



Practices

Saratoga Bridges has a commitment for environmental action. The purpose of the Environmental "Green" Plan is to put in place a mechanism that serves to **educate** and **inform** staff members about the initiative to establish a green culture. Saratoga Bridges intention is to develop, broaden, and deepen our connection to the local community; enhance our ability to function as a socially and environmentally responsible corporate citizen, increase our emphasis on responsible planning for sustainable operation and continue efforts to reduce the agency's and staff's 'environmental footprint.'" An ecological footprint is the amount of land that it takes to produce the resources you consume and absorb the waste you produce.

Our hope is that the Environmental "Green" Program will result in an increase of awareness and have a more concerted effort on behalf of the employees at work and throughout their lives as we have an ethical obligation to uphold the inherent "right" of future generations to natural resources and ecological services.

Mission Statement

- Saratoga Bridges has implemented an Environmental "Green" Program for staff members and the individuals we serve to become a steward in the community. We will educate, inform and raise awareness of environmental issues that effect all of our lives directly or indirectly.

Our Goal

- It is imperative that we **train** new and existing staff on these practices. **Consistency** needs to be a constant agency-wide. Staff will have to continue being **educated** and **informed** of new practices. Since actions speak louder than words, our new administrative building is designed and will be constructed and operated to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Certification with a geothermal heating and cooling system. We will be using our website to provide information on how we all can improve our green living habits.

- Ultimately, we want to encourage recycling at home and throughout the community.

Initial Step

- Conduct a “Green” audit of all agency facilities

Action Steps

- We generate an Action Plan to implement many of these practices. However, THE TIME IS NOW TO BEGIN TO DO YOUR PART!

**JUST ADD “GREEN”
TO YOUR ROUTINE!**

Agency wide

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!
- Utilize recycled paper products
- Recycle paper, newspapers & magazines
- Discourage the use of bottled water -- encourage staff to bring in their own cups
- Recycle ink and printer cartridges
- Reuse yogurt & plastic containers and plastic bottles
- Recycle all recyclable materials at each location
- Discontinue the purchase of Styrofoam
- Implement an energy policy that includes turning off or dimming unnecessary lights, lower thermostats in unused space etc. when leaving rooms, homes & buildings and install motion sensors for your lights
- Utilize e-mail for agency communications such as newsletters and other communications
- Utilize two sided copies
- Implement paperless systems (such as work orders etc.)
- Switch to Compact Fluorescent lighting
- Recycle computers, monitors, televisions and other electronic equipment -
- deliver all equipment to a large distribution center
- Coordinate transportation to internal and external meetings
- Utilize salt reduction techniques for snow removal

Transportation

- Utilize Bio-Fuel in agency vehicles

- Utilize the agencies waste oil for heat the bus garage
- Implement an idling policy for agency vehicles

Residential

- Utilize Energy Star rated appliances
- Utilize Low VOC paints and finishes
- Utilize timers to lower the heat & raise the air-conditioning temperatures
- Use low flow shower and faucets.
- Eliminate furniture, pillows etc. that utilize polyester.
- Change furnace filters with greater frequency
- Utilize photo cells and/or timers for lights
- Utilize organic methods for gardening
- Discontinue the use of disposable dishware where possible
- Encourage buying locally owned produce, meats, etc. from local farms

Day Programs

- Utilize Energy Star rated appliances
- Utilize Low VOC paints and finishes
- Use low flow shower and faucets.
- Utilize timers to lower the heat & raise the air-conditioning temperatures
- Change furnace filters with greater frequency
- Utilize photo cells and/or timers for lights
- Utilize organic methods for gardening
- Discontinue the use of disposable dishware where possible
- Establish a relationship with a farmer to sell produce, eggs, etc. throughout the agency

Shopping:

- Bring your own bags to the grocery store
- Support your local economy and curb excess fossil-fuel consumption by shopping close to home
- Support local farmers
- Find a green dry cleaner, and bring your own garment bag
- Eat only harvested fish that is sustainable to help protect the health of the ocean (visit oceansalive.org)
- Buy shade-grown coffee
- Use organic beauty products
- Buy Fair Trade
- Buy in bulk to avoid excess packaging
- Join a community supported agriculture (CSA) program (visit www.localharvest.com)
- Eat what's in season
- a milk, meat, fruits, and vegetables)

- Join a food co-op
- Swap paperbacks with www.paperbackswap.com
- Swap -- don't buy (try eBay.com, craigslist.org, and freecycle.org)
- Get a library card
- Choose reusable instead of disposable products (diapers, razors, cups, pens)
- Purchase eco-minded designers like Linda Loudermilk, Stewart+Brown, Edun)
- Pass on the paper towels (same goes for napkins)
- Reuse your Ziploc bags
- Fill up your freezer, since the fuller it is, the less energy it uses to keep food frozen
- Bring your own mug or thermos to your favorite coffee spot
- Use natural—not artificial—fragrances
- Join a food co-op
- Swap paperbacks with paperbackswap.com
- Buy things that will last Invest in environmentally conscious mutual funds (find them at socialinvest.org)

Cleaning:

- Utilize 'green' cleaners, eliminate non-green products such as pesticides and caustic chemicals
- Don't let the sink faucet run when you wash dishes and brush your teeth
- Install low-flow showerheads and take shorter showers
- Wash clothes in cold water
- Baking soda will clean just about anything!
- Line dry your clothes when possible
- Turn off the dishwasher's drying cycle
- Pre-wash dishes only if you have to
- Use concentrated soaps and cleaners since less packaging means less waste

Electronics:

- Conserve energy by using power strips (many electronics suck power even when off—but power strips in the "off" position don't)
- Don't charge your cell phone overnight
- Use rechargeable batteries
- Unplug your electronics (DVD player, TV, cell-phone charger) when you're not using them
- Shut your computer down when you leave work—especially on Fridays

Homes:

- Install Energy Star–qualified double-pane windows for better insulation
- Go for bamboo (for flooring, cutting boards, towels, sheets, and so on)
- Clean the fridge coils for better productivity
- Cover pots on the stove to avoid losing excess heat—and wasting energy
- After you finish baking, turn off the oven and leave the door open to heat your home
- Keep your shades down in the summer and up in the winter
- Use a push lawn mower
- Purify indoor air with plants instead of with artificial room fresheners
- Decorate responsibly by purchasing eco-sensitive accessories (check out vivaterra.com)
- Buy or borrow pre-used moving boxes
- Compact your non-recyclable trash and use fewer bags
- Go toxin-free at home
- Switch to a reusable coffee filter
- Seal up your house
- Bring lunch to work in reusable containers - “no-garbage” lunch)
- Fix leaky faucets
- Collect rainwater and use it for landscaping
- Install a ceiling fan to improve heat and cool-air circulation
- Start composting

Vehicles:

- Use clean fuel efficient vehicles -- preferred parking spaces
- Ride your bike
- Check the air pressure in your tires since under inflated tires reduce fuel efficiency
- To save gas, drive under 60 mph, or don't drive as much
- Give your car a tune-up so it drives more efficiently
- Unload your trunk; the lighter the load, the less gas your car consumes
- Stop idling in your car
- Take public transportation

General:

- Get off junk-mail lists by registering at www.dmachoice.org/MPS/proto1.php
- Shred old paper for packing instead of using Styrofoam peanuts
- Skip the elevator and take the stairs
- Go carbon-neutral
- Sign up for online banking to stop receiving paper statements
- Cancel the phone-book delivery
- Volunteer your time at local conservation agencies
- Advocate for the Kyoto Protocol

- Donate old cell phones and help save the African gorilla (eco-cell.org)
- Spend more time outdoors
- Seek out reclaimed wood furniture
- Weather permitting, take your exercise outdoors
- When traveling, ask your hotel what it's doing to be greener
- If you see litter, pick it up
- Start an eco-conversation everywhere you go
- Leave only footprints when you travel
- **Spread the word!**

“Green”

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