

## March 2017 Newsletter

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*"My students went home with the Idling Reduction pledge.  
Each student's parents signed the pledge and the students educated their parents with the information  
that we gathered about the pollution that goes into our air when cars are idling"*

- Dana Juozaitis, West Street School, Southbridge

Hello GREEN TEAM Teachers!

Please submit your [Teacher Response Form](#) by **March 31st** so your class is eligible for prizes and a Certificate of Recognition. THE GREEN TEAM looks forward to acknowledging all the hard work you and your students have put into waste diversion, energy efficiency, and other environmental activities. We want to hear about your experiences and reward your students for their accomplishments!

If your school has been collecting textiles for reuse and recycling, don't forget to note this on your Teacher Response Form! Report how many pounds of textiles your school collected to participate in our Textile Recovery Challenge!

The next pickup day for **GREEN TEAM recycling equipment** from the West Roxbury location is set for **Thursday, April 6**. For schools in the eastern part of the state, submit an [equipment request](#) by March 31 to pick up equipment from West Roxbury this spring.

### **Clean Air Information, Activities, and Resources**

THE GREEN TEAM offers many resources and links that can help teachers discuss the important issue of climate change and clean air with your students.

- [THE GREEN TEAM Clean Air Activities](#) and accompanying [Idling Reduction Pledge](#) are a great starting point. This pair of resources helps empower students to help reduce air pollution at school and in the community.
- THE GREEN TEAM can also provide you and your school with free Idling Reduction materials, including newly redesigned signs! To receive these materials, you must be registered for THE GREEN TEAM for this school year, and submit an [Idling Reduction request form](#).
- The [MassDEP Air Quality Info](#) sheet provides information about the health and environmental effects of air pollution, as well as links to more resources.
- The EPA offers a [School Indoor Air Quality Assessment Tool](#), which can help your school address critical building-related environmental health issues such as ventilation, environmental asthma triggers, and radon. It can also help schools develop, sustain or reinvigorate their Indoor Air Quality management programs

### **GREEN TEAM in the Spotlight**

The **Sandwich Public School District** includes three schools: Forestdale School, Oak Ridge School, and Sandwich High School. In November of 2015, the Sandwich Department of Public Works received a grant from the MassDEP [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program](#) (SMRP) to improve the recycling collection program in their school district. The SMRP grant funded purchase of compactors and cart tippers to consolidate recyclable containers and paper collected throughout the district. MassDEP SMRP grants are a great resource to help school districts. See the [MassDEP website](#) for information on applying for a SMRP grant.

### **GREEN TEAM in the Media**

The [Millbury-Sutton Chronicle reports](#) that students at **Blackstone Valley High School** have begun a recycling initiative, as part of the Trex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge. Students are competing against other area schools to collect and recycle the most plastic film, including things like grocery bags, bubble wrap, and newspaper sleeves.

### **School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development**

Mark your calendars with these grant opportunities, workshops, conferences and more!

**Mar 8** – [Massachusetts Environmental Education Society \(MEES\) Conference](#) in Worcester. As MEES celebrates its 40th anniversary, take a look back at how the field of Environmental Education (EE) has transformed over the past century. Come by to say hello at our GREEN TEAM exhibit table.

**Mar 10** – Registration deadline for the [Eversource Challenge](#), a program for K-12 students living in Eversource electric communities. The Challenge invites students to showcase their knowledge of saving energy, energy-efficient technologies, and sustainability through various assignments.

**Mar 11** – [Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom Winter Conference](#) in Palmer. This conference helps educators integrate agriculture into the classroom.

**Mar 16** – [MITS Professional Development Seminar Series: Alien Solar Eclipses: The Importance of Modeling in the Search for Exoplanets](#), and [Sunny With a Chance of Simulations](#). Third of four full-day sessions.

**Mar 21** – [Sea to School Culinary Workshop](#) in Wareham. This series of three seafood culinary workshops will give hands-on experience working with locally-caught, sustainable species. Learn from colleagues at the forefront of the “sea to school” movement, and hear directly from fishermen about their practices and how you can help support local fishing communities.

**Mar 21-22** – [Green Schools Conference & Expo in Atlanta, Georgia](#). This event connects green school champions nationwide for two days of learning and collaboration to support a shared mission of equitable, healthy and high-performing schools, where students can learn how to sustain and improve the world around them.

**Mar 27** – [MassRecycle’s R3 Recycling & Organics Conference & Trade Show](#) in Framingham. The R3 Conference is the biggest annual recycling and organics conference in Massachusetts, and one of the biggest state conferences in the nation. The conference includes a track for K-12 school recycling and composting.

**Mar 28** – Application deadline for the [2017 Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education Awards](#). This annual award program recognizes schools and teachers (K-12) across the Commonwealth for their outstanding efforts in furthering energy and environmental education initiatives at their schools.

