

**Pollution Prevention Practices
For Hotels and Lodging Facilities:**

***Self-Assessment Form and
Application for Virginia Green Program***



**George Washington Regional Commission
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ABOUT GWRC: *Our Mission*

As the Regional Planning District Commission, the mission of the George Washington Regional Commission is to coordinate planning to ensure economic competitiveness, reduce redundancies in government, improve efficiency, enhance services and improve implementation time of regional projects.

GWRC Going Green (from [GWCrossRoads](#), Spring 2008)

by Kevin F. Byrnes, AICP

Director of Regional Planning & Regional Demographer

No, we're not talking about St. Paddy's Day!

Concerned with helping local governments identify and implement beneficial "green" government programs, in December 2007, the GWRC formed the GW Green Government Commission (GGC). The GGC is composed of several local elected officials, and local business community and environmental group representatives with backgrounds in energy management, building design and operation, alternative fuels production, and environmental planning, to name a few. The GWRC resolution forming the GGC states: *"(the GGC)...has been created to foster cooperation among the five member localities in the Region in developing facility management and purchasing practices that will enhance the Region's environmental quality while resulting in long-term savings to the individual localities."*

Meeting on a monthly basis, the GGC is now polling member local governments to inventory "green" initiatives already in operation, other projects on the drawing board or in the early stages of implementation and potential programs worth pursuing in the Region. The GGC aims to provide the GWRC with policy and program recommendations to be considered for adoption regionally and forwarded by the end of 2008 to local governments for possible joint implementation.

Details on the membership composition of and the progress of the GGC, and the various program resource and policy documents collected and reviewed are available on the Internet at: www.GWGreenGovt.homestead.com. In conjunction with providing staff support to the GGC, GWRC staff are developing a broad in-house "Green Office" initiative, encompassing (for example):

- implementation of mixed office paper and beverage container recycling,
- increased procurement of a variety of paper products made of post-consumer recycled fiber content,
- increased use of double-sided printing and copying (to reduce paper consumption),
- use of recharged laser-printer toner cartridges and rechargeable batteries (rather than disposables),
- recycling of obsolete electronic office equipment and spent toner cartridges,
- adoption of less toxic cleaning products, and phasing out providing plastic-bottled water products in favor of supplying recyclable cups and using bulk spring water at meetings.

The GWRC "Green Office" coordinator is also our regional litter control program coordinator, Laurel Hammig and she can be contacted at: hammig@gwregion.org.

GWRC is also a Partner Organization in the **Virginia Green** program, co-sponsored by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the Virginia Tourism Corporation and the Virginia Travel and Hospitality Association.

Pollution Prevention Practices for *Hotels and Lodging Facilities*

Source: www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen



Hotels and other lodging facilities have literally dozens of opportunities to minimize their impact on the environment, just by making some simple, common-sense changes – and **almost all of them can save your facility money!!** Many facilities are already doing a lot of these, and don't even think of them as helping the environment. Take a few minutes to go through the items on this checklist and indicate any of the methods that you are already utilizing. Let us know what you are doing, and we will help you let your customers know about the good things you are doing for the environment. They don't need to know that you're saving money at the same time!

To Join – 3 Easy Steps

- 1) **Fill Out This Application.** Email or mail the completed checklist to Virginia DEQ at the addresses below. If you are doing the “**core activities**” and you work with or for the **tourism industry**, then you qualify for *Virginia Green - it's that easy!*
- 2) **Virginia Green Profile.** We will then draft a “profile” on your facility from the information that you submit to us. Once you have approved of the profile, you will officially be a **Virginia Green facility**, and your profile will go on our website and be searchable through the Virginia green tourism website: www.viriniagreentravel.org.
- 3) **Promote Yourself as Virginia Green.** We will send you a certificate and window decals for display and encourage you to use the logo on your website, signage, and any printed materials.

