

2024 Certification Webinar

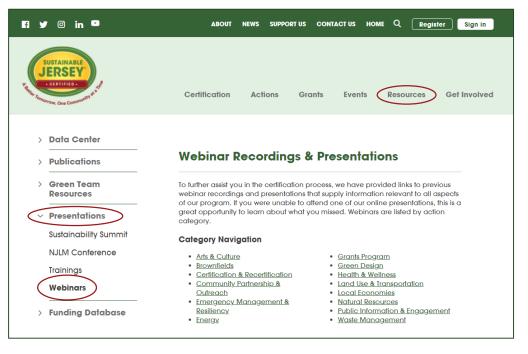
December 13, 2023

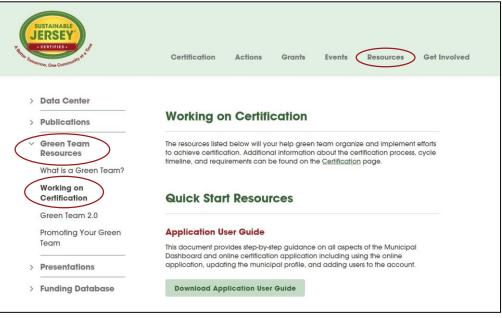
Samantha McGraw | Senior Department Administrator



Housekeeping

- Housekeeping: All attendees are muted.
- Questions? Enter them into the Questions box or "raise your hand" and we will answer them at the end of the presentation.
- The presentation and recording will be posted on the <u>Webinars page</u> & <u>Green</u> <u>Team Resources – Working on</u> <u>Certification</u> by the end of the week.





Agenda

- 1. Program Overview
- 2. Certification Overview
- 3. Actions Overview
- 4. New, Updated & Retiring Actions
- 5. Applying for Certification & Recertification
- 6. Working On & Submitting Your Application
- 7. Resources
- 8. Questions & Answers



Program Overview



What is Sustainable Jersey?

A nonprofit organization that provides tools, trainings and financial incentives to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs.

\$7.6 million in grants to municipalities and schools through the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for sustainability initiatives. Learn more:

sustainablejersey.com/grants

Actions

Tools, resources, guidance

Funding



Statistics

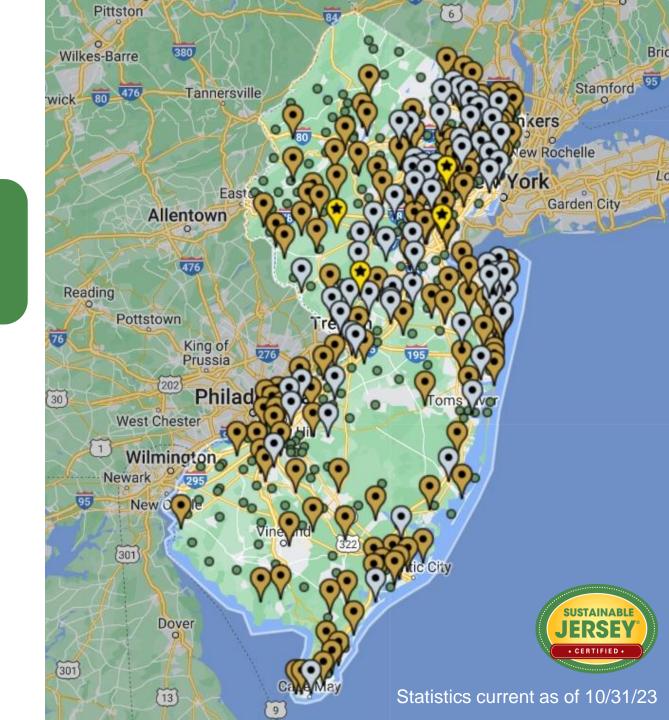
2009 Program Started

83% Participating

91% Population



16,710
Actions
Implemented





Certification Overview





Certification Benefits



Save money. Get money.



Get recognized. Promote your town.



Gain access to tools, training and expert guidance.



Conserve valuable resources.
Protect the environment.



