



SERT Flash

School Energy and Recycling Team



Keep it Green; Protect your Blue



Recycling monitors at Bethesda Elementary School remind and assist.

Do the recycling bins in your cafeteria get contaminated with straws, spoons, and other non-recyclables at lunchtime? The staff and students at Bethesda Elementary School are trying to prevent contamination in their recycling bins by assigning “recycling monitors” at each bin. Monitors are trained on what can and cannot be placed in their bin and to act accordingly.

While at these stations, monitors kindly assist and remind their classmates, advising them where they need to dispose of their items (paper bin, commingled bin, or trash can). Not only do the monitors provide recycling guidance and education, they “get their hands dirty” and make sure their bins are “clean.” Sometimes classmates forget to take their straws out of their drinks or remove their spoons from the yogurt cups, so the monitors will take them out and place them in the trash can. The pictures above demonstrate different monitors removing different items from their respective bins.

With this monitoring process, staff and students at Bethesda Elementary School are providing an atmosphere of learning and leading. By promoting recycling awareness, students gain a sense of accomplishment by taking on this responsibility. This is where leadership begins!

By having their bins monitored, staff and students at Bethesda Elementary School increase their recycling rates each month. These monitors exemplify sustainable practices—implementing environmental, social, and economic strategies to address our increasing solid waste concerns. The SERT office would like to thank students and staff at Bethesda Elementary School for their consistent recycling efforts.

“You can’t hide that Lion pride!”

Do you have a “SERT Flash” you would like to share regarding your SERT efforts? Please submit a photograph and paragraph about your team and you, too, can be featured in a future FLASH!

E-mail: SERT@mcpsmd.org

SERT Program- 240-314-1090

“It’s your world...choose to conserve”



SERT Flash

School Energy and Recycling Team



Recycling in Action Cedar Grove Elementary School



Cedar Grove Elementary School has a School Energy & Recycling Team (SERT) team of students actively engaged in recycling, TerraCycling¹, and energy conservation.

Each day at lunch students pass clearly marked containers from table to table to collect the different packaging items that are recycled through TerraCycling. The assigned team collects the containers with the help of a parent volunteer and places them on a cart for transport to the collection bins in the hallway next to the lunch room. Next, the sorting begins where the team separates the items and places them into clearly marked large bins for storage until they are shipped for processing.

At the same time another coordinated team of students moves throughout the school collecting the standard recycling items such as cans, bottles, and paper. These items are collected in blue rolling cans that students can easily manage down the halls while stopping at each classroom to collect the recyclables.

A third team is assigned to collect data on the lights that have been turned off in each unoccupied room. A large display in the hall shares information with the school on their progress and their mission. Cedar Grove Elementary School shows just how easy it is to meet the mission of SERT to reduce energy consumption and increase recycling rates.

¹ TerraCycles is a company whose goal is to eliminate the idea of waste by partnering with schools to create a collection program for non-recyclable material. <http://www.terracycle.net/>

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Reduce-Reuse-Recycle



Mr. Jatin Patel, building service manager at Kensington Parkwood Elementary School receiving repurposed recycling bins.

Reduce, reuse or recycle! In an effort to conserve resources, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) prefers to reuse before recycling to demonstrate our commitment to the environment and our students.

Did you know that MCPS crews go to salvage items from schools which are slotted for demolition before each modernization project so they can be reused? Items in good working condition such as HVAC systems, backup generators, plumbing fixtures, electrical panels, circuit breakers, furniture, lamps, etc. are removed from school buildings prior to demolition to be reused in other MCPS schools.

The SERT office collects all reusable recycling bins from these schools and redistributes them to schools which are in need of additional recycling infrastructure. During the month of December 2011, the SERT office collected reusable recycling bins from Beverly Farms Elementary School, Glenallan Elementary School, and Weller Road Elementary School which were being relocated to holding centers due to modernization projects. Clarksburg High School (HS), Thomas Edison HS of Technology, Wheaton HS, Kensington Parkwood Elementary School (ES), Meadow Hall ES, Judith A. Resnik ES, and Viers Mill ES were among the recipients of the repurposed recycling bins to add to their existing infrastructure. Saving resources by reusing...

Please contact the SERT office at 240-314-1090 or place an order in MAXIMO if your school is in need of recycling bins.

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School Energy and Recycling Team



Innovative Thinking Inspires New Recycling Practices at Whetstone Elementary School

Have you ever thought “It’s a shame to throw this out?”

