



GUIDE series

Volunteer Handbook

Updated February 2008

Mission

Green Calgary empowers Calgarians to create healthy homes and communities through environmental education, products and services.

Vision

Green Calgary will play a significant role in bringing this vision to fruition in five to seven years.... 'Calgarians are world leaders in urban environmental sustainability.'

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History

Green Calgary started serving Calgary communities in 1975. Outdoors Unlittered and the Federation of Calgary Communities entered into an agreement with The City of Calgary to establish a “Green Calgary Committee” as a local arm of Outdoors Unlittered. The groups’ purpose was to conduct a project fashioned after the Keep America Beautiful Program, which involved extensive photometric litter indexing in conjunction with a variety of community clean-up activities.

Two years later in 1977, members felt strongly that much more could be accomplished if they expected their mandate to include all types of pollution with emphasis on education and awareness. The next year Green Calgary became an autonomous body with a promise from the City of Calgary to provide a Fee for Service Grant. In 1979 the committee became a registered society and conducted a variety of programs.

After achieving Charitable Status in 1982 the organization continued to grow, exceeding all expectations. The programs expanded to include a major Spring-Clean up campaign and awareness activities for members. Along with the organization Green Calgary’s reputation was also growing, to such an extent that the Executive Director was appointed as the first woman to sit on a Provincial Panel to investigate and prepare recommendations on noise pollution in Alberta.

Throughout the early 1990’s Green Calgary continued to conduct programs geared to creating a clean and healthy environment in Calgary with ever increasing emphasis on education, awareness and recognition. As a result of ongoing evaluation of programs and services, it became clear in early 1991 that simply providing information and encouragement was not enough to keep the “environment movement” moving. Rather, it was apparent that new programs were needed which would facilitate the process of change. The first such project was The Great Paint Exchange.

The WINshop (Waste It Not Shop) was added to the association’s long list of activities in 1993. This program was added to in 1997 with the introduction of a teaching manual based on the Waste it Not approach to reducing through reuse.

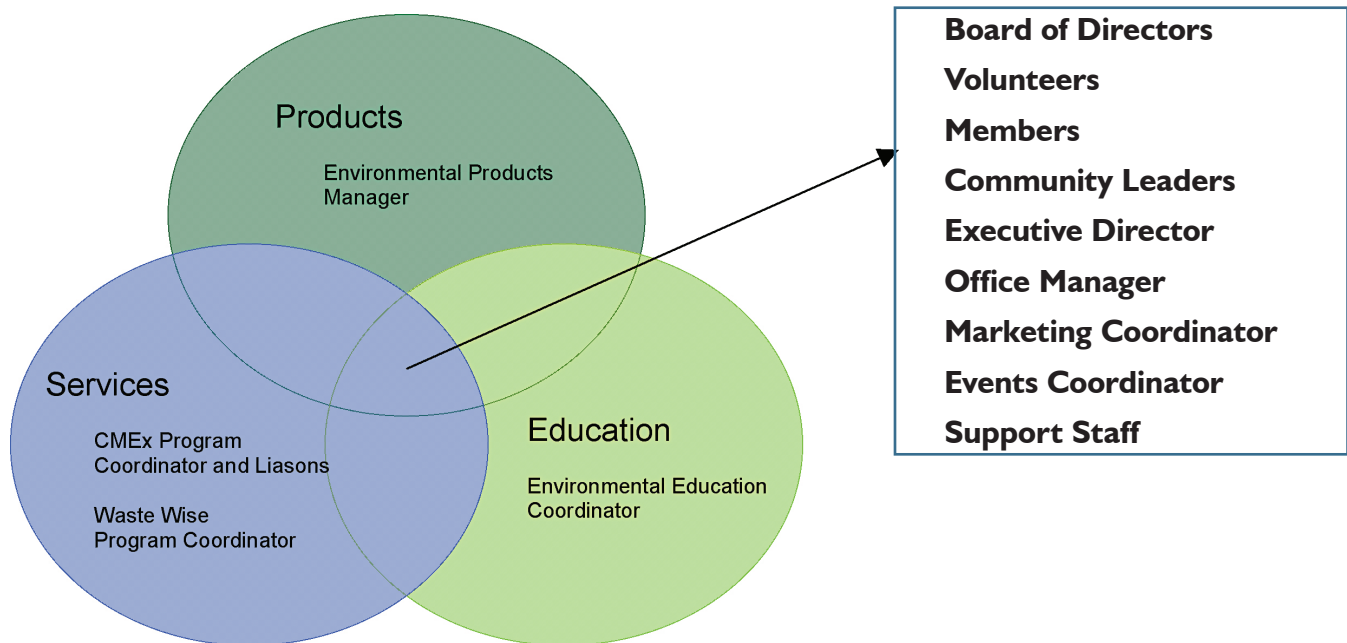
1999 saw the launch of the Master Composter/Waste Advisor program. Today, volunteers receive 20 hours of training to learn about composting, environmental concerns and recycling/waste reduction opportunities. These volunteers then act as mentors in their communities and repay the training with 25 hours of services by working on issues related to waste or composting. During the same year, Green Calgary presented “There’s No Such Thing As Junk” to over 500 grade 4 students; and in partnership with the Eco-Centre offered the “Simplifying Christmas” presentation and alternative gift wrapping services.