Certification Requirements



- Total of at least 150 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 2 of 13 priority actions
- Actions completed in 6 of 17 categories



- Total of at least 350 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 3 of 13 priority actions
- Actions completed in 8 of 17 categories

What Does Certification Mean?



Bronze

- Made a commitment to Sustainability
- Created internal organization (green team)
- Succeeded in implementing first significant actions



Silver

- Beyond getting started
- Making significant progress in a number of categories toward sustainability
- Statewide leader

2024 Certification Cycle (*)





	FIRST ROUND	SECOND ROUND	THIRD ROUND
Submission Deadline	Feb. 25	May 10	July 31
Return Date	Early-April	Mid-June	Late-Sep.

- Municipalities can submit for the first time in any round, but it is recommended to submit in the first two rounds to receive feedback to help achieve certification.
- All documentation does not need to be finished for the February or May deadline, but will need to be complete by the final July 31 deadline.



Applying for Certification & Recertification





Certification Steps

#1

Pass resolution & register municipality

#2

Form mandatory green team

#3

Meet criteria for bronze or silver certification

#4

Submit documentation for each action

^{**}Certification awarded after review and verification

What is a Green Team?

- Leads and coordinates the sustainability activities of the community
- Develops plans, implements programs, and assists with educational opportunities that support the creation of a sustainable community
- Diverse group of members encouraged
- Aspire to create a team representing the demographics of the town



What is a Green Team?

- Can be established by ordinance or resolution.
- Can be part of an existing group, like an Environmental Commission

Learn more about green teams:

<u>sustainablejersey.com/resources/green-team/</u> <u>team-resources/what-is-a-green-team/</u>





Develop a Plan

Organize green team

Review actions already in progress in your community

Identify group leader & form small groups to work on specific actions

Develop task list with target completion dates

Track progress & adjust plan as needed



Actions

Over 145 <u>actions</u> to choose from. Download the Sustainable Jersey brochure on the <u>Action page</u>.

ACTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

To become Sustainable Jersey Certified, municipalities must complete and document actions from this list.



Mandatory Green Team
2 out of 13 PRIORITY ACTIONS*
150 points across 6 of 17 categories.



Mandatory Green Team 3 out of 13 PRIORITY ACTIONS* 350 points across 8 of 17 categories.





Extreme Temperature Event Plan

Ready Set GO! Fire Company

Firewise Community

Wildfire Safety Council

Heat Island Assessment & Mitigation Plan

Community Wildfire Protection Plans

Certified communities can earn stars for high levels of achievement in Energy, Health and Water. The icons identify which actions can contribute towards earning a star.

Action	Stars	Points
ARTS & CREATIVE CULTURE		
Establish a Creative Team		10
Creative Assets Inventory		10
Creative Placemaking Plan		10
Municipal Commitments to Support Arts & Creative Culture	•	5 to 25
Utilizing Your Creative Assets		10 to 30
BROWNFIELDS		
Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization	•	10 to 15
Brownfields Reuse Planning	•	5 to 15
Brownfields Marketing		10
Brownfields Assessment & Investigation	*	5 to 30
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP & OU	TREACH	
Green Team - MANDATORY		10 to 15
Community Education & Outreach		5 to 20
Green Challenges		10
Green Fair		10 to 15
DIVERSITY & EQUITY		
Community Equity & Diversity Profile*		10 to 15
Diversity on Boards & Commissions*	•	10
Environmental Justice in Planning & Zoning	•	10
Lead Education & Outreach Programs		5 to 15

5 to 20

5 to 15

	unicipal Facilities
Energy Tracking & Mana	gement*
Buy Electricity from a Re	newable Source
Municipal Onsite Solar Sy	ystem
Municipal Geothermal En	ergy System
Municipal Wind Energy S	ystem
Renewable Government i	Energy Aggregati
Commercial Energy Effici	ency Outreach
Energy Assistance Outre	ach
Residential Energy Efficie	ency Outreach
Make Your Town Solar Fr	iendly
Municipally Supported C	ommunity Solar
Solar Outreach	
Wind Ordinance	
Fleet Inventory*	
Meet Target for Green Fi	eets
Purchase Alternative Fue	
Electric Vehicle Commun	ity Outreach
Make Your Town Electric	Vehicle Friendly
Public Electric Vehicle Ch	narging Infrastruc
FOOD	
Farmland Preservation P	ane
Community Food Pantry/	C. College Co.
Community Gardens	balik a boup hist
	Count Decrees
Expanded Supplemental Promoting Safe Food Do	100000000000000000000000000000000000000
Buy Fresh By Local Progr	
Farmers Markets	Milital
NOVE CONTROLLED	
GREEN DESIGN	
Green Building Policy/Res	solution
Green Building Education	1)
Green Building Training	
Green Development Che	cklist
New Construction	
Upgrade/Retrofit-Light P	allution
	Conservation
Upgrade/Retrofit-Water (
Upgrade/Retrofit-Water (