Whetstone Elementary School started a unique pilot program in Montgomery County Public Schools. Susan Still, administrative secretary, realized that the cardboard copy plus boxes were being broken down and recycled after just one use. Her thinking was more along the lines of “Why can’t we reuse these boxes?” Instead of just thinking, Ms. Still took action.

Ms. Still created a pilot program with Department of Materials Management/Copy Plus. The copy plus boxes are collapsed, placed in the pony, and returned to the print shop for reuse. This innovation has economic and environmental benefits and models collaborative efforts that affect change and help make our system environmentally friendly, by reducing our use and extending the life of these useful boxes. The reuse part of the recycling equation is often overlooked. Remember to think before you recycle your boxes, maybe they can be reused.

Thank you.

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Cafeteria Tray Reduction Efforts

Did you know that select high schools are participating in a pilot program to reduce the number of trays currently being used in our cafeterias?



Select high schools are participating in a “reduce your use” pilot and are making significant progress in reducing the number of cafeteria trays used on a daily basis. Some schools have totally eliminated the use of these trays during breakfast or on certain days while others are working on changing behaviors by making it less convenient to access trays during lunch and breakfast.

Ms. Laura Reese, cafeteria manager at Bethesda Chevy-Chase High School (HS) is currently working on a reduction plan called “No Tray Tuesday” where on selected Tuesdays trays are not used at all in the cafeteria. To promote this program the school broadcasts a video made by students on tray reduction to remind students that food will not be served on trays that particular day. All other times, the trays are placed away from the main serving area. A student standing in the serving area will have to make a conscious effort in order to obtain a tray.

Wootton HS is proud of their reduction efforts. Cafeteria Manager, Ms. Sharon Forbes, places a few trays out at each time and they are placed away from the main serving area. According to Ms. Forbes, they have seen significant reduction in the use of these trays at Wootton HS compared to the same time last year.

Blair HS and Seneca Valley HS have stopped serving breakfast on trays. During lunch, the trays are placed behind the serving counter and cafeteria workers will hand out a tray if asked.

Clarksburg HS and James H. Blake HS have reduced their use by eliminating the use of trays when serving breakfast.

Each of us can do our part to reduce our use in school, at home, and in the cafeteria! Be part of the solution and use only what you need.

Is your school currently participating in a “reduce your use” effort? Please contact SERT office at 240-314-1090 or e-mail us at recycling@mcpsmd.org to share your strategies so we can share your success with all of MCPS.

Together, we can make a difference!

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“Take Me Out to Travilah Elementary School”



Mrs. Carol Knoblach, 4th grade Teacher and courtyard at Travilah Elementary School

It's the bottom of the ninth inning; score is tied; two outs; bases are loaded; the count is 3 balls/ 2 strikes! Carol Knoblach is at the plate! The pitcher throws a low fast ball. “Pow” Carol Knoblach hits it out of the park!

Okay-okay, I'm not talking about baseball but, Carol Knoblach does knock it out of the park in terms of energy conservation and recycling at Travilah ES. Mrs. Knoblach is a 4th grade teacher and a true “Greenie” at heart.

Mrs. Knoblach has 22 students on her SERT team. They meet as a group once a month and they do a variety of green activities in between their meetings like:

- collecting all the recycling from the building weekly
- collecting composting from lunch and using the compost for their organic flower bed
- implementing “No Trash Friday” in the cafeteria
- leaving friendly reminders to staff when lights are left on in classrooms and work rooms
- collecting all the aluminum foil covers from lunch trays for recycling

Mrs. Knoblach takes going “Green” to a whole new level. She is currently working on getting Travilah ES recertified as a” Maryland Green School.” One of her special projects included applying for a grant to install a pond in the courtyard.

Thank you Mrs. Knoblach for leading the “green” initiatives at Travilah Elementary School.

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School Energy and Recycling Team



Diamond Elementary School reuses paper...



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle! It's all happening at Diamond Elementary School. The Student Government Association (SGA) at Diamond Elementary School keeps recycling on the minds of students and staff when planning events. During the month of January, the SGA sponsored an event called "The Snowman Challenge." Ms. Robin Strauss, counselor and green team leader, invited Mr. John Meyer, SERT recycling technician, to visit the school during the event. According to Mr. Meyer, the contents of paper recycling bins from the school were emptied on the floor and the students picked out paper for the project. The students were pleased to see that the paper recycling bins were contamination free, making it easier to pick out paper for their project. Each class created a snowman for the school's Winter Wonderland Collage made entirely by reusing paper from the recycling bins.

