



"Overall-success! The Green Team students enjoyed learning about energy conservation and became more aware throughout the projects and activities they completed this school year."

- Paul Flanigan, Robert Frost Middle School, Lawrence

Hello GREEN TEAM Teachers!

We have not yet received a Teacher Response Form from you for the 2018-2019 school year. We have extended the deadline to April 19. Please **submit your [Teacher Response Form](#) by April 19** so we can hear about your experiences and reward your students for their accomplishments!

The next [GREEN TEAM recycling equipment](#) distribution day for schools in the Boston area will be on **April 4** in West Roxbury. Register for [THE GREEN TEAM](#) and **submit a [recycling equipment application](#) by April 2** to be eligible for this distribution.

Introducing Recycle Smart MA

Did you know that on average, 1 out of 4 items that we put into the recycling bin is not actually recyclable? Recycling contamination (items placed in the bin that don't belong there) is driving up the cost of recycling and causing major problems at the recycling sorting facilities (such as worker injuries and even fires!)

The good news? It is now easier than ever to find out what belongs in the bin (and what doesn't). The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) recently released [Recycle Smart](#), a groundbreaking, statewide recycling education initiative focused on reducing recycling contamination. As part of this initiative, Massachusetts now has [standardized recycling guidelines](#) so you can be confident that you are recycling smart - regardless of where you live, work, learn, or play! Don't see an

item on the [Recycle Smart Guide](#)? Check out the [Recyclopedia](#) tool where you can search for instructions on how to properly recycle or dispose of hundreds of common materials.



The [Smart Recycling Guide](#) identifies the four categories of materials that every materials recovery facility (MRF) across the state accepts, and the top five problem materials that increase recycling costs, decrease efficiency, and cause worker injury. This guide is available for you to download online at [RecycleSmartMA.org](#) and makes a great sign for school recycling bins!

Ready to test your students' (and your own) recycling knowledge? **Sign up as a Recycle Smart Partner Today.**

Becoming a partner is easy (and free!) – just go to the [partner page](#) on [RecycleSmartMA.org](#) to sign up. As a partner you will receive educational tools and social media content to help raise awareness and improve the quality of recycling at your school. Let's all do our part and Recycle Smart!

Learn more at [RecycleSmartMA.org](#) or by following Recycle Smart MA on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

Massachusetts School Gardening Resources

If your class or school is interested in learning more about school gardening, be sure to check out the

resources below. The GREEN TEAM website also provides a number of different resources for teaching students about gardening and [food waste reduction](#) including the [How to Compost at School instructional video](#). Don't forget: one of the grand prizes for participating in the GREEN TEAM is a gift certificate to a local gardening center, so make sure you've submitted your [Teacher Response Form](#) for a chance to win one for your school!

- The Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom [School Garden Manuals/Guides](#) were designed to Massachusetts standards and frameworks, and cover such topics as Gardening in the City, Siting the Garden, and Transplanting. Their "[Get Growing!](#)" [Plant Kit](#) includes seed packets and learning tools for Elementary School teachers. **Order your free kit [here](#) by April 10.**
- Massachusetts Farm to School has a list of [School Garden Resources](#) and a number of other [tools available for MA educators](#) to incorporate hands-on farm to school learning opportunities in the classroom.
- The Massachusetts Horticultural Society offers different [Programs for Schools](#) including the traveling Plantmobile, which is designed to provide pre-K to 8th grade students with hands-on plant science education in the classroom.
- The MassDEP [School Composting Resource Package](#) covers a lot of topics and outlines how composting fits into the Massachusetts Department of Education Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework.
- The Children and Nature Network;s [Green Schoolyards Resources](#) offer tips, tools, and training to help you grow green schoolyards in your community.
- The USDA's [Using Gardens to Grow Healthy Habits in Cafeterias, Classrooms, and Communities](#) provides tips and examples for starting a successful school gardening program.

GREEN TEAM Spotlight

The **Arlington Public School District** Green Teams are taking the lead on environmental education and action in their community. There is tremendous progress being made throughout the district to keep recyclables out of the trash stream, divert food waste in the cafeteria, and promote environmental stewardship. All 10 Arlington Public Schools are separating food waste from their trash and using compostable trays, which has resulted in a 10 percent reduction in waste produced by the schools. For example, at **Ottoson Middle School** a group of dedicated students are serving as peer leaders every day in the cafeteria, helping sort waste into three main categories: recycling, compostables, and trash.

The student leaders earn a coupon for a free snack bar item after every three days of volunteering.



Ottoson Middle School student lunch leaders sorting recyclables, compostables, and trash in their cafeteria.