Best Practices for Local Boards of Health

Local Health Assessment & Action Plan

Integrating Health Into Municipal Decision Making

Building Healthier Communities

Safe Routes to School

5 to 50

10 to 20

5 to 45

5 to 50

10 to 20

10 to 20

10 to 20

5 to 10

5 to 25

10 to 25

25 to 40

10



Components of Sustainability

Action Sections

- What is it?
- Why is it important?
- Who should be involved?
- How long will it take and what will it cost?
- What to do and how to do it
- What to submit
- Spotlights
- Resources

People

Planet

Prosperity

Action Categories

- Arts & Culture
- Brownfields
- Community Partnership & Outreach
- Diversity & Equity
- Emergency Management & Resiliency
- Energy
- Food
- Green Design
- Health & Wellness

- Innovation & Demonstration Projects
- Land Use & Transportation
- Local Economies
- Natural Resources
- Operations & Maintenance
- Public Information & Engagement
- Sustainability & Climate Planning
- Waste Management



Priority Actions



Want to learn more about these "low hanging fruit" priority actions?

View the Crossing the Finish Line webinar recording and presentation on the Webinars page

- Community Equity & Diversity Profile
- Diversity on Boards & Commissions
- **Energy Efficiency for Municipal Facilities**
- **Energy Tracking &** Management
- Fleet Inventory
- **Green Business Recognition Program**
- Municipal Carbon Footprint

- Municipal Water Story
- Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)
- Prescription Drug Safety and **Disposal**
- Recycling and Waste Reduction **Education & Compliance**
- Sustainable Land Use Pledge
- Water Conservation Ordinance



- Community Education & Outreach
- Community Food Pantry/Bank & Soup Kitchen; Community Garden
- Building Healthier Communities; Safe Routes to School; Tobacco Free Community
- Environmental Commission & Site Plan Review; Community Forestry Management Plan & NJUCF Accreditation
- Recycled Copy Paper
- Digitizing Public Information
- Household Hazardous Waste, Non-Mandated Materials Recycling



South Plainfield Clean Up Day

Just getting started?

View the Crossing the Finish Line webinar recording and presentation on the Webinars page

Variable Point Actions

Building Healthier Communities 20 Points • THIS ACTION HAS VARIABLE POINTS: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 • ! Test Muni Application for Certification Action Submission: Building Healthier Communities **Directions** Please complete this form to submit this action as part of your application by following these steps: Mark the status as planned Indicate the requested points for variable point actions Enter description of implementation, no more than 300 words Upload supporting documentation · Click save action submission button Once updates are finished, mark the action completed so points are calculated in your point totals to subm certification Save the submission. Planned Current action submission status: Planned **Requested Points** Point level requested for this submission Description of Implementation In the text box below, please provide a short summary (300 word maximum) of what was accomplished outdated or unnecessary information.

- The points awarded will vary based on accomplishments
- For example, the Building Healthier Communities action allows you to earn points for having a health and wellness initiative for four different population segments
- Application view defaults to lowest point value until changed by user
- User selects point value supported by the documentation as part of the submission from the drop down menu
- Reviewer confirms point value selected or changes based on review of the documentation

Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet

Available on the <u>Actions Page</u>

Spreadsheet includes:

- Action name
- Submission requirements
- Look back period
- Approval period
- Resubmission requirements
- Points



Planning Tool

Submission Summary

Look Back Period Resubmission Requirements































Gold Star Standards

All certified municipalities are eligible to earn Gold Star recognition for reaching high levels of achievement in key dimensions of sustainability.

