SWANA 2011
Public Education Excellence Award

CleanScapes: Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards

- Submitted by:
  CleanScapes
  5939 4th Ave S., Seattle, WA

- Please contact:
  Jodie Vice, Government Relations Specialist
  Email: jodie.vice@cleanscapes.com
  Phone: (206) 859-6700
  Fax: (206) 859-6701
Executive Summary

The CleanScapes’ Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards program is an education and outreach campaign focused on overall waste reduction. The idea is simple: reduce the most overall waste (garbage, recycling, and compost) and win a capital improvement project! The competition is intended to reinforce the waste reduction hierarchy – reduce when possible, reuse if you can and then recycle.

The NRR program has been successful at creating a wide-spread dialogue about overall waste generated. And by “awarding” a community a capital project, it is a reminder of the community’s effort to reduce waste and collaborate on success.

By reaching out to schools, community groups, and businesses CleanScapes was successful in having a dialogue on overall waste reduction and actually showing a reduction in waste. The winning neighborhoods reduced overall waste by 19% in the City of Seattle and 15% in the city of Shoreline. The winning Seattle neighborhood in our service territory received a $50,000 capital project and the winning neighborhood in Shoreline, Washington received a $10,000 capital project.
Statement of Intent

In the fall of 2009, CleanScapes launched The Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards program—an incentive program designed to educate people on the concept of overall waste reduction—not just recycling and composting.

The idea is simple: the neighborhood reducing the most waste (including recycling and compost) is rewarded by CleanScapes with a capital project of their choice.

In our Seattle service area the reward is $50,000, and in our Shoreline service area the reward is $10,000. The program has drawn wide support from both the City of Seattle, the City of Shoreline, and the residents we serve.

CleanScapes is now in our second year of the NRR program. We have already installed the Shoreline’s award—benches along a trail, and we are very close to completing installation of Seattle’s award—a playground structure in a Seattle park.

Our first NRR program was a sixth-month pilot to test the success of the program. Due to the program’s popularity, CleanScapes implemented a year-long program in 2010, providing a longer time frame for education and outreach and the ability to measure month-to-month reduction for each service day.

At the launch of the program, CleanScapes conducted an extensive public outreach campaign, distributing 700 posters to Seattle businesses and 500 posters to Shoreline businesses. On-going outreach and education includes weekly waste reduction tips e-newsletter, presentations at local business/chamber of commerce meetings, school assemblies, community council meetings, a waste reduction checklist, and advertising on CleanScapes trucks.

A popular component of the program, in addition to the reward, is our elementary school art competition focusing on waste reduction. CleanScapes uses the local students’ art to advertise the waste reduction program on the side of our trucks. The school outreach and competition reached 1,400 school-aged children.

To kick-off of the second year, CleanScapes dumped a ton of each waste stream—the equivalent of what a Seattle family of four generates annually—into the yard of a Seattle Transfer Station. This event ignited evening news media coverage, local media print coverage, and numerous blog postings.

CleanScapes posts monthly tonnage updates on our website, showing neighborhoods their current ranking. The monthly results allow an additional opportunity to remind the communities of the challenge, and the available waste reduction tips and resources.

The NRR program has been successful in creating a wide-spread dialogue about overall waste generated. By “awarding” the community a capital project, the result is an ongoing reminder of the community’s effort to reduce waste and collaborate for success.

Statement of Intent – No points but used to determine eligibility, very important
Research/Planning – 30 points

Describe the need for this program/project: what were the facts and perceptions regarding the problem or situation? Include a synopsis of research data/methods.

When CleanScapes bid on the City of Seattle municipal solid waste contract, we specifically added an element about helping the City of Seattle achieve its “Zero Waste” goals. In 2007, the Seattle City Council adopted a citywide Zero Waste Strategy with the following language:

“Zero-waste principles entail managing resources instead of waste; conserving natural resources through waste prevention and recycling; turning discarded resources into jobs and new products instead of trash; promoting products and materials that are durable and recyclable; and discouraging products and materials that can only become trash after their use.”

King County, where Seattle and Shoreline are located, also has a policy to work towards zero waste by 2030.

When CleanScapes was awarded the Seattle contract, we began developing the Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards program as a way to fulfill our contractual obligations with the City of Seattle as well as give back a capital project that improves the neighborhoods we serve.

Creating an overall waste reduction program allowed CleanScapes to create an outreach campaign focusing on the re-use of materials and education about the environmental cost of recycling. We need to recycle and compost, but there is a better way, and that is to stop waste before it happens.

