



*"I love participating each year!!!"*

– Jen Comiskey, Teacher, Bernardston Elementary School, Northfield

Hello GREEN TEAM Teacher!

We have not yet received a Teacher Response Form from you for the 2015-2016 school year. We have pushed back the deadline to April 15. **Please submit your [Teacher Response Form](#)** by April 15 so we can hear about your experiences and reward your students for their accomplishments!

Please also email photos to [recycle@thegreenteam.org](mailto:recycle@thegreenteam.org) to share on [THE GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#) and in upcoming newsletters.

### **Does your school have a mercury policy?**

Knowing how to identify mercury-containing products and properly dispose of them can help prevent harmful mercury exposure at your school.

In schools, mercury may be found in science labs (e.g. barometers and elemental mercury), nurses' offices (e.g. blood pressure meters and thermometers), and utility areas (e.g. float switches and thermostats), as well as in fluorescent light bulbs.

THE GREEN TEAM links page includes resources to help your school prevent mercury exposure. These resources include:

- [MassDEP Mercury Resources](#): A wealth of resources on mercury for teachers and students.
- [EPA's Schools and Mercury](#): Information about how to reduce the hazards of mercury on children's health, avoid chemical liabilities, develop planning tools and establish collection programs for mercury.
- [NEWMOA's Getting Mercury out of Schools and Communities](#): A comprehensive guide to identifying common sources of mercury in schools and how to replace mercury-containing items with safe substitutes.
- ["Mercury in our Environment – Problems and Solutions"](#): The Center for EcoTechnology's fact sheet

about the effects of, solutions to, and ways to prevent mercury exposure.

- [Don't Mess With Mercury](#): A mercury spill prevention initiative for schools, with informative resources on mercury for teachers and students from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

Contact your local Health Department or Department of Public Works for information on how to properly dispose of mercury-containing devices.

## GREEN TEAM In the Media

The First Lego League recently published a [blog post](#) about THE GREEN TEAM's involvement with Massachusetts schools participating in the TRASH TREK Challenge. The post highlights the cafeteria waste diversion project developed by the team at Hadley Elementary School.

## GREEN TEAM Spotlight

**Katherine Lee Bates Elementary School** in Wellesley is the first K-12 school in New England to join the US EPA [Food Recovery Challenge](#). The pilot project, which has the potential to expand to other Wellesley Schools, will involve three initial phases: (1) assessment and planning (Spring 2016), (2) implementation and monitoring (Fall 2016), and (3) analysis and reporting (Spring 2017). Student engagement is a major focus of this endeavor.

Students at **Innovation Academy Charter School** in Tyngsboro have been organizing an idle reduction initiative this school year. Their efforts included publishing opinion articles in the school newspaper, morning announcements, and distributing bumper stickers and fliers from THE GREEN TEAM in their school parking lot.



*Innovation Academy Charter School students promote the school's idle reduction initiative.*

Students at **Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School** in South Yarmouth hosted a rummage sale. The students researched local agencies with which to collaborate, and chose to donate proceeds to The Salvation Army.



*Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School students create posters advertising their rummage sale.*

Second and third-graders at **Woodward Memorial School** in Southborough have decreased waste in their cafeteria by 25%. They began by recycling milk cartons and other recyclable containers. The students then came up with several ideas for other ways to reduce waste, and wrote a persuasive letter to the director of food services and the cafeteria manager. As a result, the school has applied for, and received, a grant to purchase reusable silverware for the cafeteria! On April 29, the school is also hosting a town-wide polystyrene/styrofoam recycling event with ReFoamit.

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

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

### **April 5**

GREEN TEAM equipment distribution day, West Roxbury, 10:00 am. Submit an [equipment request](#) by **March 31** if you want to pick up equipment on April 5.

### **April 12**

Nomination deadline for [Green Difference Awards](#), which recognize outstanding environmental education and STEM education efforts.

**April 15**

The submittal deadline for [Green Team Teacher Response Forms](#) has been extended. Please [submit the form](#) by April 15 so your students' work can be recognized.

**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, inspiring 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 17**

[Fenway Muddy River Symposium](#), Boston. Wheelock College hosts a symposium about the project to restore the Muddy River.

**April 17-23**

[NEEF National Environmental Education Week](#).

**April 21**

Free Collaborative for High-Performance Schools (CHPS) training workshop, [Solutions for Green Schools in Massachusetts](#), in Maynard.

**April 22**

[Earth Day](#). The theme for 2016 is [Trees for the Earth](#).

**April 28**

The [Great American Can Roundup](#) 2015-2016 School Challenge end date. Register and upload your recycling log for state and national prizes.

**April 30**

[Massachusetts Park Serve Day](#), MassParks annual statewide day of volunteer service during Earth Week.

**May 2**

Awards Ceremony for the [22nd Annual Secretary's Awards for Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education](#), Massachusetts State House, Boston. 11:00 AM.

**May 4**

[Bike to School Day](#)

**May 6**

[Greening Your 21st Century School Training](#) in Manchester. Students can attend with a staff member from the school.

**May 12**

The [2016 Massachusetts Envirothon Competition](#) in Hopkinton.

**May 13**

The [Roots and Shoots Mini Grant](#) deadline to fund a community service project.

**May 14**

[Youth Summit on Climate Change & Sustainability](#) co-sponsored by Boston Latin School's Youth Climate Action Network and the Technology & Culture Forum at MIT.

**May 16-17**

[Northeast Resource Recovery Association Conference](#) in Nashua, NH.

**Other Resources**

Schools can join the US EPA's [Food Recovery Challenge](#) to track their efforts to prevent and divert wasted food in the school cafeteria by following the [EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy](#). The hierarchy recommends actions in the following order: source reduction, feeding hungry people, feeding animals, industrial uses and composting.

The [State Electronics Challenge](#) encourages participants to manage electronics in an environmentally responsible way from purchase to disposal. Schools can sign up to receive free resources and assistance to improve electronics stewardship and reduce costs.

The recent webinar on the ABC's of School Gardening from the Healthy School Campaign is now [available on YouTube](#).

We wish you a happy Earth Day on April 22!

**Emily Fabel**

**Green Team Program Administrator**

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