All standards require the completion of base certification actions, AND the Gold Star action(s)

Learn more:

<u>sustainablejersey.com/actions/gold-star-</u> standards/

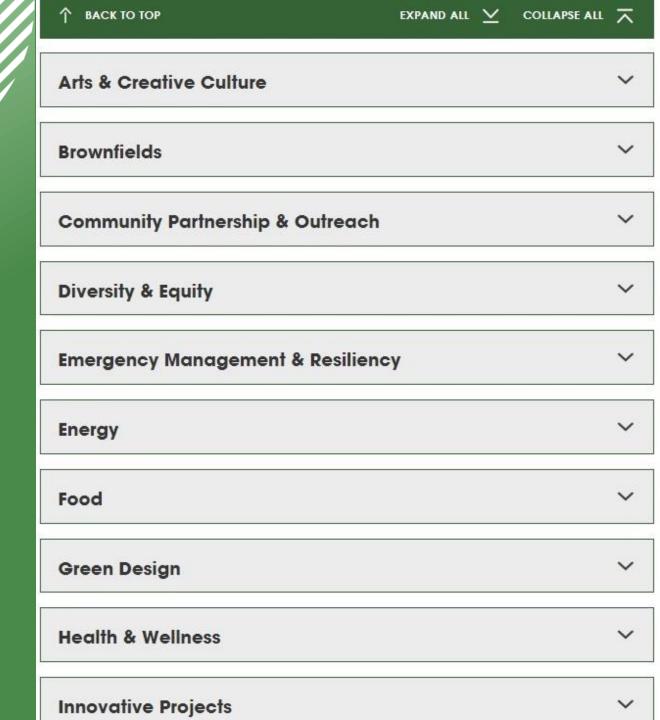








New, Updated & Retiring Actions





<u>Category</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Status</u>
Animals in the Community	Animals in the Community Education	10	Retires 12/31/23
Community Partnership & Outreach	Green Fair "Green" Your Green Fair	10 to 15 10	Updated Retires 12/31/23
Emergency Management & Resiliency	Heat Island Assessment & Mitigation Plan	5 to 20	Updated
Energy	Energy Assistance Outreach Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach Commercial Energy Efficiency Outreach	10 to 20	Re-Launching 2024
Natural Resources	Municipal Water Story Winter Best Practices to Reduce Road Salt Impacts	20 to 25 5 to 15	Updated New

Stay up to date by visiting the Program Updates page: sustainablejersey.com/actions/program-updates



New, Updated & Retiring Actions

<u>Category</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Status</u>
	Green Purchasing Policy	5 to 10	New
	Adopt a Green Purchasing Policy by	5 to 10	Retires 12/31/23
	Ordinance/Resolution	E to 1E	l la data d
Operations &	Green Cleaning Products & Motorized Cleaning Equipment (formerly Green Cleaning Products)	5 to 15	Updated
Maintenance	Recycled Copy Paper (formerly Recycled Paper)	5 to 15	Updated
	Efficient Landscape Design	10	Retires 12/31/23
	Integrated Pest Management	10	Retires 12/31/23
	Minimize Water Consumption	10	Retires 12/31/23
	Community Energy Plan or Climate Action Plan	10 to 15	Coming Soon
	(formerly Climate Action Plan)		
Sustainability &	Community Sustainability Plan	10 to 25	New
Climate Planning	Vision Statement & Goals	5	Retires 12/31/23
	Indicators & Targets	10	Retires 12/31/23
	Action Plans	10	Retires 12/31/23

Stay up to date by visiting the Program Updates page: sustainablejersey.com/actions/program-updates



Working On & Submitting Your Application

Refer to the Application User Guide on the Green Team Resources – Working on Certification page for guidance navigating the Municipal Dashboard and online application

Application User Guide



🔷 www.sustainablejersey.com 🔸



Manage Municipal Users – Keep Contacts Updated!

- Update the Municipal Profile for current primary/secondary contacts.
- Add additional users to contribute toward your application.
- Both owners & contributors can access, edit, and submit the application.
- Owners can add/remove other owners & contributors;
 contributors can only add other contributors

If town officials such as the business administrator, clerk, mayor, etc., wish to receive notifications about the status of your application, please add them as a user to the account.