This project reinforced the importance of conservation and demonstrated how each of our actions can help to preserve the earth's natural resources, while at the same time, reducing the cost of purchasing new paper.

This event was a huge success. The SGA's objective of making it fun and earth friendly is evidenced by the picture above with members of the SGA standing proudly in front of the school's Winter Wonderland Collage.

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Unique Situations – Unique Opportunities – Unique Solutions Edison High School Goes Above and Beyond



“Construction Materials Recycling Center” Made From 100% Recyclable Items

Looking for fun and creative ways to promote recycling at your school? Look no further than what the students and staff are doing at Thomas Edison High School of Technology. SERT Team Leader and Network Operations teacher, Jesse McGee, has installed an atmosphere of teamwork, accountability, and environmental stewardship throughout the school.

Offering unique courses from construction to cosmetology, Edison classrooms are filled with materials not normally found in a typical MCPS school. Although most of these materials can't be recycled in the paper or commingled bins, the staff at Edison has found other ways to recycle or reuse them.

Participating in a program-wide recycling campaign, the Carpentry class built a Construction Materials Recycling Center (pictured above). All other construction programs are responsible for maintaining the center and placing materials in the correct area for removal by SERT to the Montgomery County Recycling Center. Also, the Auto Tech program is recycling all tires, oil, car batteries, and all other parts are either reused or sent back to the manufacturer to be refurbished. Café Edison recycles all of their cooking oil, while the folks in the Network Operations program are eCycling (recycling electronics) and refurbishing used computers.

The SERT program staff would like to extend a sincere “thank you” to all staff and students at Thomas Edison High School who are implementing a culture of conservation and recycling responsibly and creatively.

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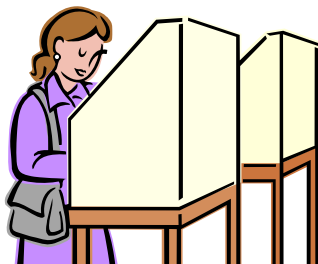
Election Site Recycling



On **Tuesday, September 14, 2010**, and **Tuesday, November 2, 2010**, over 150 MCPS schools and centers have been selected as Primary and General Election sites.

Tips to increase recycling

- ✓ Set up centralized recycling stations - especially paper recycling stations.
- ✓ Set up extra paper recycling stations in the polling areas and hallways.
- ✓ Remember to empty your recycling bins every hour.
- ✓ Use extra bins in concentrated areas (temporarily relocate bins from school).
- ✓ Increase recycling stations if your school or center has an exceptionally large voter turnout.
- ✓ Call SERT or e-mail recycling@mcpsmd.org with any questions.



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Is Your Homecoming Float Recyclable?

It is hard to believe that summer is over; school has begun and the homecoming season will be upon us. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) high schools will welcome alumni, friends, and family back to their alma mater to celebrate the past, present, and future. Schools will be planning multiple programs, decorating schools, building props on stage, and may be even building floats for the parades.

As you plan for the events, remember to recycle. There are many opportunities to recycle during, before, and after homecoming events. Adequate recycling bins to recycle paper and bottles/cans should be placed in area used during the celebrations. If necessary, use recycling bins from other areas of the school temporarily at the event areas. Decorating paper and cardboard used for the homecoming can be recycled with the normal paper recyclables in school. Drywall, wood, and other construction material used for building props can also be recycled by requesting special pick up service through the SERT office. Please ensure that the exterior recycling bins around the school and recycling bins in the stadium are empty and ready for the event. If necessary, you may schedule extra recycling pick-up service for your school in anticipation of the increased recycling by contacting the SERT office by calling 240-314-1090.

Enjoy the homecoming season! Please feel free to contact the SERT office by calling 240-314-1090 if you have any questions or need any assistance with your recycling needs.



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Recycling Inspections Begin

*Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services
School Recycling Program Evaluation*

Starting on Friday, October 1, 2010, the Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) will begin conducting in-school recycling program evaluations. Please note these evaluations will continue through December and are conducted at all Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) facilities. Evaluators will check in at the office and follow MCPS protocol.

It is once again time for MCPS to demonstrate our excellent recycling program, by following the tips to a successful evaluation as described below.

