



Dear Sustainable Jersey Participant,

We are pleased to present our program update for 2010 with new features, new and improved actions, and a refined point structure. Municipalities can continue to build their certification applications and update their profiles beginning Monday, March 1, 2010, however points will not yet be awarded for the following actions as they are still under development:

- Cumulative Risk Assessment
- Sustainability Master Plan Revision
- Municipal Planning and Zoning Self Assessment
- Institutional Purchasing
- Gardening on Municipal Lands
- Amend Master Plan
- Zoning for Food Production & Sales
- Collaborative Land Preservation Programs
- Water Conservation Ordinance
- Historic Preservation Plan

Points and Program Structure

Given that 2009 was the first year of the program, some tweaks to the structure were necessary. However, we have endeavored to keep the fundamental elements of the program consistent so that municipalities already working on their certifications would not be interrupted. We are also very pleased to release a slate of new actions that will score points.

The biggest change for 2010 is that we have made the program more flexible. The most common complaint we had was from municipalities with more than 100 points that could not get certified because they did not have two of the four “priority actions”. This year municipalities will be able to select two out of six priority actions. A second issue was that the points available for many types of actions were capped. For example, even if you had five amazing recycling advancements, you could only get credit for two. We have lifted those caps so you can get credit for more of the things you do.

We also adjusted the point system to keep the same level of difficulty as 2009. It is now easier to score points, and there are more points available, so we have adjusted the minimum necessary to 150 for new applications. The new structure will be slightly easier for some, and slightly harder for others. Going forward, as we refine the program we expect to be able to limit program changes and emphasize consistency.

New Features

Municipal Profiles: All certified communities now have a profile on website showcasing their efforts that led to certification. This will include descriptions of their efforts, and the actual documents they submitted to become certified.

Search Feature: A new search function will allow all participating communities to be searched by county, certification status, and the specific actions that have completed or planned.

Grants Portal (coming soon): All financial incentives and grants, from public and private sources, will now be searchable through a customizable grants portal. Users will be able to search by category and keyword, or create profile that will generate, and automatically update, a list of grants for which they are eligible.

Training and Green Team Support

We understand that it takes a lot of effort for your community to successfully become a certified municipality in the Sustainable Jersey program. Over the next year we will be offering a wide range of support to assist you in navigating the process. Some of the ways we hope to support your work include Training that focuses on **"How To Implement"** specific actions, ***Green Team capacity building support and training***; monthly ***webinars and conference calls*** where you can have your questions answered will be some of the ways we hope to support your work.

We have also heard that you would like the opportunity to meet informally with other communities involved in the program. To facilitate that we will be organizing Sustainable Jersey gatherings to help the great volunteers and municipal staff meet, collaborate and learn from each other's successes and challenges. We are midway through our first series of "How To" trainings on Community Energy Outreach that was offered through morning, evening webinar and full day formats throughout the State. Stay on the lookout for email announcements and posting on the Sustainable Jersey website under Training for the latest offerings.