Sign up or login

Municipal Dashboard

Manage Profile & Users

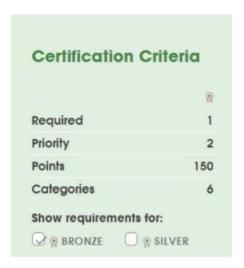
Submitting the Application

Make sure enough actions are marked as completed and approved to meet the minimum requirements for bronze certification so that the submit button turns yellow and you can submit the application

To submit the application, click the yellow submit button found on the right hand side of the main application page. NOTE: Depending on the size of your computer screen, you may need to scroll down a little bit to see the submit button.

Steps to Submit

- · When finished working on an action mark it as "Completed."
 - Remember: Follow this procedure even if an action is not fully finished and you do not
 have all the documentation uploaded because the submit button only turns yellow when all completed and approved actions total to the minimum requirements for bronze certification.
 - Tip: Check to make sure the completed and approved totals meet the minimum requirements for bronze. Requirements are listed in the Certification Criteria section above Action Totals.
- Press the yellow submit button, confirm submission, and you will receive a notification in green at the top
 of the page that the application has been submitted.
- All users on the account will receive an automatic email that the application has been submitted for
 review. If the business administrator, clerk, mayor or other municipal official wishes to receive these notifications but is not on the account, please add them as an owner or contributor. Guidance is available on
 page 6.







Reviewer Feedback

Automatic Email Approved or Must Revise

Archived Comments

After submitting the application, project area specialists review the submissions to see if they meet the requirements for each action. During the review process, the status of the actions submitted will change, but comments are not viewable until the review is complete. At that time updates can be made to actions based on the reviewer feedback.

Reviewer Feedback

- All users associated with an account will receive an automatic email notifying them when the application
 has been turned to "Awaiting Updates".
 - The email will list the actions marked "Must Revise" that need attention in the application.
- Reviewer feedback may be available for any action status, and can be found in one of two places:
 - By clicking "Published Comments" in the Reviewer Feedback area at the top of the application.
 It will return a list of the actions with comments associated with them in the order they appear in the application.
 - 2. By clicking on the **action name** and scrolling to the bottom of the page to the "Reviewer Feedback" area.
- Reviewer feedback will provide information on the updates needed for action approval.
- Once all of your updates have been made, mark those actions updated as "Completed" and resubmit the application for review.
- At the end of the review cycle, all comments will be archived and accessible either at the top of the application, or at the bottom of each action's submission page.







Show archived comments



Action Submission Tips

#1

Read the action description in order to understand what the action requires

#2

Provide a summary of what was accomplished that aligns with the action

#3

Delete old documents and upload new documents that support the information contained in the summary

#4

Type in descriptive document titles for all uploaded files (i.e. Wildlife Interaction Plan or Outreach Materials)

Why Actions Are Not Approved

Pitfall	How to Overcome
Action too old/expired	 Review look-back period; update action as necessary. If you add new documentation, make sure to remove the old if not needed for approval.
Proper documentation not submitted	 Review action submission requirements and documentation uploaded. If resubmitting for an action, check for an "updated" date at top of action and read the "What to Submit" section to see if submission requirements have changed since last submission.
Misinterpretation of action goals	 Be sure to closely read the "What to Do" and "What to Submit" portion of the action to verify that what you plan on submitting is in line with the intent of the action
Seeking credit for same activity under two different actions	 One activity may only be given credit under one action; Have someone that oversees entire application
Not conducting outreach/education component required for many actions	 Read the submission "What to Do" and "What to Submit" sections closely
Not completing the prerequisite action	 Be sure to read the Introduction to each action and the "What to Submit" section to make sure the action does not have a prerequisite or that it has been completed.





Resources

A new Resources website page houses our Data Center, Publications, Green Team Resources, and Presentations



Certification

ABOUT NEWS SUPPORTUS CONTACTUS HOME Q

- > Data Center
- > Publications
- > Green Team Resources
- **Presentations**

New Jersey Community Solar Project Finder

Tour the Sustainable Jersey Website

Resources

Sustainable Jersey strives to connect elected and appointed officials, municipal staff, and green team volunteers with resources that can help them identify strategies, implement initiatives, and share their successes with others.

