



Maryland Green Registry MEMBER

The Maryland Green Registry promotes and recognizes sustainable practices at organizations of all types and sizes. Members agree to share at least five environmental practices and one measurable result while striving to continually improve their environmental performance.

Anne Arundel County Public Library

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www.aacpl.net

Local Government

Member since September 2010

Management and Leadership

Environmental Team

The Environmental Team formed in 2010 with three staff members who are interested in sharing tips and best practices system-wide to reduce waste and increase environmental awareness among colleagues and the larger community.

Environmentally Preferable Products and Services

We are looking for ways to improve communication with patrons and reduce paper notifications. Patrons are asked if they can be notified by phone or e-mail, instead of receiving letters about requested materials, due dates and fines. This has reduced the numbers of printed notifications and envelopes used by the library system.

The "Library Happenings" newsletter is now available on our website. Patrons can read about library events and services at their convenience. Fewer hard-copy newsletters are printed, saving paper, ink, cardboard and gasoline needed for delivery services.

Magazines, newspapers, and books also are now in electronic format, giving patrons the choice of paper or computer screen and reducing the number of printed reference works the library must purchase.

AskUsNow live chat, Ask a Librarian email reference and Live Homework Help from Tutor.com extend the reach of library services to patrons. With these remote-access services, patrons can access materials, receive reference assistance and be individually tutored without traveling to a library, thus saving gas and printing and/or photocopying costs. In fiscal year 2010, AskUsNow responded to 4419 questions, Ask a

Librarian answered 4499 email questions, and Live Homework Help from Tutor.com assisted 10,098 patrons.



Environmental Restoration or Community Environmental Projects

The library system began promoting green-living programs in cooperation with community organizations in 2009. The West County Area Library celebrated Earth Day by providing a series of informational programs featuring speakers from Anne Arundel County Public Works, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Arundel Habitat for Humanity, BGE, Solar Energy Services, Anne Arundel County Master Gardeners, Aquabarrel, Arden Gardeners, and Annapolis Community Food Gardens. Eighty-nine patrons benefited from learning about such environmentally sustainable practices as recycling, composting, energy-saving strategies and renewable energy, stormwater management and rain barrels, alternatives to chemical fertilizers for lawns and gardens, supporting local agriculture, and vegetable gardening.

The Annapolis Area Library hosted Zora Lathan of the Chesapeake Ecology Center in the spring of 2009 for a talk on rain barrels, rain gardens and other ways to reduce toxic runoff. The branch also held a recycled-art program for children.

The Crofton Branch worked with a local Boy Scout Troop on an Eagle Project that installed native perennials and shrubs and mulched a planted area to stop erosion.

The Severna Park Branch has a longstanding relationship with the Hollyberry Garden Club. The club recently refurbished the branch landscaping by adding native plants and mulch, resulting in reduction of turf and less frequent irrigation. The club also received Bay-Wise landscaping certification from the Anne Arundel County Master Gardeners for its sustainable landscaping practices.

The South County Branch provided Bay-Wise gardening programs in spring 2010. Zora Lathan presented rainscaping techniques on display at the Chesapeake Ecology Center. A Master Gardener demonstrated worm composting or vermiculture. Leaders of a local elementary school's "healthy and tasty eating" garden club planted a wheelbarrow full of herbs for display outside the library. In fall 2010, the branch will present a series of programs to promote environmental awareness, featuring local experts on invasive plant species, beekeeping and rock-hunting. A member of the AACPL Board of Trustees and staff of the South County branch also envision a rain garden for the grounds, with educational signage to be provided by the Chesapeake Ecology Center. The garden will inform patrons about eco-friendly landscaping techniques and native plant species and add beauty to the stormwater management measures recently taken as part of a construction project at the branch, which is in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

Waste

Solid Waste Reduction and Reuse

System-wide attention to reducing our waste stream has been a goal for several years. We are now seeing results.

- *The Maintenance Department replaced brand-name cleaning products in single-use containers with biodegradable concentrates before 2009. These concentrates are mixed and sent to the branches in refillable spray bottles. **With this change, we estimate that 3,600 cans and bottles are eliminated from our waste stream each year.***
- *Use of the duplex copy feature on staff copiers reduces the amount of paper used in memo and report preparation and distribution. To take this a step further, staff members also reuse pages printed on one side to print drafts of documents and to print the send-item list each day.*
- *Paperless payroll system is now in place. Employees view pay stubs online and print only when necessary. This practically eliminates paper previously used for printing the paystubs and the envelopes used for mail or delivery. **Prior to the conversion, 10,894 paystubs and envelopes were mailed or delivered to employees each year.***
- *Online versions of many library documents and forms are now available through our intranet. Wikis, blogs, emails and shared documents have replaced the voluminous binders. The Policy and Procedures Manual, Material Management Notebook, Staff Directory and Part-time Hourly Notebook can be instantly updated on each desktop without requiring printing of updates for the binders. **The initial estimate of printed pages saved this year is 33,700.***
- *The annual Summer Reading Club staff notebooks are now online, saving a **minimum of 640 pages each year.***
- *Branch desk schedules are composed online and saved on desktops, reducing the need for printed pages at individual desks.*
- *Blow dryers have been installed in public restrooms, replacing often wasted paper towels.*
- *Carpet squares have replaced rolled carpeting in the branches over the years. Individual damaged squares can be replaced instead of entire rooms of carpeting.*

