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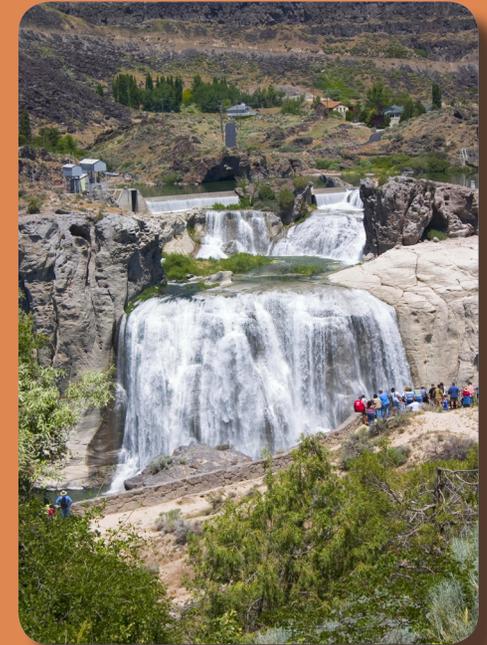
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# How to Start and Sustain a Green Team in Your Workplace



Courtesy of Idaho Tourism



**Idaho Department of Environmental Quality**  
[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)



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## What is a Green Team?

A Green Team is a group of environmentally conscious employees within your organization that is responsible for brainstorming and looking at ways to reduce pollution in the workplace.

## Why Have a Green Team?

A Green Team can help increase efficiency and productivity, reduce costs, and improve worker satisfaction. A Green Team is uniquely situated to identify ways to reduce pollution and waste that might not have otherwise been indicated by a balance sheet.



## Steps to Starting a Green Team

- 1. Get top management support:** Support from top management is essential to the success of a Green Team. Explain the benefits of pollution prevention and the potential for cost savings and efficiency improvements in order to gain support from management.
- 2. Get coworker support:** Develop written pollution prevention policies that identify what pollution prevention is and the value of achieving it in your workplace. Train employees on the purpose, scope, and means of implementing pollution prevention. Set realistic and tangible goals for pollution reduction.
- 3. Characterize the process:** For manufacturing facilities, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the entire production stream, including inputs from suppliers and waste generated by the manufacturing process. For service industry businesses, understanding what is generated in your waste stream can be a good starting point for working backwards to reduce the total volume of waste from your business. In evaluating a production stream, there are generally three areas in which you might improve:
  - Behavioral/operational improvements: Adding or improving inventory controls can help to reduce waste and the potential for accidents.
  - Maintenance issues: Deferred maintenance can cost energy and efficiency.

- Capital improvements: Sometimes capital improvements are necessary to reduce waste. For example, improving lighting with more efficient bulbs and more windows can cut down energy use during the day.
- 4. Assess waste and identify opportunities:** After analyzing and brainstorming about how certain parts of the production process or waste stream can be improved, write down and assess some options you have for improving those parts of the system.
  - 5. Consider costs:** Determine the costs of the waste that is being generated, how much it might cost to fix the problem, and the payback rate on the improvements to the system.
  - 6. Identify and implement options:** If multiple options can solve a given problem, choose the most appropriate for your situation. Model how changes will be implemented and how they will work practically on the ground. Train employees on new techniques or processes.
  - 7. Evaluate the program:** Analyze the results of implementation by taking measurements of waste or pollution before and after pollution prevention programs are put into place. Tweak the process to ensure efficiency.
  - 8. Sustain the program:** You may need to reevaluate the program as economic situations change. This is a “continuous improvement” process that will ensure future competitiveness and efficiency.

Source: **Pollution Prevention Opportunity Assessments: A Practical Guide** by Marcus J. Healey and Daniel Watts