Data Center

View and download sustainability-related data and maps, useful for municipalities and Green Teams to better understand their communities. complete actions, and track progress.

View All

Publications

Sustainable Jersey has released reports which take an in-depth look into important sustainability issues. Learn best practices, review research and discover the current state of sustainability in New Jersey.

Resources

Get Involved

View All

Green Team Resources

No need to reinvent the wheel! Learn how to create, recruit, train, change leadership, grow and promote a municipal green team. Use these resources to build a highfunctioning green team.

View All

Presentations

Sustainable Jersey offers a wide variety of training and educational opportunities each year. View presentations from Sustainable Jersey events, conference sessions, in-person trainings, and webinars.

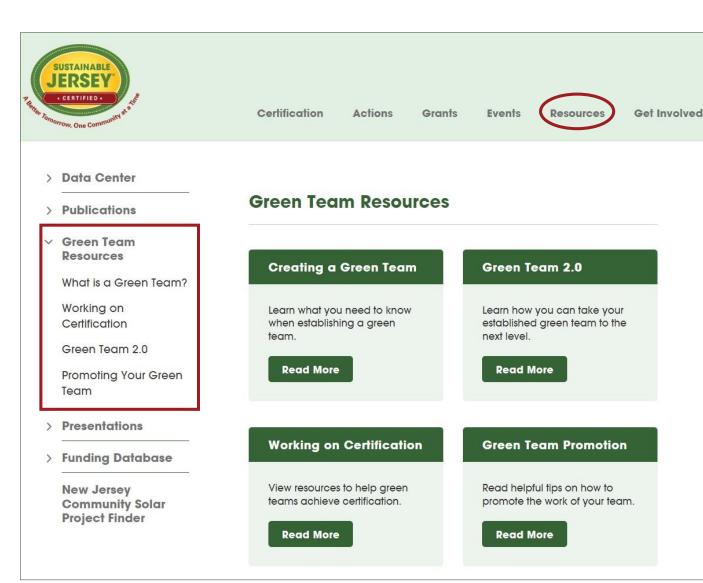
View All



Green Team Resources

- 1. What is a Green Team?
 - a. Information about forming your green team & sample docs.
- 2. Working on Certification
 - a. Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet
 - b. Application User Guide
 - c. Certification-specific webinar recordings & presentations

sustainablejersey.com/resources/greenteam-resources/working-on-certification/



Webinar Recordings

- Webinars on different action topics available to view at your convenience.
- Presentations from other conferences available as well under the general Presentations page.

sustainablejersey.com/resources/presentations/webinars/



Certification

Actions

Grants

Events



Get Involved

- Data Center
- Publications
- Green Team Resources
- Presentations

Sustainability Summit

NJLM Conference

Traininas

Webinars

> Funding Database

New Jersey Community Solar Project Finder

Navigate to:

- Arts & Culture
- Brownfields
- Certification & Recertification
- Community
 Partnership &
 Outreach
- Emergency
 Management &
 Resiliency

Webinar Recordings & Presentations

To further assist you in the certification process, we have provided links to previous webinar recordings and presentations that supply information relevant to all aspects of our program. If you were unable to attend one of our online presentations, this is a great opportunity to learn about what you missed. Webinars are listed by action category.

Category Navigation

- Arts & Culture
- Brownfields
- Certification & Recertification
- Community Partnership & Outreach
- Emergency Management & Resiliency
- Energy

- Grants Program
- Green Design
- Health & Wellness
- Land Use & Transportation
- Local Economies
- Natural Resources
- Public Information & Engagement
- Waste Management

