



# The Green Team News

## December 2012 News

Season's Greetings from the Green Team!

Encourage your students to think about the impact of their actions this holiday season! They could investigate options such as [Conservatree's consumer guide](#) to cards that incorporate postconsumer recycled paper and support other environmentally-friendly practices, such as cards embedded wildflower seeds or cards made from junk mail. Students can create their own wrapping paper and holiday decor, visit [Earth 911](#) for ideas.

If you're interested in recycling or composting bins for your school, materials are available through forms on [The Green Team website](#). We have equipment in stock, and we are responding to requests as they come in. There is a composting lesson plan on the [website](#) and other materials to help you get started.

### School Programs, Resources, and Professional Development

#### December

#### Free Energy Efficient Lights for Massachusetts School Districts

The Department of Energy Resources Leading by Example Program and Green Communities Division, in partnership with NSTAR, WMECO, National Grid, and Phillips Lighting, are making energy-saving lights available **free of charge** to all school districts served by the partner utilities. Interested applicants must **submit a completed application form** by 5pm on **December 12, 2012**. An outline of the [full opportunity](#) and complete [eligibility requirements and schedule](#) are available at their [website](#).

**Dec. 14, 2012** is the deadline to submit your application for the Green Ribbon Schools Awards to the Mass. Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education. Visit [Green Ribbon Schools Recognition](#) for the application and instructions and more information. The U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Schools award honors K-12 schools for exemplary reduction in environmental impact and costs, improvements in the health and wellness of students and staff, and delivery of effective environmental and sustainability education that incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), civic skills, and green career pathways. In 2012, for the first time, schools across Massachusetts are eligible to apply.

#### 2013 Massachusetts Agricultural Calendars Available

Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom provides a wealth of resources for schools, including an [annual](#)

[calendar](#) featuring Massachusetts agricultural photographs. Students are encouraged to submit photos for the 2014 calendar by June 2013, visit their [website](#) for more details.

### January

On **Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>**, the national award-winning **Green Scholars program** will be hosting a workshop at Manchester Essex Regional High School titled “An Adventure Approach to School Sustainability.” This program utilizes adventure and service learning to engage students as change agents through independent projects within their school or community. The “Scholars” design takes a place-based approach, connecting students more deeply to the environment in which they live while working to protect it. Participants will review the well-developed model, practice use of tools for “teacher advisors” and plan for their own Scholars launch. The cost of the workshop is \$100. More information can be found at the [Green Scholars](#) posting on Project Adventure’s website.

### February

The [Healthy and Sustainable Food Journalism Awards](#) is a high school competition designed to bring the hard facts about school food to entire school communities – in the students’ own words. Articles submitted for consideration must be about the need for healthy, sustainable school food and must have been published in a school newspaper. Best-selling author and food activist **Michael Pollan** will judge the finalists and select the winners who will receive cash prizes (\$1,500 for first place!) and \$200 for their journalism class. **Contest ends February 28. Winners will be announced on Earth Day – April 22, 2013.**

### **Waste Reduction at School**

The New Dream Blog recently posted [Easy Steps to Waste-Free School Lunches](#), a guide for parents who pack their students’ lunches. The post addresses the link between prepackaged food and reduced nutritional value and describes solutions for common disposal packaging found in school lunches. The author also mentions lunch boxes and lunch containers designed in tandem for optimal use of space to encourage reusable containers. [WasteFreeLunches.org](#) is another website with several resources for promoting the environmental and economic benefits of reusable materials in school lunches. Be sure to give it a look!

### **Massachusetts Recycling News**

Students at **Essex Elementary School** have recently been recognized for the efforts in waste diversion. With the help of the Green Team Advisor Kim Field and Head Custodian Rob Page, students are actively involved in collecting and sorting recyclable and compostable material. “I have fun coming to school early in the morning, getting to recycle and making the world a better place,” said Cameron Ellis, a fifth grade member of the Green Team. In addition to containers, food waste and paper the team now collects used biodegradable paper towels and the recycling load has just about doubled. A school district report said the Green Teams at the Manchester Essex Middle and High and Essex Elementary schools **cut their waste streams by 90 percent, saving the district \$5,000 to \$8,000 last year**. Read more about their efforts and see pictures from an article in the [Gloucester Times](#).

If you have any questions, please contact me via email or telephone at (413) 586-7350, ext. 225.

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