The 2000’s have brought a significant amount of development to Green Calgary, including the establishment of the Calgary Materials Exchange (CMEx), an award winning environmental program that assists companies in finding alternative disposal options for operational waste. There have also been expansions to the Master Composter/Waste Advisor program, most notably the 2007 Waste Wise Community Outreach pilot project in the Dalhousie community. Launched in 2008, Green Calgary now also has a specific Environmental Education Program that works with schools, communities and workplaces educating Calgarians and providing them with tools to incorporate environmental changes into their lifestyles.

Throughout its almost thirty-three year history one service has withstood the test of time, namely providing information on everything from recycling locations to practical ideas about leading an environmentally friendly lifestyle. Our reputation for “not passing the buck” has made us well known as a reliable “one call” source of a wide variety of information. If we don’t have the answer, we try very hard to get one for you.

Organization Structure

There are a large number of committed individuals who enable Green Calgary to serve Calgarians and their communities. All of these individuals play a vital role in the organization as a whole, including our dedicated volunteers. Below, the relationship and structure between these groups is illustrated.



Our Programs

Green Calgary's timely and effective programs support Calgarians of all ages in the creation of an environmentally clean and healthy community. Our roster of programs is a dynamic one, with new programs being added and old ones expanded as the environmental needs and interests of Calgarians evolve. A list and brief description of our current programs is below.

Calgary Materials Exchange

The Calgary Materials Exchange (CMEx) is assisting companies throughout Calgary to divert industrial, commercial and construction waste going to landfill. The Calgary Materials Exchange works to build relationships between companies and provide opportunities and information to facilitate exchanges of material for reuse and recycling. By-products from one company may be usable by another company.

Fundraising

Green Calgary is a not-for-profit organization that relies on fundraising to support its programs and services. Our most important fundraiser is our annual Rain Barrel Sale. We also collect program funding through our Cell Phone Recycling Program and our Jump the Junk Campaign through the sale of our No Junk Mail Stickers.



Waste Wise Community Outreach

The Waste Wise Community Outreach program is a community-based social marketing pilot project to encourage and engage 100 Dalhousie households to reduce their waste by 30% through home composting. The first 100 households who have committed to home composting have been offered free incentives and hands-on training, support, and mentorship from our Master Composters. Dalhousie community members have joined the program to learn how to compost properly within a fun and supported environment. After a

VERY successful first stage the program is currently going through an evaluation process to determine how to best help Dalhousie community members in their composting futures.