Arts & Culture

New Resources for Arts & Creative Culture Actions Webinar

December 2021

- View Recording
- Download Presentation

Creating Creative Communities

May 2020

- View Recording
- Download Presentation

The Art of Sustainability - Creative Placemaking and Your Community



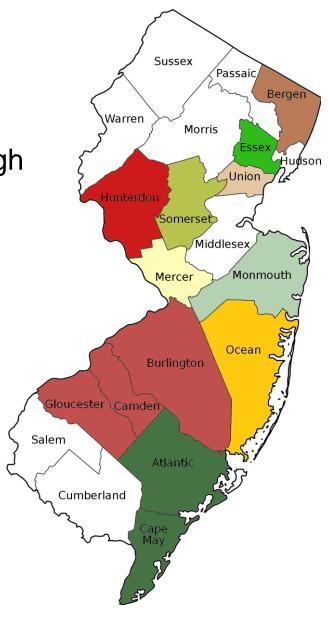
Regional Hubs

Ten hubs around the state to help green teams build capacity through training, best practices resources and networking. Learn more

sustainablejersey.com/get-involved/

Benefits

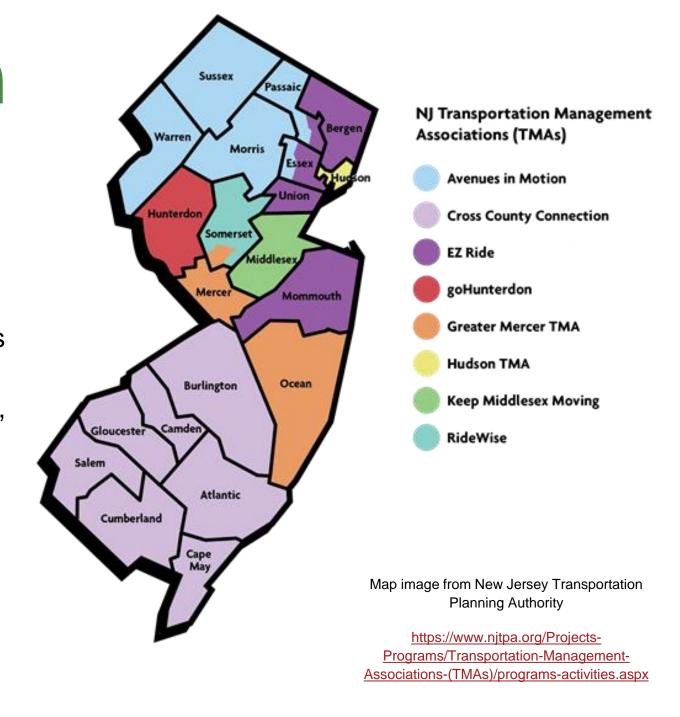
- Peer mentoring
- Project collaboration
- Online communication platform
- Network of Leaders
- Quarterly Events
- Help Peers Get Certified
- Technical assistance & administrative support from SJ



Transportation Management Associations

Eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) that can assist with the Safe Routes to School, Anti-Idling Education and Enforcement, Smart Workplaces, bike/ped actions and other transportation-related actions.

Learn more and get contact information for each TMA on the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's <u>website</u>.



Other Organizations

These are some of MANY organizations that can help with actions. View the **Resources** section of all actions for more information

Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions

- Natural Resources Inventory
- Environmental Commission & Site Plan Review
- Single-Use Plastics

New Jersey Bicycle & Pedestrian Resource Center

- Complete Streets
- Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan

New Jersey Institute of Technology & NJEDA

 Brownfields through the Technical Assistance to Brownfield Communities Program

New Jersey Prevention Network

 Tobacco Free Community

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

- Community Gardens
- Green Infrastructure
- Water Conservation Education

Watershed Associations

- Water-related actions
- Private Well Outreach and Testing



Participants Map Search

Use the <u>Participating Municipalities & Approved Actions</u> (sustainablejersey.com/certification/search-participating-municipalities-approved-actions) page to find examples of documentation from certified towns and connect with municipal green teams