Tips to a successful evaluation:

- ❖ Collection: Hang posters at each collection site and label all recycling bins appropriately.
- ❖ Convenience: Place recycling bins of sufficient size in convenient locations.
- ❖ Participation: Remember, all schools and facilities must recycle paper/cardboard and commingled material. Please inform the inspector if your school is participating in other voluntary recycling programs (chip bags, pens, etc.)
- ❖ Contamination: Please ensure that there is no contamination in the recycling bins or dumpsters.
- ❖ Trash: Please ensure that there are no recyclable materials in trash.
- ❖ Staff participation: Demonstrate your **recycling awareness** among administration, teachers and staff – posters, morning announcements, student involvement, staff lounge recycling, and post your recycling rates.
- ❖ Program in place: Please ensure that SERT Action Plan is complete and available for review during the on-site evaluation.
- ❖ Yard waste: Recycle all yard waste through the Division of Maintenance.
- ❖ Call SERT at SERT @ 240-314-1090 or e-mail recycling@mcpsmd.org with any questions.

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Martin Luther King Recycling Panthers are Taking Recycling to the Next Level.... Are you?



MLK Recycling Panthers

Beverly Thompson, paraeducator, from Martin Luther King Middle School has taken recycling to the next level. Not only do her students do a great job of collecting the school's recycling material, but Ms. Thompson has the students weigh and graph out the increased weight of recyclable materials. In-house performance measures help reinforce the proactive approach of the team. The students enhance their math skills and create bar graphs demonstrating their progress for posting in the main hall. Keeping the school informed of their efforts increases awareness and participation. This outstanding effort models successful strategies used in creating a well-rounded educational environment and promotes a culture of conservation.

Team work demonstrating initiative, leadership skills, and environmental stewardship, propels Martin Luther King Middle School's recycling team to excel. We thank everyone for staying active and involved.

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School Energy and Recycling Team



Recycling Rangers at Olney Elementary School Are Making Recycling Fun and Educational!



The Recycling Rangers from Olney Elementary School

How does Olney Elementary School (ES) integrate recycling into their day?

Ms. Heritage and her fourth grade class at Olney ES have developed a quick and efficient method for responsible recycling that gives instant feedback to other classrooms on how well they are doing while learning about the multiple benefits of recycling. Recycling Rangers are assigned a classroom to retrieve the paper recycle container. If there is contamination in the recycle container, the Recycle Ranger writes out a ticket indicating the type of contamination. If everything is perfect, the classroom gets an award ticket. They do this twice a week, and it only takes about 20 minutes!

On the day SERT was visiting Olney ES, only six tickets for contamination were passed out; and the contaminated materials were removed before reaching the recycling dumpster. The Recycling Rangers are busy creating a living bulletin board displaying data that reflects perfect recycling scores. This awareness activity inspires the school population to do a great job. After the recycling data is documented on the bulletin board it is added to a recycling performance matrix and distributed to all staff electronically avoiding paper waste too!

Ms. Heritage is teaching the students how they can be a positive force to help the environment, about the connections between human behavior and the environment, and math calculations and concepts.

If you would like to learn how you can set up a program similar to the Olney ES Recycle Rangers please contact the SERT Recycling office at recycling@mcpsmd.org

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User-Friendly Recycling Data!



New Recycling Data Format!

By popular demand SERT has been working to improve recycling data for the schools based on pounds not percentages. The SERT office is excited to present to you the new and simple “Pounds per Person (PPP) Recycling Report.”

This is a simple report that takes into consideration the actual weight of paper and bottles and cans recycled at your school and the student/staff population. Estimates are not involved.

$$\text{PPP} = (\text{Monthly Weight of Paper} + \text{Bottles \& Cans}) / (\text{Total numbers of students} + \text{staff})$$

It is very simple, more paper and bottles & cans recycled, the higher the PPP will be for your school. During the 2011-2012 school year, elementary schools recycled at an average of 4.34 PPP; middle schools recycled at an average of 4.20 PPP; and high schools recycled at an average of 3.42 PPP. These baselines are shown as a red line on your school’s recycling chart.

The Annual Recycling Award will be based on your school’s average PPP for the school year compared to the baseline average PPP by level. All schools that achieve a minimum of a 20% increase over baseline PPP or higher compared to your school’s level will receive the Annual Recycling Award which is normally delivered during the months of October, November or December.