Core Activities:

These are the minimum requirements for all **Virginia Green Lodging Participants**

We Pledge that we: (click or mark (X) the box next to the techniques that your facility uses)

- Offer Optional Linen Service.** Sheets and towels are not automatically changed every day during your guests' stay, thus decreasing usage of water, energy, and harmful detergents.
- Recycle and Reduce Waste.** Recycling is probably the most visible sign to your guests that your facility is **green**, and it can be one of the most difficult services to arrange. However, you must strive to at least provide **the opportunity for guests to recycle** cans, bottles, etc. In certain areas of the state, a comprehensive recycling program is simply not feasible. However, facilities should have a written explanation available of the recycling opportunities that they provide, and staff should be able to address this with guests.
- Use Water Efficiently.** The facility must have a plan for conserving water that should consider water-saving faucets, showerheads, and toilets, leak detection, and an effective landscape watering plan.
- Conserve Energy.** The facility must have a plan in place that encourages the replacement of lighting and equipment to energy-efficient alternatives such as compact-fluorescent lighting, LED Exit signs, lighting sensors, efficient heating and cooling, and ENERGY STAR rated computers and other equipment.
- Offer a Green Events Package.** The facility must offer a “green” or “environmentally-friendly” package for conferences, meetings, and other events. At a minimum, you must be able to provide recycling at such events and be willing to work with “environmentally-aware” customers on other techniques to reduce wastes. For lots of ideas on Green Events, please see the fact-sheet on *Environmentally-Responsible Conferences, Meetings, and Events* at: www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/lodging/eventplanning.html.

Details about your green activities! Please tell us more about the great things you are doing. We will include these in your website profile. You can also use this list to get ideas of green techniques you may not have thought of.

Optional Linen Service– we pledge that we:

- Change linens only upon request **(required for Virginia Green Lodging)**
- Train house cleaners on process for optional linen service **(required for Virginia Green Lodging)**
- Purchase water- and energy-efficient washers and dryers (www.Energystar.gov)
- Use non-phosphate, non-toxic, and biodegradable laundry detergents.
- Minimize the use of bleach and chlorinated chemicals.
- Use an “ozone laundry system” that greatly minimizes need for detergents and saves water
- Use linens service providers that employ “wet” versus “dry” cleaning
- Line dry linens whenever possible
- OTHER specifics related to laundry / linen service:

Recycling – we pledge that we recycle:

- Glass
- Aluminum Cans
- Steel Cans
- Plastic
- Office Paper
- Printer/ copy machine toner cartridges
- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Packing Supplies
- Fluorescent Lamps (required by RCRA law)
- Batteries (required by RCRA law for NiCad and Lead-Acid)
- Electronics equipment – computers, etc (required by RCRA law)
- OTHER specifics related to Recycling:

- Please identify your recycling vendor (the company that takes your recyclables):

- Clearly marked recycling bins or drop off locations are provided for guests. Please indicate how your guests are able to recycle (for example: recycling cans in rooms, collection bin in lobby, recycling bins in parking lot).

This is a minimum requirement for Virginia Green Lodging Facilities:

Waste Reduction – we pledge that we:

- Track overall waste bills
- Have numeric goal to reduce overall materials that go to the landfill

Guest Rooms

- Use bulk soap dispensers instead of individual soaps/ shampoos in guest rooms
- Fill up shampoo bottles
- Instruct housekeeping to save and reuse unopened items

Kitchen (or Meetings/Events)

- Recycle fryer grease and/or filter grease prior to recycling
- Donate excess food from events
- Compost food waste and other compostables
- Have an effective food inventory control to minimize waste
- Purchase locally grown produce and other foods
- Purchase organic- and “sustainably-grown” foods (<http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues>)

Dining Room (or Meeting/Events):

- Do not use Styrofoam
- When disposable containers are used, they are made from:
 - bio-based materials, recycled content, and/or compostable material
- Use reusable dishware and glassware & minimize use of disposables
- Use non-bleached napkins and coffee filters
- Provide condiments, cream and sugar, etc. in bulk
- Use water pitches and filtered water to minimize the use of single-use bottles
- Use menus and table placards as opportunity to communicate green activities:
 - Print menus on recycled content paper with soy-based inks and include recycling symbols, recycled-content, and message about soy-based inks on printed material
 - Use Virginia Green logo to indicate organic, local or sustainable menu choices
- Use screen-based ordering systems

Restrooms:

- Use bulk soap dispensers in public restrooms
- Use high-efficiency hand-dryers
- Purchase recycled-content paper-towels and toilet paper

Office:

- Use a last-in/first-out inventory & effective labeling systems
- Encourage suppliers to minimize packaging and other waste materials
- Purchase from vendors and service providers with a commitment to the environment
- Make 2-sided copies / printed materials
- Use electronic correspondence and forms

Buildings and grounds:

- Using "green" cleaning chemicals (www.greenseal.org) that are dispensed in bulk
- Purchase durable equipment and furniture
- Purchase low-VOC carpets and fabrics
- Use reused building materials or those from sustainable sources
- Use latex paints that are low-VOC
- Re-use paint thinners
- Properly recycle and/or disposal of thinners and solvents (required by EPA-RCRA)
- Perform preventative maintenance on all appliances, HVAC systems, plumbing, and vehicles
- Use less toxic materials
- Use "integrated pest management" (IPM) - www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm
- Minimize use of pesticides and herbicides in landscaping
- Use a nutrient management plan that minimizes the use of fertilizers
- OTHER specifics related to Waste Reduction:

Water Conservation – we pledge that we:

- Track overall water usage and wastewater
- Have a numeric goal to reduce water consumption over time
- Perform preventative maintenance to stop drips and leaks
- Use water-flow metering to discover leaks and areas of high use
- Have: high efficiency dishwashers, low flow restrictors on faucets and showerheads, Low flow toilets, waterless urinals, composting toilets, automatic faucets or toilets in public restrooms.
- Discourage water-based cleanup (sweep first) and use microfiber technology mops
- Have an effective landscape management plan which utilizes drought tolerant species, metering and rain gauges, and/or minimizes lawn areas.
- Have an effective storm water management plan including: rain gardens (www.dof.virginia.gov/rfb/rain-gardens.shtml), pervious pavement, and/or minimization of impervious areas (paving, concrete, etc)
- Have a green roof (www.greenroofs.com)
- Use cisterns, rain barrels (www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/stormwater.htm), and/or drip line irrigation
- Maintain vegetative buffers around streams and ponds
- OTHER specifics related to Water Conservation & Efficiency:

Energy Efficiency – we pledge that we:

- Track overall energy bills
- Have had an energy audit to identify efficiency opportunities
- Have a numeric goal to reduce energy usage over time
- Have an “energy management system” in place to track and meter energy usage
- Calculate the pollution factor of our energy usage by using a pollution calculator, such as www.cleanerandgreener.org/resources/pollutioncalculator.htm
- Use:
 - High efficiency compact fluorescent light bulbs in all rooms and in canned lighting
 - LED Exit Signs -- www.energystar.gov/ia/business/small_business/led_exitsigns_techsheets.pdf
 - High efficiency fluorescent ballasts and lamps (T-5's & T-8's)
 - Ceiling fans
- Have a high efficiency heating & air conditioning (HVAC) system
- Perform preventative maintenance on HVAC system
- Have geothermal heating and cooling
- Have individual thermostats for each room
- Have installed additional insulation
- Use natural lighting
- Use lighting sensors to turn on/off lights
- Use occupancy sensors to turn on/off lights
- Generate electricity from photovoltaic solar panels
- Have a solar water heating system
- Generate electricity from a wind turbine
- Purchase of ENERGY STAR computers, appliances, etc. (www.energystar.gov)
- Have thermal-rated windows and insulation
- Use of directional (downward-facing) lighting in parking areas and other outdoor areas
- Purchase “Green Tags” or “Renewable Energy Certificates” to support new renewable energy resources (www.green-e.org)
- Use LEED criteria when developing new buildings (www.usgbc.org)
- Achieved LEED certification as a _____ building
- Are working to achieve LEED-EB (existing building) certification through operational changes and renovations
- Use fuel efficient vehicles or hybrid vehicles
- Use ENERGY STAR's Benchmarking Tools for the Hospitality Industry (www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus_hospitality)
- OTHER specifics related to Energy Conservation & Efficiency:

Green Conferences & Events – we pledge that we:

- Include availability of "green meetings/conferences" in marketing packages (see fact sheet on "Environmentally-Responsible Conferences & Events": www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/lodging/eventplanning.html.)

Please list standard “green” activities for conferences and events:

OTHER Creative / Common-Sense “Green” Ideas – Let Us Know About Them!

FACILITY INFORMATION

Facility Name:			
Address:			
Website:			
Contact Name:			
E-Mail:		Phone:	

What type of facility are you? Please provide a 1-2 sentence objective description of your facility, number of rooms, etc.

Why did your facility decide to *Go Green*? Please limit to 1-2 sentences

Logo & 2 Pictures! Please email us your logo and 2 pictures that you would like for us to include in your profile.

Complete this checklist and email it to us at viriniagreen@deq.virginia.gov

**You may also print the completed application and Mail it to:
 Virginia Green Program
 Virginia DEQ Office of Pollution Prevention
 PO Box 1105 Richmond, VA 23240-1105
 804-698-4172**

Thank you for voluntarily committing to minimize your impact on the environment!!

Virginia Green is a partnership program supported by