In 2009, Seattle residents and businesses created 352,000 tons of garbage, which was hauled 300 miles away, six days per week, in a mile-long train stacked two containers high, and buried in an Oregon landfill. That is equal to 11.7 million full 32-gallon garbage carts. Roughly 54% of that garbage could have been recycled or composted—or better yet—not created in the first place.

Reducing waste has environmental and economic benefits. The manufacture, distribution and disposal of the goods we use consumes resources, generates pollutants and accounts for 29% of the anthropogenic (caused by people) greenhouse gas emissions emitted in the US. The collection and disposal of goods we no longer want also costs money. Collecting, sorting and processing materials to be recycled or composted also consumes resources and costs money. The NRR program reinforces the waste reduction hierarchy—reduce when possible, reuse if you can and then recycle.

Research has shown that incentive programs can be just as effective as regulation in terms of working with the public to reduce, reuse and recycle. So CleanScapes developed a creative way to actively engage area youth, residents, and businesses by educating them on why waste reduction is important and giving them a $10,000 or $50,000 reason to care.
Describe examples of materials that were previously being used prior to implementing this program/project.

The City of Seattle has long been a leader in recycling, boasting an overall recycling rate of 51% and goals of 60% recycling by 2012 and 70% by 2025. With these goals and the City’s zero waste strategy policy, CleanScapes realized more needed to be done.

CleanScapes developed the first-ever program focused on overall waste reduction. The idea of creating a program that offered a neighborhood-wide incentive to reduce waste was a new concept. The incentives enticed many area residents to express an interest in learning about the program and actively participate.

Describe the target audience(s) and how this program/project is appropriate for that audience(s).

The target audience for the program is Seattle and Shoreline residents in the CleanScapes service areas—60,000 homes in Seattle and 14,000 homes in Shoreline. At the beginning of the program, CleanScapes conducted outreach to area elementary schools. CleanScapes gave workshops at local schools and created an “art competition” as a way to get local school-kids involved in waste reduction education. By actively involving children, they take the message back home to their parents. The “art competition” winner’s art was reprinted on the sides of our collection vehicles to promote and announce the program, and share creative waste reduction ideas with the rest of the community.

CleanScapes placed 1,200 posters in businesses throughout our service area to further promote the program, and gave 46 presentations to Seattle neighborhood, community, and business groups. Our goal was to reach every residential household in our service area by placing information in local schools, community centers, libraries, businesses, and on all our collection trucks that drive through each neighborhood daily.

The idea to offer a capital project reward was designed to benefit an entire neighborhood and give the community an opportunity to choose which project gets built. A community group, made up of residents from each neighborhood in the winning collection area chose the capital project.
Describe the goals of the program/project (goals should be specific, realistic and measurable) and the strategies/tasks planned to meet the goals.

The goals of the program were to begin a dialogue about overall waste reduction, engage residents in actively reducing waste, and reward neighborhoods for their efforts by providing a lasting capital project in their community.

The outreach and education goal was clearly measurable. We were able to reach 1,400 school children and many neighborhoods through presentations, community meetings, press releases, and blog postings. The overall percentage of subscribers to CleanScapes Weekly Waste Reduction Tips increased by 460%.

We also measured the reduction in the amount of garbage, recycling, and compost collected over the period of the competition. In essence, while neighborhoods were “competing,” the program was really measuring the overall reduction for that area over a certain period of time. The winning neighborhood in Seattle had an overall reduction of 19%. The winning neighborhood in Shoreline had a reduction of 15%.

Because the program was new in concept, it received a lot of attention: media, blog entries, request for presentations, etc. The program has been widely received as a positive mechanism to reduce waste generation.

The idea of engaging a community group to collaborate on the winning project was also a success. In Seattle, 13 project ideas were submitted for consideration. A committee of seven local community council representatives met for two months to determine the winning project based on criteria they developed. This process ensured active participation and a community-based decision.

Describe anticipated obstacles and opportunities for meeting the goals.

CleanScapes had excellent data on the amount of garbage, recycling, and yard waste tonnage created by each neighborhood and used this data to then measure the overall amount of waste reduction after the end of the program. Data showed a 19% reduction in Seattle and a 15% reduction in Shoreline over the program timeline.

A potential obstacle is the role the economy has played in the amount of waste generated. While we can assume that when people reduce consumption this leads to decreased waste and recyclables, we are unable to quantify how this may have affected the data.
Implementation/Execution

- **Implementation/Execution – 35 points**

*Describe how the program/project was implemented using a timeline of events that lists each activity/task.*

CleanScapes developed a timeline/approach to implementing the program. The spreadsheet below clearly shows the timeline and events.

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Discuss the budget for the program/project (including any funding leverage). If any of the activities exceeded the budget, explain why.

