of Maryland School of Nursing helped her earn the title of **RN, Hospital Green Crusader!**

## Practice Green Health Webinars



### ◆ Low Flow Water Fixtures for Healthcare Facilities — July 11th 2008, 1 pm

Low flow water fixtures that address the health care setting's infection control concerns and high volume usage criteria are becoming increasingly available at competitive prices. Mara Baum of Anshen and Allen will review how to tailor product selection to a health care facility's needs, and will offer the latest resources on ranking systems and other criteria to help the decision making process. Kevin Shulte and Craig Flandermeyer of Schmidt Associates will present a case study of water efficiency in hospital emergency rooms. You will learn how low-flow plumbing fixtures have saved money at Providence St. Peter Hospital in Olympia, WA from Geoff Glass of Providence and Troy Aichle of Stirrett-Johnsen, Inc.

### ◆ Water Use in Healthcare Facilities: Laundry, Stormwater, and Green Roof Case Studies — July 25th 2008, 1 pm

Hospitals are often the largest consumers of water resources in their community. In this Webinar, you'll learn about the impact of laundry and stormwater on healthcare's 'aquaprint'. In the summer of 2007 Metro Health Hospital installed a one acre vegetative roof along with three bio-retention swales as design strategies to mitigate storm water runoff. These design features were submitted as a part of Metro's LEED certification. The two designs are undergoing a study to measure storm water runoff. John Ebers from Metro Health will describe the benefits of the project and lessons learned. Ken Tyler will discuss the impact of Laundry Operations on a hospital's environmental footprint, and how that impact can be reduced. He will review several case studies during his presentation.

To Register for one or both Webinars, go to:

[www.practicegreenhealth.org/tools/webinars/](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org/tools/webinars/)

Note: Access to Practice Greenhealth webinars is a fee-based service, and is one of many member benefits. You can learn more about the fees and benefits of membership by going to our website. See:

[www.practicegreenhealth.org/community/membership/](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org/community/membership/)