



“Green Team students learn not only how to make an impact, but how to organize, work together to accomplish tasks and become aware of the lasting effects of their work.”

– Eric Magers, Teacher, Manchester Essex Regional Middle/High School

Hello GREEN TEAM Teachers!

More than 50,000 students from 254 schools across Massachusetts are participating in THE GREEN TEAM so far this school year! See the [Participating Schools](#) list if you’d like to network with other teachers in your area.

You have not yet registered for THE GREEN TEAM 2015-2016 school year. (Registration does not carry over from one year to the next.) It’s not too late to register! [Register now](#) to access free recycling and composting equipment and idle reduction materials, and give your students the opportunity to be recognized for their environmental efforts.

Are you interested in composting food waste from your school cafeteria? THE GREEN TEAM has resources to help you get started with anything from a small demo project in the classroom to a school-wide food waste diversion program.

If you would like an outdoor compost bin for your school garden or composting worms for an indoor bin, send us an equipment request form for a [compost bin or worm voucher](#).

THE GREEN TEAM website includes videos that show you [how to assemble](#) a compost bin and [how to compost at school](#). THE GREEN TEAM [Composting Lesson Plan](#) can help your students learn about composting.

If you set up a worm bin (also known as a vermicomposter), you can compost right in the classroom! Watch this [vermicomposting time-lapse video](#) to see how it works. The MassDEP offers instructions on [how to build and use a worm bin](#).

For schools that would like to divert all of the food waste from their cafeteria, see [THE GREEN TEAM Food Waste Diversion Guide](#) for tips on how to get started. Schools that have registered for THE GREEN TEAM can also ask for help by emailing recycle@thegreenteam.org.

GREEN TEAM In the Media

The [WestfordCAT](#) News recently posted a video about Westford Academy's new composting program. The Westford Agricultural Commission, along with the school's environmental club and a group of special education students, are composting food scraps from the school cafeteria on site. The school plans to use some of the compost for their garden and sell excess at school fundraisers. Westford received advice from THE GREEN TEAM when they started setting up this program last year.



GREEN TEAM Spotlight

Whately Elementary School in Whately has been recycling and composting for years. Amy Donovan of the Franklin Solid Waste District regularly visits the school to help educate students, teachers, and administrators about the 5 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, Rot). Principal Peter Crisafulli reports that the sixth graders collect recycling from around the school each week and load it into 15 recycling carts. The cafeteria also fills a 64-gallon tote with food scraps, which Bear Path Farm picks up and composts. The school purchases finished compost from Bear Path for use in the school gardens. Fresh produce from the garden is used in the school's excellent salad bar, closing the loop!



The Whately Elementary custodian is building a beautiful sorting station for the cafeteria!

Marion E. Zeh Elementary School in Northborough recently set up a New Age Composter that they received from THE GREEN TEAM. The photo below also shows two smaller bins they previously used, but which did not have a large enough capacity. Parent volunteer Selvi Oyola comments, “Your 'how-to' video on setting up these compost bins was very helpful and it was an easy task to put it together.”



Compost bins at Marion E. Zeh Elementary School.

Rick Haggarty, a teacher at **STEM Middle Academy** in Springfield, reports on the recycling and composting at their school:

“The students at STEM Middle Academy participate in a Recycling Committee and meet weekly. My special education class, and other classes, recycle school plastic milk bottles and all plastic and paper products, which are collected by our committee participants weekly. We are also awaiting delivery of compost containers, to facilitate composting of otherwise discarded food products.”

School Programs, Events, Competitions and Professional Development

The spring calendar is filling up with conferences, competitions, workshops, and funding opportunities!

February 4

[Massachusetts Envirothon](#) Ecostation Workshop at Worcester Technical High School for Envirothon teams and coaches.

February 12

Registration deadline for the [2016 Massachusetts Envirothon](#). The topic this year is Invasive Species: A Challenge to the Environment, Economy, and Society.

February 16-19

[Winter in the Rainforest February Vacation Camp](#) in Charlestown.

February 19

Massachusetts Horticulture Society school gardening conference, [Cultivating Community in School Gardens](#), at Elm Bank Reservation in Wellesley. MassDEP’s Ann McGovern will present on school composting indoors with worms and outdoors with bins. Blizzard date: Feb 26

February 19

Next application deadline for [Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots Mini Grant](#) for youth-led service campaigns. These \$200 grants are available throughout the school year.

February 19

Registration deadline for [The Eversource Challenge](#). Open to students in grades K-12 in the Eversource service area, this program teaches students about energy efficiency through grade-specific challenges.

February 25

Submission deadline for [World of 7 Billion Student Video Contest](#). Open to students in grades 6-12.

March 4

Deadline for the US DOE [BioenergizeME Infographic Challenge](#) for high school students.

March 5

[Growing Minds Through Agriculture Winter Conference](#) at Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School in Palmer.

March 9

Webinar: [The ABCs of School Gardens](#) from the Healthy Schools Campaign. 10:00am-11:00am EST.

March 9

The 2016 [Massachusetts Environmental Education Society \(MEES\) Conference](#) in Worcester. The focus this year is how to communicate to a K-12 and college audience about climate change.

March 15

Submission deadline for the [Young Reporters for the Environment Journalism Competition](#) sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation. Youth ages 13 to 21 are welcome to submit writing, photography, or video.

March 22

Application deadline for [MassCEC Learn and Earn Program](#). This program provides schools with funding to create programs that provide students with employment and training opportunities in clean energy/STEM related occupations.

March 29

MassRecycle's 2016 [R3 Recycling & Organics Conference & Trade Show](#) in Quincy. This is the largest annual recycling conference in Massachusetts.

March 31

Submittal deadline for THE GREEN TEAM [Teacher Response Forms](#). Report your students' activities to receive recognition and prizes from THE GREEN TEAM.

April 15

Entry deadline for the [U.S. Stockholm Junior Water Prize](#) which is awarded to a high school student for a water-related research project.

April 15

Entry deadline for the [Barron Prize for Young Heroes](#), which recognizes young people ages 8 to 18 for their work on an independent, inspired service project.

April 15-16

The [Massachusetts Sustainable Campuses and Communities Conference](#) at Hampshire College (in Amherst) and in Northampton.

April 15-24

The 10th annual [Cambridge Science Festival](#) offers 10 days of events and activities that celebrate science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM).

April 22

[Earth Day](#)

Other Resources

Registration is open for the 2016 [Summer Pre-College](#) at UMass Amherst. One to six-week courses on a variety of topics are open to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors in good academic standing.

The Library of America offers a [Free Teachers Guide to American Earth](#) that includes two centuries of exceptional nonfiction environmental writing. For use in English, science, history, social studies, and environmental studies classes, this guide includes Common Core performance tasks and assessment questions.

The EPA offers a webinar series on [Sensible Steps to Healthier School Environments](#). These webinars introduce sensible, low-cost steps schools can take to create healthier environments.

THE GREEN TEAM hopes you have fun composting this spring!

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