Environmental Education

Green Calgary focuses on two areas: environmental education, and the tools to incorporate positive environmental changes into one's lifestyle. Our Environmental Education program offers both school presentations and workshops.

Our current school presentations are: Water for Life for grade 2, Waste in our World for grade 4, HSBC Clean Air Achievers for grades 6 to 9, Bow Stewards for grade 8, High School Environmental Round Table-Global Issues, Local Solutions, VermiComposting for all grades, a new School-wide composting program, and Waste at Home for teachers. The workshops we are offering at this time are: Waste at Home, Waste at Work, Green Procurement, Getting There Green, and Green Cleaning. An Eco Logic 101 program is also being developed, launching later in 2008.

Green Calgary EcoStore

The EcoStore is another branch of the Green Calgary tree. The EcoStore officially opened in April 2005 and is adding more products regularly. All of the products carried in the store are either made of a minimum percentage of recycled content, directly help in reducing waste, or close the recycling loop. The store is open every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm and Thursdays 10:00am-7:00pm.



Our Organizational Values

We at Green Calgary hold ourselves to high standards, staff and Directors alike. We freely adopted these values to help guide our work, for they offer ideals to which we aspire in fulfilling our mission.

- Leadership - we lead by example and inspire others to champion environmental leadership in their homes and communities.
- Integrity - we commit ourselves to maintaining the trust and responsibilities placed in us by our donors, members, volunteers, partners and the public.
- Teamwork - we strive to create and support effective partnerships between volunteers and staff, and we seek opportunities to form alliances with others
- Education - we are committed to the collection and communication of information, and to offering the tools to put that information to good use

GREEN CALGARY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Benefits of Volunteering with Green Calgary...

Green Calgary is an urban environmental non-profit charitable organization. Our mandate is to empower Calgarians to create healthy homes and communities through environmental education, products and services.

Green Calgary was established in 1977 with a focus on minimizing litter. Over the past 30 years, Green Calgary has evolved and expanded to address a wide range of environmental issues with an emphasis on solid waste reduction through reuse, recycling and composting, and water conservation. Green Calgary receives support from and has numerous partnerships in the private sector, the municipal and provincial

government, as well as other local ENGOs.

Green Calgary is an award winning organization that is recognized as a leader in environmental education and community based environmental initiatives, particularly in the areas of recycling and composting. Green Calgary operates 3 complimentary program areas: environmental education, environmental products, and environmental services. Measuring our impacts and retooling our strategies are key elements of all Green Calgary projects, which are based on community-based social marketing concepts. None of this would be possible without the hard work of our volunteers.

Some of the amazing benefits of volunteering with Green Calgary are:

- Making a difference.
- Encouraging Calgarians to live sustainably.
- Teaching and living environmental stewardship.
- Developing knowledge and skills and sharing these with others.
- Meeting community members with similar interests and values.
- Having a great time!

Additionally, Green Calgary volunteers will have the opportunity to attend Volunteer and Member Learning Sessions, which will be held every few months, and take part in Green Calgary workshops at a reduced rate. There will also be annual Volunteer Appreciation events to honor our dedicated volunteers.

Steps to take to Volunteer with Green Calgary...

In an effort to provide a quality volunteer program, Green Calgary has established a few steps potential volunteers must take in order to become a welcomed member of our dynamic team.

- Submit an online [volunteer application](#)
- Attend a General Green Calgary Volunteer Orientation
- Sign the Green Calgary Volunteer Agreement

What You Can Expect From Us...

In accordance with our Mission Statement, Vision and Organizational Values, Green Calgary is committed to providing a volunteer program of high quality and integrity. We will fulfill this commitment by:

- Providing a secure and healthy environment for all Green Calgary staff, directors, and volunteers by completing reference checks on all members of our team, communicating and upholding our Organizational Values.
- Provide in-depth and ongoing training and orientation for all our volunteers.
- Consistent and clear communication in regards to upcoming volunteer opportunities and information for all events.