Many other environmental projects are taking place in Arlington Schools beyond the cafeteria.

Thompson Elementary School students created musical instruments out of reusable materials, **Stratton Elementary School** collected over 330 pounds of plastic film through the [Trex Plastic Film Recycling Challenge](#), and students throughout the town encouraging their community to recycle and compost through artwork, podcasts, and presentations. Textile recycling is also going strong at eight participating schools, with over 100,000 pounds of textiles collected by Bay State Textiles for reuse or recycling since 2017. This amazing effort has netted the district over \$5,000.

Thank you Arlington Schools for all the wonderful work you do for our environment!



Students at Stratton Elementary School in Arlington collecting bags of plastic film to be sent to Trex for recycling.

Throughout the school year, send us photos and stories about the great work you are doing to share in [THE GREEN TEAM Photo Gallery](#) and [THE GREEN TEAM Spotlight!](#)

GREEN TEAM in the Media

The Reminder reported on the [Town of Agawam's 'Cooler Community Challenge'](#), which aims to engage public schools in recycling and energy use education in an effort to reduce their town's carbon footprint.

If your school is covered in the local media, let us know and we'll add it to [THE GREEN TEAM in the Media!](#)

School Programs, Events, Competitions, and Professional Development

April 2 - Deadline to submit THE GREEN TEAM [recycling equipment application](#) for the **April 4** distribution day to be held in West Roxbury. (Equipment requests for the Amherst and Pittsfield equipment locations may be submitted at any time).

April 4 – [Distribution day](#) for GREEN TEAM recycling equipment for schools in the Boston area. Register for [THE GREEN TEAM](#) and submit a [recycling equipment application](#) by April 2 for this distribution.

April 10 – Deadline to [order](#) your Get Growing Plant Kit from Massachusetts Agriculture in the

Classroom.

April 15 – Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom [Meet a Local Farmer](#) video contest deadline. Students from Elementary to High School are encouraged to make a video of an interview with a local farmer. A total prize of \$2,000 will be divided among 4 winning entries.

April 18 – Visit [The Great Exchange](#), 33 Andrews Parkway, Devens, 8:30am-4:30pm, to gain classroom, craft, janitorial, office, and safety supplies at very low prices.

April 19 – Extended Deadline to submit THE GREEN TEAM [Teacher Response Form](#) to report your students' activities and receive a Certificate of Recognition and student prizes to recognize their work.

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 theme of Earth Day this year is "Protect Our Species."

April 25 - Visit [The Great Exchange](#), 100 Sherman Avenue, Devens, 8:30am-4:30pm, for classroom fixtures, office furniture, and janitorial items very low prices.

April 25 – The Wade Institute for Science Education's [Professional Development Seminar Series](#) fourth full day seminar, **Science on the Brain**, will feature a full day session entitled **Mind on Brains: Making the Connection**.

April 26 – Submission deadline for the Massachusetts Marine Educators [2019 Marine Art Contest](#). Students in grades K-12 are invited to submit a piece of original artwork focusing on this year's theme, "Revealing the Biodiversity of Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary."

April 27 – Keep Massachusetts Beautiful's [2019 Great Massachusetts Cleanup](#). Join with your neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers to clean up and beautify your neighborhood or community.

May 4 – Save the date for Boston Latin School's [YouthCAN's 13th Annual Youth Summit on Climate Change](#). This year, the summit focuses on the theme of "Facing Waste", with the goal of bringing together as many young people as possible to learn about climate change and how they can help combat its effects.

May 17 – [Massachusetts Envirothon 2019](#). Save the date for this year's Massachusetts Envirothon, at Sholan Farms in Leominster. The 2019 Current Issue is "[Abundant, Affordable, Healthy Food](#)".

May 23 – Visit [The Great Exchange](#), 33 Andrews Parkway, Devens, 8:30am-4:30pm, to gain classroom, craft, janitorial, office, and safety supplies at very low prices.

May 30 - Visit [The Great Exchange](#), 100 Sherman Avenue, Devens, 8:30am-4:30pm, for classroom fixtures, office furniture, and janitorial items very low prices.

Other Resources

Did you know the Arnold Arboretum in Boston offers [Self-Guided School Trips](#)? The Arboretum provides a variety of activities that elementary, middle, and high school groups can participate in during their visit.

The Green Team wishes you a happy Earth Day on April 22! Send us a message, photo, or video to let us know how your school is celebrating Earth Day this year. We are looking forward to learning more about all of the wonderful environmental projects your students worked on this school year in your [Teacher Response Form](#).

Megan Denardo
Green Team Program Administrator