The budget for the Neighborhood Rewards Program included many elements. The main budget item was the $50,000 project award in Seattle and the $10,000 award in Shoreline. CleanScapes also has two Waste Diversion Project Managers working full-time on education and outreach, including the Neighborhood Waste Reduction program. CleanScapes also has a specific budget to produce, print, and distribute all education and outreach materials. In addition, the NRR program has a website, accessible from CleanScapes’ homepage.

In Seattle, CleanScapes teamed with a local design firm, KPG and a local construction contractor, Lease Crutcher Lewis, both of which are donating their time and expertise to help design and build the chosen project, a playground structure at a local park. CleanScapes also worked extensively with City of Seattle staff on the installation of the play structure. The only budget overage is a new containment area being built at the City’s expense for an existing donated swing set the City of Seattle decided to keep. This is a City expense, not a CleanScapes budgeted item or expense.

Describe any partnerships or collaborations with other organizations that helped the program/project meet its goals.

There are many partnerships that make this program successful. CleanScapes works closely with our contract cities, Seattle and Shoreline. Outreach and education material is reviewed by City staff. The Cities also help distribute information about the program. Other major partners include local schools. Through the art competition and education fairs at the schools, CleanScapes distributed educational material on waste reduction along with information on the NRR program. CleanScapes also worked through community councils and chambers of commerce to present information. For example in 2010, CleanScapes’ Waste Diversion Project Managers gave 46 presentations in Seattle and 13 presentations in Shoreline.
Discuss how well the elements described in the planning phase were accomplished.

Because the program is data-driven, measuring waste reduction monthly from the start of the program through the end, CleanScapes’ timeline was implemented rigorously.

NRR started with a kick-off event to get local media attention about waste reduction. For example, in Seattle, we dumped three tons of each commodity (garbage, recycling, yard waste) for a visual effect of how much a family of four generates each year. The kick-off event was featured on the evening news and a story in the local paper. Simultaneously, CleanScapes went out to the local elementary schools and kicked-off the “art competition” – a way to get kids engaged in waste reduction, while at the same time, using their artwork to announce the program and winner.

The NRR program has produced real results, in terms of calculating waste reduction. The program has also generated numerous blog postings, 1,723 unique hits on the website, and 390 subscribers to CleanScapes weekly waste reduction tips e-newsletter.

Creativity: describe how your program/project is unique or an improvement over a similar project/program

The Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards Program is unique in several ways. First, the program is a paradigm shift. The education and outreach is focused on overall waste reduction, not just recycling and composting. The Cities of Seattle and Shoreline are progressive jurisdictions who were ready to take on a new challenge of having residents understand the concept of waste reduction. The program is also multi-faceted, engaging elementary students and neighborhood community and business groups. By having elements that many people can relate to, our education and outreach efforts reached more audiences. The focus of the program is also on building communities and being a partner with the cities we serve. CleanScapes’ investment in a capital project will be a lasting reminder to the community of their overall efforts to reduce waste.
Results/Evaluation – 30 points

Describe how the target audience(s) participated in, or reacted to, the program/project.

As mentioned previously, our target audience includes school children, residents, and community and business organizations. In 2010, CleanScapes visited 41 schools in Seattle and 6 schools in Shoreline, and gave 46 presentations to community and business groups in Seattle and 13 presentations to groups in Shoreline—each tailored to the specific audience. Additionally, the program was made advertised to area residents through flyers, posters, truck ads, and waste reduction messages in invoices.

After the “winning” neighborhood was announced, CleanScapes focused on working with that community to receive project applications for the capital project. In each city, a group comprised of residents chose the winning project from the project submittals. In Seattle, 13 project ideas were submitted and the playground structure was chosen because the committee determined it would serve the most people for the $50,000—not limited to people in the community, but whoever came to use the park.

The first year of the NRR was deemed a success. CleanScapes is now currently in the middle of the second year of the competition. Each month CleanScapes posts the competition results on our website which continues to receive hundreds of hits per month. Additionally, our Waste Diversion Project Managers conduct two to three well-received outreach and education events each week.

Demonstrate how success was measured. Results should be quantifiable and directly relate to the goals stated in the Research/Planning section.

As previously mentioned, the goals of the program were to begin a dialogue about overall waste reduction, get residents actively engaged in reducing waste, and reward them for their efforts by providing a lasting capital project.

By reaching out to schools, community groups, and businesses, CleanScapes was able to successfully engage the community in a dialogue about overall waste reduction. We received 422 entries for our elementary school student art competition which asked children, “Do you have great ideas about how to reduce waste?” CleanScapes also developed educational materials for use in schools: a FAQ on waste reduction, and a flyer for ways to reduce waste at home. Examples of outreach materials are included at the end of this application. These materials educated residents on waste reduction and provided information on how to get involved in the competition.