Search by action



View certified towns approved for that action



View certification report for example documentation



Final Thoughts

- Add users to your account to assist with uploading documentation to speed up the certification process.
- Review the Green Team Resources pages. Use the Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet to develop your plan.
- Go for Silver!
- Questions? Call us if you do not know how to complete an action and we will connect you with the reviewer. Review the FAQs page:

sustainablejersey.com/about/faqs/



Support



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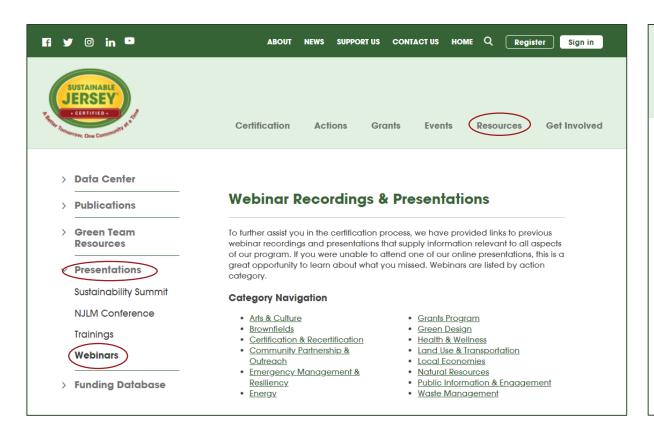
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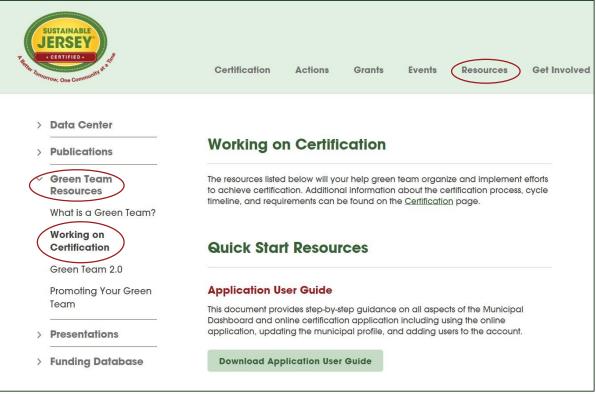


Waste Actions
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Presentation Posting

The presentation and recording will be posted on the <u>Webinars page</u> & <u>Green Team</u> Resources – <u>Working on Certification</u> by the end of the week.









Events, Grants & Technical Assistance

sustainablejersey.com/nc/events/

Certification Actions Grants Events Resources Get Involved

Sustainable Jersey Events

Sustainable Jersey and its program partners regularly host trainings and events that support progress toward Sustainable Jersey certification. In general, events posted on the calendar are FREE or of minimal cost.

Post an Event

You can post FREE events that are open to the general public that would be of interest to the Sustainable Jersey community. Sustainable Jersey staff review all event submissions and will follow up if more information is needed.

Post Event

NOTE: You must have a Sustainable Jersey website account and be signed into the website to post an event. Sign-in or sign up <u>here</u>.

Filter Events by:			
Location		Range	
All Locations	~	Upcoming Events	~
Category		Туре	
All Categories	~	All Types	~

Need Funding? Apply for a Sustainable Jersey Grant!

The PSEG Foundation is contributing \$200,000 to support another cycle of the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program. The funding cycle will award:

- Four (4) \$20,000 project grants
- Eight (8) \$10,000 project grants
- Twenty (20) \$2,000 project or green team support grants

Application Deadline: Friday, February 9, 2024

Learn More: sustainablejersey.com/grants/pseg-cycle/



Complete Streets Technical Assistance

Municipalities within the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) region can apply to receive **free** technical assistance services focused on bicycle network planning or a corridor/neighborhood Complete Streets assessment to advance their Complete Streets initiatives. All selected municipalities will also receive training on how to create or update a Complete and Green Streets policy.

Learn more: <u>sustainablejersey.com/grants/complete-streets-technical-assistance/</u>

Application Deadline: Friday, February 2, 2024 at 11:59pm







Energy Technical Assistance

Sustainable Jersey offers a variety of **free** energy technical assistance opportunities. Set up a consultation by completing the form here with the Sustainable Jersey Energy Team to learn more about the technical assistance options open to your municipality.



Using the Enhanced Stormwater Control Ordinance Action to Meet New DEP Requirements

February 6, 2024, 12:00pm – 1:00pm; Register

Save the Date for the 2024 Sustainability Summit

May 3, 2024; 8:00am – 4:00pm; Bell Works, Holmdel, NJ

Support



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