



What is Sustainable Jersey®?

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey. The program addresses sustainability from three angles—Planet, Prosperity and People—to help municipalities go green, save money, and promote a higher quality of life for all residents. The SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program describes action steps that municipalities can take to become “certified” as leaders, while providing guidance, tools, resources, and access to grant funding to support the ‘greening’ process.

Why do municipalities join SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®?

Municipalities which are registered with or certified through SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® gain access to a range of well-researched environmental standards and resources. In addition, participating municipalities gain priority access to many New Jersey grant programs, and are eligible to apply to the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® Small Grant Program. They also automatically receive updates on new grants, training and events, and news about the latest resources.

Over half of all New Jersey municipalities are registered with SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®. The program has proven effective at mobilizing residents and municipal leaders to make their communities more sustainable, reduce municipal operating expenses, and secure valuable resources.

What does Certification entail?

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® has two levels of certification—Bronze and Silver. Bronze Certification denotes that a municipality has made a commitment to sustainability and has taken its first steps towards that goal. It requires the establishment of a Green Team, implementation of 2 out of 7 priority actions, and earning a minimum total of 150 points from the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® menu of actions: <http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actionlist.php> Actions must be completed in 6 of the 16 categories in the menu of actions.

Silver Certification means that a municipality has made significant progress toward sustainability and is a statewide leader. Silver Certification requires the establishment of a Green Team, implementation of 3 out of 7 priority actions, and a minimum total of 350 points from the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® menu of actions. These actions must be completed in 8 of 16 categories in the menu.

Why should my faith-based community support SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®?

SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® is recognized as a national model and represents a significant opportunity for environmental leadership within municipalities. Participating communities across the Garden State are going 'green,' saving money, and engaging on important environmental issues.

Creating a sustainable community takes everyone working together, and faith-based institutions can make an important contribution to the sustainability and well-being of their community through their involvement. By participating, your faith-based institution can:

- Help your municipality to achieve Certification
- Conduct valuable environmental outreach work
- Engage potential new and younger members who are interested in the environment or who are involved in their municipality or SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®
- Build a stronger connection with municipal leaders in your community and develop a better understanding of local government
- Identify opportunities to collaborate with your municipality on environmental events and projects
- Learn ways to help your own institution to go 'green'

How does my faith-based institution connect with SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®?

First, find out if your municipality is already engaged in the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program: <http://www.sustainablejersey.com/community/map.php>

1 If YES:

Schedule a SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® presentation: Invite a member of your municipality's SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® Green Team to make a presentation at your faith-based institution. This is a great way to learn about SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®, what your municipality is doing, and ways to get involved.

Identify opportunities to participate on the green team: Each municipality in the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program is required to have a Green Team. Some municipalities have an open door policy determining who can join the team. Others mandate that team members are government-appointed. If there is an open door policy, have a congregational representative join the team. If the members are government appointed, talk with the team about any opportunities that are available for your institution to get engaged.

Suggest a faith-based working group: The SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program does not yet allocate points for faith-based engagement, and therefore many Green Teams do not have a working group assigned to this task. Identify opportunities to create a working group that is focused specifically on activities and collaboration with faith-based institutions. This will ensure that faith-based activities become a priority, and are incorporated into the municipality's action plan.

Participate in local 'green' events: Many municipalities host community events, such as green fairs, in order to gain points within the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program. These events can offer partnership opportunities, and they can also be promoted to your membership.

2 If NO:

Review the steps required to get started with SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®:

<http://sustainablejersey.com/editor/doc/pnews01.pdf>

Meet with your environmental commission or municipal administrators to discuss SUSTAINABLE JERSEY®: There are several steps a municipality must take to join the SUSTAINABLE JERSEY® program, including passing a resolution, designating a municipal point of contact, and completing the registration form. These steps require municipal engagement and input, so getting the environmental commission or municipal administrators on board is the first step.