

Mecklenburg County Environmental Leadership Policy

Mecklenburg County Government will operate in a manner that conserves and protects our air, water and land resources; become a model of environmental stewardship for local governments, businesses, and industry in our region, and; use and apply the County's existing and future resources wisely for the benefit of its citizens.

Environmental Policy Principles

1. Comply with all applicable local, state and federal environmental regulations in all County facilities.
2. Practice energy conservation in all County facilities.
3. Practice waste minimization and recycling in all County facilities.
4. Purchase the lowest-emission vehicles practical to meet County needs.
5. Include environmental considerations in purchasing decisions for goods and services.
6. Acquire, maintain, manage, and preserve land to protect the natural environment.
7. Re-use existing buildings and infrastructure and avoid greenfield development.
8. Require environmentally sensitive design options in all new facilities and retrofits.
9. Provide employees with opportunities and incentives to practice environmentally sound behaviors.
10. Actively explore the feasibility of implementing new and innovative products and/or practices that provide environmental benefits, and inform elected officials of new opportunities.
11. Direct all County business units to integrate environmental considerations into their activities, and direct LUESA staff to assist business units with identifying and implementing environmentally sound practices.
12. Develop a process for continuous review of County activities to insure we seek practical ways to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of our activities, and carefully evaluate new opportunities to achieve sound environmental practices in government operations.



2007 Accomplishments

Plans Adopted

- Policy Action Plan containing 2008 and 2020 goals,
- A County Energy Plan with 2008 goal of 5% energy savings,
- Fleet Management Program reduced ozone-forming emissions by 6.2 tons,
- Environmental Preferable Purchasing Guide developed,
- The County achieved ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certification, for the Foxhole landfill.

Pollution Reduced

- Computer monitor energy management program avoided 1,226 tons of carbon dioxide emissions (an 30% improvement over the 871 tons of avoided emissions in 2006),
- Recycling program diverted 2,064 tons of paper waste recycled equivalent to 12.2% of the total waste, ahead of our FY07 goal of 12%,
- Diverted 15,000 tons of clean concrete demolition waste from disposal and reused at the County's Foxhole Landfill,
- Green purchases saving estimated at 991 tons of virgin wood saved from being cut; 2,244 pounds of air pollutants avoided; 153,372 kilowatt-hours of energy not required; and 261,856 gallons of water from being utilized.

Land Stewardship

- Land Preservation was accomplished through the acquisition of 350 acres for parks and open space, greenways, and watershed protection,
- Pollution loads from over 184 acres are being reduced through the use of storm water best management practices,
- Historically 50,000 total linear feet of stream has been restored.

Involvement

- Action Plan was extended to all County departments and to County funded agencies (CMS, CPCC, and PLCMC),
- Employee incentive programs have been expanded from the very successful Best Workplaces for Commuters (encouraging County employees to utilize the transit system) realizing an increase 32 participants to 271 in FY07, to also include a new volunteer match for time away from work that applies to environmental programs, as well as the development of a Green Guardian employee recognition and awareness program.

A Look to Future Projects:

The Environmental Leadership Team worked diligently and successfully at creation of specific goals for each principle in the Environmental Leadership Policy. Additionally, all County departments as well as County funded agencies will be working together to accomplish the newly adopted goals.

<http://co.mecklenburg.nc.us/Departments/LUESA/Environmental+Leadership+Policy.htm>