What We Can Expect From You...

We value our volunteers at Green Calgary, and work with them to achieve the high standards we have adopted for the organization. To reach these heights we expect a few things from our volunteers:

- A secure and healthy environment; adherence to our Organizational Values and references for a reference check.
- Reliability; showing up for events on time and ready. If you are unable to make your shift ALWAYS inform the Volunteer Manager or Events Coordinator.

- Record of volunteer hours; where applicable through the volunteer sign-in form or through email. We need this information for securing project funding and volunteer appreciation and honoring.
- Commitment to the Green Calgary Volunteer Agreement; please sign and hand in the agreement.
- Dismissal; if a volunteer is unable to meet these expectations on more than one occasion, we will dismiss the volunteer from Green Calgary. A reintroduction into the organization may be possible at a later date.

What You Will Be Doing...

Volunteers do a variety of valued work for Green Calgary, without them things just would not work! Green Calgary is a multi-branched organization with a number of programs and focus areas; similarly our volunteer program includes a number of branches for volunteers to get involved in. In the next section is a list of the different categories of volunteer opportunities. Please keep in mind that this list is a dynamic one, and as our organization grows and develops so do our volunteer opportunities.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One Day Events

Green Calgary participates in a number of expos and trade fairs throughout the year. At all of these events we have a booth operated by volunteers and staff with the purpose of spreading our message, answering inquiries from the public and showcasing some of our environmental products from our EcoStore.

Other one day events include our major fundraising events. Please note the inclusion of FUN in FUNdraising! These events, while busy are lots of fun and a chance to connect with a large number of Calgarians in a short period of time. Volunteers have the opportunity to sell environmental products such as rain barrels and composters, educate buyers on the use of these products, and assist with set up and take down. Without volunteers these FUN events would be impossible to pull off.



Program Specific

We have a growing lineup of comprehensive programs at Green Calgary, which all have specific needs. A major need across all our programs is having a line-up of well trained, informed volunteers. These volunteers go through specific training and volunteer for events or tasks that are particular to each program. Our Environmental Education Program, Waste Wise and the EcoStore have plenty of opportunities for specialty volunteers.

Community Leadership

Some of our volunteers already have established roots in their communities and are committed to making change there. There are opportunities for these volunteers to learn from our workshops and programs and take what they have learnt back to their communities. This aspect of our volunteer program is open to volunteer initiative. Giving back can range from talking with neighbors to initiating community programs. In these cases we do ask for a description of how the volunteer plans to give back to their community.

Research

A lot of thought goes into all of our programs at Green Calgary. A major part of this thinking process is research; What is the issue? What has been done? What needs to be done? What are barriers to this action? There are also situations when Green Calgary learns about a new issue or program and a little background research is needed before we communicate it to our members and the rest of Calgary.

Volunteers have the opportunity to play a significant role in this process.

Writing

The written word is a major medium we use for communicating our message. We send out both Green Calgary and Calgary Materials Exchange e-newsletters monthly, along with ongoing website updates. Green Calgary is always seeking volunteers with strong writing skills who would be interested in contributing to our e-newsletters, program materials, website resources, and various Green Guides.

Environmental Information



A lot of what we do at Green Calgary is respond to questions from Calgarians. The question topics range from what to do with plastic (a major crowd favorite) to I have mice living in my compost! We take this service very seriously and are committed to providing clear, appropriate, quality environmental information to Calgarians. As a volunteer you have the opportunity to be an environmental information provider via telephone answering, emails, and topic-specific “hot-lines”.

Administrative Tasks

We are a busy organization with a number of staff and various programs. In result we have a constant list of administrative tasks to deal with. Volunteer opportunities to assist with some of these tasks are always available.

Building Projects

As our organization and programs grow so to does our space. Volunteer opportunities arise from time to time to help us out with some of our building/rearranging/renovation projects. As well, there are sometimes opportunities to help construct outdoor composters or other program specific building projects.