Example: Assuming an elementary school achieves an annual average of 5.30 PPP. The annual elementary school baseline for school year 2011-2012 was 4.34 PPP. In this example, this school achieved 22% increase over the baseline of 4.34 PPP for elementary schools, therefore will be eligible to receive the Annual School Recycling Award. Below is the link to SERT Recycling webpage, PPP report by level is available under the section “Recycling Resources.”
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/greenschoolsfocus/recycle.shtm>

The SERT office appreciates your commitment to conserve and is here to provide you with support. Please contact the SERT office if you have any questions or need assistance by calling 240-314-1090 or e-mail: recycling@mcpsmd.org

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SERT FLASH

School Energy and Recycling Team

Olney ES Recycling Tee Shirt Contest

Winner



Student Voting



Entry Bulletin Board

MCPS SERT Program

Dept. of Facilities Management
45 W. Gude Drive
Suite 4000
Rockville, MD 20850
240-314-1090
301-279-3005, fax

January, 2014
Olney Elementary School

Olney Elementary School 4th graders are committed to raising awareness about recycling. This Fall, fourth grade teacher, Carrie Heritage, with the support of her administration, building service staff, parents and students held a design contest for a recycling logo to appear on tee-shirts. Over half of Olney Elementary School fourth grade students participated. The whole student body voted for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. The first place winner's design will appear on the 2013-14 Olney Elementary School Recycle Ranger tee-shirts. SERT celebrates efforts such as this contest to promote natural resource conservation and sustainability.



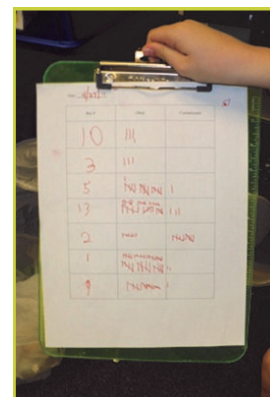
SERT FLASH

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Keeping it Green by Keeping it Clean – Ashburton Green Team Strives for Perfection

Environmental stewardship is not a new initiative at Ashburton Elementary School. Successfully certified as a MD Green School in 2010, and successfully recertified in 2014, the Green Team at Ashburton Elementary School constantly finds different ways to improve their sustainability efforts year after year.

The focus for this year’s Green Team is to reduce the contamination in their centralized recycling stations. To help build awareness of this problem, the Green Team collects weekly data on the number of recyclables and contaminants in the recycling bins throughout the school. Students analyze the data and post graphs by each bin to show how many recyclables and contaminants were found in specific bins. The Green Team found that some bins were more likely to be contaminated than others, so increased signage and awareness were brought to these locations.



By posting the graphs weekly, each student and staff member

at Ashburton Elementary School is given an update on their progress as a school, bin by bin. SERT would like to say “thank you” to the Green Team at Ashburton Elementary School for being great recyclers and environmental stewards.



MCPS SERT Program

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January, 2015

Ashburton Elementary School



SERT FLASH

School Energy and Recycling Team

Election Day Recycling

Upcoming election: Tuesday, June 24, 2014
2014 Primary Election



Tip to increase recycling:

- Set up minimum of four centralized stations in the election room (see picture below)
- Set up minimum of two centralized stations in the hallway (see picture below) leading to election room
- Temporarily relocate recycling bins from classrooms or other areas of school to make up centralized recycling stations.
- Increase the number of stations if you are in a large school or have exceptionally large voter turnout.
- Empty recycling centralized stations once every hour or sooner if needed.
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- Please contact Richard Benjamin, recycling manager or John Meyer, recycling technician by calling the SERT office at 240-314-1090 or e-mail recycling@mcpsmd.org with any questions or if you need assistance with set up.

MCPS

School Energy & Recycling Team

Dept. of Facilities Management

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301-279-3005, fax

June 2014

SERT



*This message is intended only for MCPS school/facilities that have been selected as election polling site.



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Got Leaves?



Fall is the one of the prettiest times of the year in Montgomery County. Every year, our friendly neighborhood shade trees remind us that Mother Nature has a mind of her own as the leaves begin to flutter down and cover the ground like a crunchy snowstorm.

Remember, yard waste is one of the four mandatory recycling items in Montgomery County. Please remember to recycle the yard waste generated at the school or at your residence. All yard waste collected at the school must be placed in a designated area, or in paper bags, or in clear plastic bags. Complete a MAXIMO work order requesting for a special pick-up.

Contact SERT@mcpsmd.org with your conservation strategies so we can Flash you!

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November 2015