Children are really excited to teach others—even the President—about waste reduction.
The art competition and community outreach activities actively engaged residents in the waste reduction competition. The winning Seattle neighborhood reduced their total waste by 19%, and the winning Shoreline neighborhood reduced theirs by 15%. In addition, 390 people have subscribed to receive CleanScapes weekly waste reduction tips — a weekly reminder about ways to reduce waste.

Once the winning neighborhoods were announced, CleanScapes began the process of organizing a selection committee to choose a project. This committee met for three hours weekly over a two-month period. The community members are proud of their involvement and happy to have had an opportunity to choose a project that will benefit the neighborhood for many years. In the press release announcing the project winner, one selection committee member stated:

“CleanScapes’ generous gift to the community will be used and appreciated for years to come. The people who generated the project ideas and the members of the Project Selection Committee did a great job. The CleanScapes team also deserves special recognition. They took the proposed ideas and did the considerable work required to turn ideas into meaningful, executable projects.”

Discuss how the program/project can be improved.

The program is currently focused on residential households because that is what CleanScapes can measure those waste streams. The program could be improved if an additional focus on overall commercial waste could be developed. There is ample opportunity to reduce waste from commercial establishments, however measurement is not currently possible. CleanScapes cannot measure recycling and composting reduction for all commercial customers, as these are open-markets and we do not collect all commodities from the commercial businesses. CleanScapes is developing ideas to work with building property managers and tenants individually on tailored waste reduction plans.

Is the project/program replicable in other communities for similar target audience(s)?

Absolutely! The Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards Program could be easily replicated in communities and cities everywhere. Even in jurisdictions where recycling and composting services are not readily available, a community could still implement the concept of overall waste reduction — reusable water bottles or coffee mug or bring reusable bags to the grocery store, etc.

The program is simple: Reduce first. Reuse what you can, and then Recycle. “Create community instead of waste”— an achievable and worthwhile goal for a community of any size.
SEATTLE ELEMENTARY STUDENT ART COMPETITION

How the Contest Works
Do you have great ideas about how to reduce waste?

CleanScapes, your local garbage and recycling company, is sponsoring an art competition for students in grades 1 through 6 attending Seattle Public Schools.

Deadline to enter artwork: February 28, 2011
Theme: Waste Reduction
Grade Categories: 1st and 2nd grade
3rd and 4th grade
5th and 6th grade

Guidelines for Artists
- All artwork should communicate a waste reduction message or theme
- Composition must be original
- Entries may be in a 2-dimensional medium of the artist's choice, including crayon, oil paint, watercolor, pastels, pencil, pen and ink, charcoal, collage, etc.
- Preferred sizes for the artwork are 8½” x 11”, 8 ½” x 14” or 11”x17”; matting is optional
- Entries should not be framed
- Computer generated images will not be considered

Prizes!
Three winners will be chosen for each grade category. Each winner will receive a $50 gift certificate to Daniel Smith Art Supplies and a chance to be featured on the side of a CleanScapes truck!

Your artwork could be featured on a CleanScapes truck!

www.seattle.gov/util   (206) 684-3000
NEIGHBORHOOD WASTE REDUCTION REWARDS
Build a $50,000 community project.

Artist: Livvy, Age 9
less is more.
$ 50 Gift Certificate
Don’t Feed the Landfill!
In 2009 Seattle and Shoreline elementary school students participated in CleanScapes’ waste reduction workshops featuring the first of the three R’s—Reduce. Students were asked to think about what they threw away, where the garbage goes, and what might happen if it never was taken away.

The “Don’t Feed the Landfill!” program highlighted the impact of garbage and how each person can make a difference to create less waste. Students were encouraged to write letters and create artwork that talked about how and why we should reduce waste. Some kids made posters, and other kids wrote letters to the people they believed could make the biggest difference. A gallery of their inspirational letters and artwork is featured here.

Elementary School Teachers—sign up now for fall waste reduction student workshops. For more information email educationoutreach@cleanscapes.com.

Web Site: www.cleanscapes.com
Email: educationoutreach@cleanscapes.com
Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards

$50,000

reasons to reuse your mug

Choose to reuse. Your neighborhood could win $50,000!

Learn more and get started
www.cleanscapes.com

FOLLOW US ON twitter
twitter.com/cleanscapes

Competition map, additional details and tips to reduce waste available online.