Recycling

All AACPL branches participate in the single-stream recycling program of the AA County Waste Management Services. Recycling bins are placed in the kitchen area to collect recyclables at meal times. Large recycling bins for paper, cardboard and plastic are in various locations in each branch and headquarters. Paper, cardboard, glass, metal

and plastics are regularly collected and recycled. Recycle bins also are placed strategically around the public computer tables and photocopiers to encourage proper disposal of unwanted paper. Recycle bins in the meeting rooms encourage meeting attendees to recycle appropriately.

Programmers are looking for ways to recycle craft materials to reduce programming costs and reduce waste. Household items such as paper towel tubes, paper bags, foam trays, plastic food trays, water bottles, egg cartons, shoe boxes, etc. are re-purposed as craft supplies for story times and children's programs. Dated magazines are saved for collage projects or given to art teachers at local schools for their classes to reuse. The large Summer Reading Club banners will be turned into game backdrops or attractive tote bags rather than disposed of in the landfill.

Energy



Energy Efficiency

System-wide attention to energy savings has encouraged branches to find ways to cut back. This is a compilation of best practices:

- *turn off meeting room lights when no one is using the room*
- *on sunny days, turn off unnecessary overhead lighting, reducing cooling costs as well as lighting cost*
- *set printers and copiers using auto-off timers*
- *set monitors to energy-saver mode and turn them off when away from the desk and at night*
- *turn off printers and monitors when library is closed*
- *set front doors and interior lobby doors to auto open/close to reduce heat/AC exchange*
- *replace incandescent light bulbs with more efficient fluorescent bulbs, CFL bulbs and LED bulbs when possible*
- *use fans to circulate air at work stations to allow AC to be set slightly higher*
- *turn off the book-drop room light when staff are not retrieving materials. Returned materials don't mind the dark.*
- *Chilled water dispensers have been removed from staff kitchens, except for those branches on non-potable well water.*

System-wide energy savings are made by resetting building thermostats to 78 degrees and 30% relative humidity in cooling mode and 68 degrees in heating mode.

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Transportation

Employee Commute

Several staff members have arranged carpooling to work while a few others regularly walk and bike to their branches.

Efficient Business Travel

Now that online training and meeting space are available, business travel has been reduced in 2010:

- *Human Resources Department participates in monthly conference call meetings and webinars*
- *Information Services provides online training and meetings. To date, there were six meetings with forty-four people attending*
- *Staff Development Coordinator offers training webinars and meetings for staff. Multiple sessions of computer training and six meetings were held this year. One hundred staff members are trained in learn-how-to-learn online. Additional training opportunities will be offered in the coming months.*

*Carpooling to meetings and training locations is not a new practice at AACPL. A mini-van is available to take groups to meetings, training workshops and conferences. The Maintenance Department recently took advantage of van-pooling for a meeting and training workshop at the South County branch. Custodians from around the county met at Library Headquarters and rode together, **saving a total of 324 miles of single-occupancy vehicle travel.** The Linthicum Branch staff has used the van to transport staff to a training event.*

Water

Water Conservation

Low-flow-compliant toilets replace malfunctioning older models and are installed when restrooms are remodeled.

Stormwater Management and Site Design

Stormwater management is specifically addressed at the Crofton, Eastport Annapolis Neck, West County and South County branches. Crofton and Eastport Annapolis Neck's have bio-retention ponds that collect run-off and allow slow

infiltration. Eastport Annapolis Neck retention pond is planted with native plants. The West County landscape is designed with the most current water retention practices at the time in place. The parking lot includes a series of curb cuts draining water into naturalized rain gardens. A project that added parking spaces at South County entailed extensive regrading of the grounds, installation of stone outlet sediment traps, settling ponds, planting of native trees and shrubs and other improvements required for construction in the Critical Area.

Green Building

LEED Certified

The West County Area Library is a LEED-certified building for new construction featuring: site selection to minimize disturbing plant life; natural landscaping and native plants; green roofs; a bio-retention pond to control storm water run-off; a shower for staff walking or biking to work; carpool parking; bike racks; and, automatic-flush, low-flow-compliant toilets.



Help build a greener, more sustainable Maryland through voluntary practices that reduce environmental impacts and save money.

Learn more at www.green.maryland.gov/registry