**Mar 29** – [Sea to School Culinary Workshop](#) in Salem. This series of three seafood culinary workshops will give hands-on experience working with locally-caught, sustainable species. Learn from colleagues at the forefront of the “sea to school” movement, and hear directly from fishermen about their practices

and how you can help support local fishing communities.

**Mar 31** – Submission deadline for GREEN TEAM [Teacher Response Forms](#) to receive prizes and recognition for your students.

**Mar 31** – Application deadline for [MassCEC's Learn and Earn Program](#). This Request for proposal seeks qualified applicants to provide career development curriculum and paid summer work experience for students.

**Mar 31** – Jane Goodall's [Roots and Shoots Mini Grant](#) deadline. These grants support the work that you and your "young Jane Goodalls" are doing in your community. Educators are invited to apply for a mini-grant to start, support, or celebrate their service campaigns.

**April 1** – [Mini-Grant deadline](#) for Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom. Each year, these grants fund a number of agriculture-related project proposals from teachers, schools, and farms working with schools.

**April 2** – [2017 Girls STEM Summit](#) in Weston, a one-day statewide summit for young women in grades 8-12 who love STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering & Math, and would like to learn more about emerging careers in these fields.

**April 3** – Submission deadline for the National Energy Technology Laboratory's [Earth Day Poster Contest](#). Students in kindergarten through fifth grade can design a poster about their favorite way to keep the Earth a sparkling place to live.

**April 4** – [National Healthy Schools Day](#). Whether you are at the beginning stages of investigating school environments or have an established Indoor Air/Environmental Quality program, use this day to host a local activity that educates others and celebrates your school's successes!

**April 6** – GREEN TEAM recycling equipment distribution day, West Roxbury, 10:00am. Submit an [equipment request](#) by **March 31** if you want to pick up equipment on April 6.

**April 6-7** – The [2017 Farm to Institution Summit](#) in Leominster. This two-day conference, hosted by Farm to Institution New England, is designed for food system players who are working to increase the amount of local and regional food served in schools, colleges, and health care facilities.

**April 7** – Nomination deadline for [2017 Green Difference Awards](#). These awards, given by Project Green Schools, honor and recognize Outstanding National Environmental Education & STEM

Education efforts in Schools & Communities.

**April 12** – [MITS Professional Development Seminar Series: Imitating Mother Nature to Improve Chemical Reactions](#), and “**I’d Like to Have an Argument**”: **Making Meaning Through Conversation**. Final of four full-day sessions.

**April 12** – Entry deadline for Evergreen Packaging and KidsGardening.org’s 2017 [Carton 2 Garden](#) contest. Contest winners will be selected based on their implementation of an innovative garden creation featuring creative and sustainable uses of repurposed milk and juice cartons

**April 12** – [Sea to School Culinary Workshop](#) in Northampton. This series of three seafood culinary workshops will give hands-on experience working with locally-caught, sustainable species. Learn from colleagues at the forefront of the “sea to school” movement, and hear directly from fishermen about their practices and how you can help support local fishing communities.

**April 14–23** – [Cambridge Science Festival](#). An annual 10-day celebration of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math in Cambridge and New England and the global impact of those endeavors. The Festival makes science accessible, engaging and fun for everyone through multifaceted, multicultural events.

**April 22** – [Earth Day](#). In 1970, the first year of Earth Day, the movement gave voice to an emerging consciousness, channeling human energy toward environmental issues. The focus of Earth Day this year is environmental and climate literacy.

**May 18** – [Massachusetts Envirothon 2017](#) at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln. High school students show how much they know about Massachusetts’ soils, forests, water, and wildlife, as well as this year’s current issue, Agricultural Soil and Water Conservation, at this outdoor field competition. Teams rotate through four “ecostations” where they answer written questions and engage in hands-on activities.

**May 18** – [Outdoor Classroom Day](#), a day to celebrate and inspire learning and play outside the classroom. Join schools from across the world in taking at least one class outdoors for one lesson!

**May 22-23** – Save the date for the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) [36th Annual Conference & Expo](#) in Manchester, NH, with a School Recycling Conference on May 23.

**Other Resources**

**UMass Amherst** is offering one, two, three, and six week pre-college courses for students. Subjects include Sustainable Tree Care, Hydrology and Climate Change, and Sustainable Living Immersion. Registration and more information [is available here](#).

**Project Green School's** [MA/RI Green Student of the Month](#) is a recognition program modeled after the President's Environmental Youth Awards [PEYA]. This program will celebrate outstanding youth-led environmental projects and initiatives by selecting three Green Students of the Month each month until May. Selected students will also be recognized and celebrated at the Annual Green Difference Awards Program and throughout Project Green Schools Communications and social media platform.

The **Arbor Day Foundation's** [Energy-Saving Trees Program](#) is a research-based tool intended to help people save energy and money by strategically planting trees.

We look forward to receiving your [Teacher Response Form](#) and hearing about what your students have been working on this year!

**Emily Fabel**  
**Green Team Program Administrator**