Poster advertising the Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards competition in Seattle
**Weekly Waste Reduction Tips**

**Sign Up For Weekly Tips**

There are many ways we can stop waste before it happens. Every week, CleanScapes emails tips on how to reduce waste. To sign up, email EducationOutreach@cleanscapes.com with the subject line “Weekly Tips.” It is easy to sign-up and you can unsubscribe at any time!

**Enjoy this sample tip:**

**Water A-Go-Go**

On the go? Buy reusable water bottles and bring them with you — to work, on the trail, at the gym, and in the car. By using your own water bottle you can save money and natural resources.

**The Big Picture**

Single-use water bottles may seem inexpensive and convenient, but the environmental cost is substantial.

In the US there are 2 million plastic beverage bottles used every 5 minutes. Worldwide some 2.7 million tons of plastic are used to bottle water each year. The plastic most commonly used for bottled water is polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which is derived from crude oil. Earth Policy Institute’s research concluded that making bottles to meet Americans’ demand for bottled water requires more than 1.5 million barrels of oil annually, enough to fuel some 100,000 U.S. cars for a year.

Bottled water is not necessarily safer than your tap water. Some bottled water is treated more than tap water, while some is treated less or not treated at all. Neither EPA nor FDA certify the quality of bottled water.

According to the Container Recycling Institute about 86% of plastic water bottles in the U.S. become garbage or litter.

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**Reduce first. Reuse what you can, and then Recycle.**

EducationOutreach@cleanscapes.com | www.cleanscapes.com

**Sources:** 1) Chris Jordan, Seattle artist; from "Running the Numbers An American Self-Portrait" | 2) National Geographic / Earth Policy Institute | 3) Environmental Protection Agency “Water & Health Series” | 4) Container Recycling Institute
Community Project Proposal

Congratulations
Capitol Hill, First Hill, Denny-Blaine, Montlake, Madison Park and Madison Valley!

The CleanScapes Thursday collection area has won the Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards competition and will receive a $50,000 community improvement project.

Between now and July 31, Seattle residents have the opportunity to submit project proposals for construction in the Thursday collection area (see map). Representatives from the neighborhood community councils in the Thursday area will recommend the winning project(s) to CleanScapes using the criteria below.

- The proposed project must be a visible and easily accessible capital project or community amenity that the public can actively use, such as playground equipment, public benches, community garden structures, or neighborhood information kiosks.
- Project construction costs (including materials, labor and permit fees) must not exceed $50,000. The award money can be used to fund more than one project. The project(s) must be located in the winning neighborhood collection area (see map).
- The deadline for project design and required permits is December 2010. The project must be completed by April 2011.

Please complete the proposal form (over) and submit to CleanScapes by July 31, 2010.

Web Site: www.cleanscapes.com
Email: educationoutreach@cleanscapes.com
Address: 5939 4th Ave. S, Seattle, WA 98108
Phone: (206) 250-7500
Who can submit a Community Project Proposal?
Anyone living in the City of Seattle can propose an improvement project by turning in a Community Project Proposal Form.

When are proposals due and where do I send them?
Project proposals are due July 31, 2010 and can be emailed to educationoutreach@cleanscapes.com or mailed to:

CleanScapes
Attn: Education Outreach
5939 4th Ave S.
Seattle, WA 98108

Can the $50,000 improvement project(s) be built anywhere in Seattle?
No, all proposed projects must be located in the 2009/2010 winning area – the Thursday collection area. The CleanScapes Thursday collection area includes portions of Capitol Hill, First Hill, Madison Park, Madison Valley, Denny-Blaine, Madrona, Montlake and Yesler Terrace. A map showing the CleanScapes collection areas is available at www.cleanscapes.com/seattlewastereductionrewards.html.

Who decides which project or projects will be built?
The Project Selection Committee will choose the project(s) to be constructed. This committee is a volunteer group consisting of representatives from the community councils representing the Thursday collection area: Capitol Hill, First Hill, Madison Park, Madison Valley, Madrona, Montlake and Yesler Terrace.

What role does CleanScapes have in reviewing the projects proposed?
CleanScapes has two roles in the process of reviewing projects: 1) verifying that the proposed project meets the given criteria, and 2) completing a cost estimation to ensure the project does not exceed $50,000.
CleanScapes would like to thank the City of Shoreline for its innovative partnership in the Neighborhood Waste Reduction Rewards Program. Congratulations to the Shoreline neighborhood that reduced its total waste stream the most. CleanScapes had five new benches installed along the Interurban Trail on their behalf.

CleanScapes is the trusted partner for communities seeking to enhance residential & commercial vitality by providing innovative streetscape maintenance, recycling & solid waste services.