

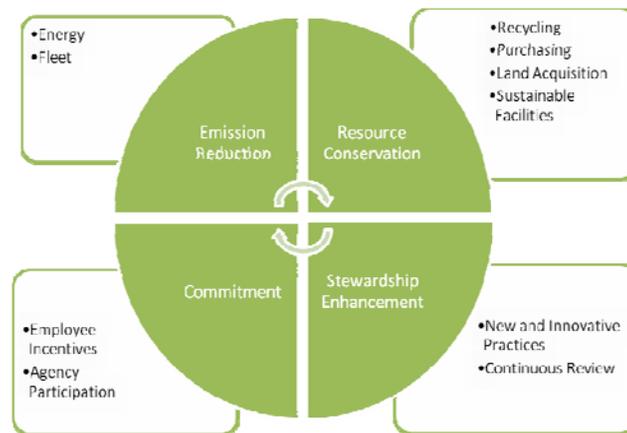
*Annual Report to the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners
Environmental Leadership Policy Implementation
September 2009*

Executive Summary

In 2004, the North Carolina Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners adopted the Environmental Leadership Policy prescribing the environmental principles to be adopted in daily activities conducted by the County. The Environmental Leadership Team (ELT) responsible for implementing the Action Plan toward achieving County goals includes members from six County departments and three County funded agencies. The mission of the ELT is:

Mecklenburg County Government will operate in a manner that conserves and protects our air, water and land resources; become a model of environmental stewardship for local governments, businesses, and industry in our region, and; use and apply the County's existing and future resources wisely for the benefit of its citizens.

The ELT recognizes the need for concise communication of the details in this Environmental Leadership Policy Action Plan. The 12 Principles and their combined 35 goals were consolidated during 2009 into four categories including: Emission Reduction, Resource Conservation, Commitment, and Stewardship Enhancement. The Principles and Goals remain intact but will be communicated in terms of these new categories.



Adoption of a scorecard approach to measuring overall progress toward the County's Environmental Leadership Policy goals was piloted with reporting of the 2008 Annual Report. The 2009 comprehensive scorecard result indicates that 88% of all goals (37 of the 42 total goals) were met, equivalent to a green light. In comparison to the 2008 reporting year (resulting in 77% goal achievement), the County has not only met the more stringent 2009 goals but has improved the achievement rate toward meeting those goals.

Reflections Over the Past Year

Emission Reduction

- Energy efficiency measures taken have resulted in electrical savings for FY09 of 2.8 watts/square foot, or approximately 13% better than the FY07 baseline results for the buildings measured.
- Computer monitor energy management program continued to avoid 1,616 tons of carbon dioxide emissions.
- Reduced ozone-forming emissions from the County vehicle fleet by 1.16 tons (8.7% lower than 2007 emissions).

Resource Conservation

- Recycling program diverted 3.300 tons of paper waste recycled equivalent to 16.1% of the total waste, ahead of our FY09 goal of 14.5%.
- Purchase of recycled content products resulted in exceedance of County goals for all products, including: paper (80% of purchases), office supplies (21% of purchases), cartridges and toner (58% of purchases), and cleaning supplies (90% of purchases).
- Green cleaning paper products purchased resulted in saving an estimated 1,398 pounds of air pollutants avoided as well as an estimated 95,526 kilowatt-hours of energy use avoided, and 163,093 gallons of water from being utilized.
- Land Preservation was accomplished through the acquisition of 323.24 acres for parks and open space, greenways.
- The County achieved LEED Gold certification for the Medical Examiner facility during 2009.

Commitment

- Employee incentive programs have been expanded from the very successful Best Workplaces for Commuters (encouraging County employees to utilize the transit system) realizing an increase of participants to 388 (equivalent to 8% of County employees) in FY09, up from 6.4 % of employees in FY08. Additionally, 10 individuals and one team of employees were recognized as Green Guardians after being nominated by their peers.
- County employees participated in a tree planting event (planting 500 trees) and a road-side trash collection event, volunteering their time to display community environmental stewardship.
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) adopted an Environmental Stewardship Policy requiring the development of a district-wide environmental management system. CMS was recognized by the NC Department of the Environment as a Partner in the Environmental Stewardship Initiative. CMS has identified 25 campuses that meet the Energy Star certification rating and realized a 6.77% reduction in electrical use during FY09.
- Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County reported on their first year implementation of an environmental action plan. Accomplishments included: 4% reduction in energy consumption, replacement of two delivery vehicles to lower emission vehicles, 30% of landscaping installed as drought-resistant at a library, staff volunteer hours in green programs and activities.

- Central Piedmont Community College realized environmental stewardship beyond the existing requirements from the State on their institutions. During summer 2009, the College implemented a 4-day work week, resulting in reduced commuting costs for employees and students and savings in utilities costs of more than 5% of budget. CPCC's Center for Sustainability focuses on topics and programs that will support environmental education, renewable energy, and workforce development in the Charlotte region.

Stewardship Enhancement

- Energy and Water saving fixtures were installed and tested throughout the County (including: occupancy light sensors, faucet sensors, and water efficient urinals).
- Green Cleaning Contract was awarded for 342,500 square feet of County facilities.
- Nature Centers adopted environmental stewardship programs including: native plants, rain barrel use, rain gardens and composting demonstrations.
- County's ISO 14001 Environmental Management System at the Foxhole Landfill was expanded to encompass additional activities performed at the site and involvement of the recycling operator.
- Green house gas (GHG) action plan was completed, highlighting the potential 28% GHG emission reduction possible through existing Environmental Leadership Policy actions.

<http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/LUESA/Environment/home.htm>