



Summer 2018

Municipalities Certified: 200, Participating: 447 ♦ Schools Certified: 262, Participating: 783 ♦ Districts Participating: 304

## SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION: SIX SUCCESS STORIES

### Schalick HS Students Plant Trees to Protect the River (Salem County)

Students from Arthur P. Schalick High School (APSHS) in Pittsgrove Township School District worked collaboratively with the American Littoral Society and South Jersey Land and Water Trust on an important reforestation project. The volunteers planted nearly 800 trees and expanded the forested buffer of the unnamed tributary of Muddy Run by 1.9 acres. APSHS was awarded a \$12,580 grant from the Roots for Rivers Reforestation Grant and Technical Assistance Program, which is a partnership between The Nature Conservancy and Sustainable Jersey. The grant was used to cover the cost of tree saplings and other protection measures. Planting trees within floodplain land in places where it has been degraded helps to protect the lands and waters on which the people of New Jersey depend.



### Sustainable Egg Harbor City Offers Residents Savings on the Cost of Home Energy (Atlantic County)

The Egg Harbor City Green Team, [Sustainable EHC](#), decided to focus on energy efficiency in homes as a way to reduce the city's overall carbon footprint. Homes are significant consumers of energy in New Jersey, accounting for approximately 24 percent of the annual statewide energy usage. After reviewing census data, the green team learned that nearly half of their city's population is over fifty years old and over a quarter of the residents are living below the poverty level. Sustainable EHC chose to promote the [New Jersey Comfort Partners Program](#), which is a free energy saving and energy education program for qualified low-income residents and renters. The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities and the state's electric and natural gas utilities work together under New Jersey's Clean Energy Program to partner with income-qualifying families and



individuals to help them save energy and money by making their homes more energy efficient. The program provides eligible homeowners with energy efficient lightbulbs, low-flow shower heads, energy efficient refrigerators and set-back thermostats, insulation upgrades, duct sealing and repair, heating and cooling

equipment and personnel energy education counseling. These measures do not only help save energy and reduce utility costs for the residents, they improve the health and comfort of the home by checking for gas leaks and addressing rooms that are hot and stuffy in the summer or cold and drafty in the winter. Energy efficiency measures are provided free of charge by Certified Building Performance Institute contractors. Sustainable EHC had a community event to raise awareness. The group promoted the program on the Sustainable EHC website, through social media, in the local newspaper and by constructing a permanent display at City Hall. Egg Harbor City received ten points toward their Sustainable Jersey certification application with this outreach because it satisfies the action: [Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach](#).

## Glen Rock Freecycle Program Keeps Waste Out of the Landfill (Bergen County)

The Glen Rock Green Team runs a popular initiative called Freecycle Friday that is estimated to have kept about 5,000 pounds of waste from the garbage stream in the program's first year. Freecycle Friday promotes reuse through local gifting among members. Members can give and get items for free. The program is run through a Glen Rock-only Facebook group. Residents post items they are giving away for free. If a resident wants the item, they comment. The original owner and the owner-to-be set up a time for the item to be picked up from the home of the original owner. Residents can post things they are looking for (ISO = In Search Of). If another resident has that item, they can respond. About 25 to 50 residents participate each week and nearly everything is claimed. If an item is not claimed, residents are asked to donate it and are provided with local [options](#). Glen Rock Borough added ten points to their Sustainable Jersey certification application because this program satisfies the action: [Materials Reuse Program](#).



## Knowlton Elementary School Makes Access to a Healthy Breakfast Easy (Warren County)

The Knowlton Township Elementary School leadership feel strongly that children need access to healthy foods to grow, learn and thrive. Studies show that good health improves student attendance and learning. The school representatives met with stakeholders and held group meetings to develop a Breakfast Improvement Plan. The goal was to increase the number of children eating a healthy breakfast on school days by improving the effectiveness of the school breakfast program. The Grab and Go Breakfast option was implemented because it suited

the students and the school best. Participating students are provided with bagged or boxed meals when they arrive at school. To increase awareness and participation in the school breakfast program, the school promoted it on the morning announcements and through flyers sent home to



parents. The school also serves breakfast in the classroom on special testing days and hosts breakfast promotion events. These efforts have increased participation in the breakfast program school wide. The Grab and Go Breakfast, a Breakfast After the Bell program, is a way for school districts or individual schools to re-imagine the school breakfast program by offering it at a time during which a greater percentage of students will benefit, which is in the classroom, after the bell has rung. Knowlton Township Elementary School is certified with Sustainable Jersey for Schools and received twenty points toward their certification application because this program satisfies the action: [Breakfast After the Bell](#).



## Sustainable Absecon Partners with Students to Design Local Park (Atlantic County)

Sustainable Absecon, the Absecon Green Team, partnered with eighth grade students from Emma C. Attales Middle School to plan and implement a sustainable design for the Morton and Traymore Park. Eight groups of students presented re-designs for the park to the green team. In the end, rather than choosing one design, the green team selected the best elements from all the proposals and the final design was presented at a city council meeting for approval. Sustainable Absecon used a \$2,000 Sustainable Jersey grant, funded by the PSEG Foundation, to implement the design improvements.



## Sustainable Jersey Bergen County Hub Focuses on Being Styrofoam-Free

The Sustainable Jersey Bergen Hub has an active Styrofoam Reduction and Recycling Committee. In addition to research on the topic, the green teams have started a multi-town petition to ask the Bergen County Freeholders to eliminate Styrofoam food containers on county property. A multi-town Styrofoam recycling drive is scheduled for the fall and the goal is to do more events across the county throughout the year. As part of the effort in Leonia, the Girl Scouts provide environmental award certificates and window sticker medallions to stores that do not use or sell Styrofoam. The informational flyer to the local businesses was translated into three languages: Spanish, Korean and Chinese.



## More Sustainability Stories

Take a moment to read about three people doing impressive work in their communities. Catch up on the monthly Sustainable Jersey blog for the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

- June Hero: [Michael Salvatore, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools, Long Branch Public Schools \(Monmouth County\)](#)
- June Blog: [Sustainable Jersey: Creating a place, rather than a design](#)
- July Hero: [Christine Symington, Program Director, Sustainable Princeton \(Mercer County\)](#)
- July Blog: [Sustainable Jersey: This is what a movement looks like](#)
- August Hero: [John Henry, STEAM & Sustainability Schools Specialist, New Jersey School Boards Association](#)

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