GREEN CALGARY MEMBERSHIPS

We encourage all our volunteers to take the step to becoming a member of Green Calgary. We are continuously developing our Membership Program, and as a charitable, non-profit organization we rely on members to be active decision makers and participants of our organization. For a nominal fee, you can join Green Calgary and participate in developing and implementing positive, proactive environmental projects.

There are many benefits to becoming a member including:

- 10% discount at the EcoStore (excluding subsidized items). Visit www.cleancalgary.org to view products.
- Discount on Green Calgary workshops
- Green Calgary newsletter

- Upcoming events bulletins
- Access to sign-out library materials
- First choice of volunteer opportunities
- Members can vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Members can become Directors of the Green Calgary.

Your Membership will help Green Calgary

- Raise awareness and provide tools for environmental change
- Strengthen Calgary's environmental network
- Build a central hub for environmental activity

Yearly membership fees are as follows:

- Individual \$50
- Non-profit agency membership \$75
- Corporate \$200

New members are always welcome. If you would like to become a member, please fill out our membership form found on our website, or speak with one of the Green Calgary Staff.

LOGISTICS

How You Can Make Suggestions

We at Green Calgary appreciate and welcome all suggestions from our volunteers. If you wish to make suggestions regarding our Volunteer Program or any of our other programs please email our volunteer manager at heather@cleancalgary.org. Upon receiving your suggestion the volunteer manager will bring it to the attention of the staff at the next staff meeting, after which the appropriate actions will be taken. While we try to take all suggestions into consideration, we can not always act on them. However, we will communicate back to you about what happened with your suggestion.

Communication

The communication between Green Calgary volunteers and the volunteer manager will predominately be through email. Volunteer postings will be sent out via email, along with any information regarding event specific information and orientation sessions, volunteer learning sessions and workshops, and upcoming Green Calgary events. Volunteer opportunities will also be posted on the Volunteer Page of the Green Calgary website (www.greencalgary.org). The community organizer will be available over phone at 403.230.1443 ex 232. However, email communication is preferred.

Event Specific Information

Certain events Green Calgary participates in requires specific information and training for volunteers. This is because at times Green Calgary wishes to communicate specific messages to Calgarians and often more detailed training is needed to do so. The intention behind this is to set up our volunteers for success,

enabling them to respond to public questions and inquires with ease and confidence. If you are unable to attend an event specific Information and Training Session but wish to volunteer for a certain event, please communicate with our volunteer manager and hopefully arrangements can be made.

Emergency Procedures

Please provide our volunteer manager with an emergency contact number on our Green Calgary Volunteer Agreement form. We ask for this so that in the case of an unfortunate event we can communicate quickly with your loved ones.

Further, certain events may have particular emergency procedures, especially large scale events. If you volunteer for such an event this information will be passed on to you.

Location and Transportation

The Green Calgary is located downtown, at the intersection of 4th Avenue and 7th Street SW, on the Southwest corner. Our address and contact information is:

809 - 4th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2P 0K5

Telephone 403.230.1443

Note: The Green Calgary Office and EcoStore is wheelchair accessible.

Public Transit

Green Calgary can be reached easily by alternative transportation.

LRT: Stations are located on 7th Avenue at 7th Street SW and 8th Street SW. These LRT Stations are just three to four blocks from the EcoStore.

Buses: The Green Calgary EcoStore is in walking distance to more than 50 bus routes. Five buses stop right across the road from the EcoStore (#1, 9, 31, 105, and 411). For other routes and schedules, please visit <http://www.calgarytransit.com> or call (403) 262.1000.

Parking

We have two customer parking spaces in the alley behind our store and offices. They are the two spots closest to 7th Street SW and are clearly marked with a sign. There is also metered parking all around us, including in front of our EcoStore entrance on 4th Avenue SW except during rush hour. After 6:00pm on Thursdays most metered parking spaces downtown are free!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Green Calgary

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