



GREEN LINK

Sustainable Business Program E-Newsletter
September 2009



In this Issue...

Sustainable Business Program Highlights
Program News-Lyn's Lines
What's Coming Up?
Sustainable Business Theme of the Month: Sustainable Landscapes
About the Program

Program Highlights

Making a Difference - One Business at a Time!

The Steamboat Sustainable Business Program is half way through its third year. To date, 65 businesses have enrolled and 40 have achieved certification.

Businesses that are currently certified:

Marabou-GOLD
BAP and Big Agnes-GOLD
Images of Nature-SILVER
Moots Cycles-GOLD
Pet Kare Clinic-GOLD
Black Tie Ski Rentals-GOLD
Smartwool-GOLD (and working towards Platinum!)
bistro c.v. -GOLD
Moving Mountains Chalets, Inc.-GOLD
Drexel Barrell & Co. -GOLD
Air Quality Systems-GOLD
Kelly & Stone Architects-GOLD
Prudential Steamboat Realty-GOLD
Fox Construction- GOLD
Horizons - GOLD
PostNet - GOLD
Colorado Group Realty - GOLD
Big House Burgers - GOLD
Simply Steamboat Property Management - GOLD
City of Steamboat Springs - Centennial Hall - BRONZE
City of Steamboat Springs - City Hall - SILVER
ResortQuest Steamboat - GOLD

Habitat Construction - GOLD
Steamboat Springs Chamber - BRONZE
Central Park Management - GOLD
CMC - GOLD
Life Essential Wellness Spa - GOLD
Rex's American Grill & Bar - SILVER
Mazzolas Restaurant - GOLD
Mountain Valley Bank - BRONZE
TouchStone Promotions - GOLD
GO Alpine - GOLD
The Ore House at The Pine Grove Restaurant - GOLD
Alpine Bank - GOLD
Native Excavating - GOLD

Businesses on their way to achieving certification:

Drahota Construction Co.
Tall Tulips Flower Shop
Resort Group
Computer Cures
Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp. Administrative Offices
Dovetail Designs
Peabody Energy
Mountain Home Stove & Fireplace
Landmark Consultants
Irene Nelson Interiors
Pinnacle Resort Management
NRC Broadcasting
Steamboat Pilot & Today
Catamount Ranch & Club
Sheraton Steamboat
Light Works of Steamboat
Lowell Whiteman School
Aspire Osteopathy
Rio Grande Restaurante
Alpine Insurance
Steamboat Motors

Congratulations to Air Quality Systems for moving from SILVER to GOLD Certification!

WELCOME to our newly enrolled Businesses!

Alpine Insurance
Steamboat Motors

Are you following the Sustainable Business Program on Twitter?

Find us at www.twitter.com/sustainableboat! Up to date tips and reminders.



Lyn's Lines

Throughout the program we have strived to add value and new programs of interest to our ever-growing list of participants. These include this newsletter, quarterly networking luncheons, an on-

line forum, a Sustainable Business Directory, an annual Sustainable Business of the Year Award, and the new **Cents for Steamboat** program. There have been numerous articles and publications about the program, and significant recognition of members and their achievements. We have also partnered with the Governor's Energy Office **Colorado Carbon Fund** program.

Our collective group of dedicated business has supported two local "on the ground" community sustainability initiatives - **Green Halloween** last fall during which we reached out to hundreds of kindergarteners and first graders in local schools to educate them about recycling, and this past June a **Community Tree Planting Day** in north Routt where over 100 volunteers showed up to plant around 1,000 seedlings and help revegetate forests that have been devastated by the bark beetle.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with each of the **65 participating businesses** toward attaining their sustainability goals. Each one has been very different and I applaud your dedication and accomplishments. You are all truly leaders in the community and your ongoing support is appreciated!

One of the high points of the program has been bringing like-minded businesses together to share ideas at our **quarterly networking luncheons**, where average attendance has exceeded 50-60 people. This has been a very rewarding process for many and we plan to continue them in the future. I hope you will enjoy our upcoming mini-workshop on Sustainable Landscapes. As always, we would like to hear your thoughts on what might be beneficial to you and your business in the future. Please feel free to email me your ideas at lhalliday@environmentalsolutionllc.com.



What's Coming Up?

SAVE THE DATE!

For our sixth Quarterly Networking Luncheon!

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES:

**Water Efficient Landscapes and Irrigation Practices
Mini-Workshop and Garden Tour**

September 10th at 11:30am at the Yampa River Botanic Park

We have a great lineup of speakers including local Master Gardeners and professionals, to talk about drought resistant landscape plants, water-wise design, efficient irrigation practices and water saving products, and a garden tour. Sign up today!

Lunch will be provided for \$5 for businesses enrolled in the Sustainable Business program and \$15 for non-members. All are welcome! Space is limited. RSVP@steamboatchamber.com or 875-7000 by September 7th. We hope to see you there!



Sustainable Business Theme of the Month



Introduction

What is Sustainable Landscaping?

Although there are varying definitions, sustainable landscaping should embody the following:

1. an attractive environment,
2. that is in balance with the local climate, and
3. that requires minimal resource inputs, such as fertilizer, pesticides and water.

Sustainable landscaping begins with an appropriate design that includes functional, cost efficient, visually pleasing, environmentally friendly and maintainable areas (source: CSU Extension).

Why - What are the Benefits?

Businesses and homeowners alike can reap major benefits from implementing sustainable landscape practices. A major advantage is cost savings through water conservation. Most businesses in the Steamboat Springs area pay for their water, and rates continue to rise. Additionally, irrigation uses are a large percentage of peak day demand on the City's water supply system. Efficient irrigation can reduce this demand significantly (30-80% according to CSU), thereby defraying the need and cost of future infrastructure expansion. If you are on a well, water conservation is also a priority. In drought years, water conservation is everyone's responsibility. Utilizing drought tolerant plants in landscape design improves the potential for success and longevity.

Benefits can also be realized to the environment and ecosystem. Introducing less chemicals from pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers helps to protect water quality. Protecting indigenous wildlife habitat and increased biodiversity are also beneficial side effects of using native plants.

Site Assessment

It may seem daunting at first, but a few important considerations will help with the success of your landscape endeavor. First, assessment of the site is critical, including soil analysis, orientation to the sun, grade and slope, and your overall goal/vision. Soil amendments are a good idea and most mountain soils benefit from organic amendments. Incorporating your own compost material will add to the sustainability aspect of the garden.

Design

Time spent on a good water-wise design will pay off for years to come. Using native plants has many advantages - they generally use less water and need less fertilizer and pruning; they are naturally adapted to area climate, soils and other conditions; they provide good habitat for wildlife and help maintain biodiversity. Factoring in plant height, texture, color scheme, will all improve overall design. There are many native flowering plants that can be incorporated to provide the desired appearance you may be seeking.

"Xeri"-gation Tips

Before digging, always remember to have underground utilities located. It is a good idea to consult a professional when installing a drip or spray irrigation system. There are many new products available at an affordable cost to conserve water and ensure your irrigation system is efficient. Among these are water saving spray heads, rain shut off devices, and weather station controllers

that adjust to humidity, wind, solar and temperature data.

General best practices when it comes to irrigation are:

Pay special attention to the design of the system. Consider if a drip system is appropriate

- Water before 6am and after 8pm
 - Avoid watering on windy days
 - Install a rain sensor/shut off, to save water and reduce the potential for overwatering
 - For healthy plants, water in several short sessions, allowing for moisture to reach deep roots. Check the ET (evapotranspiration rates) for your locale for guidance
 - Maintain the system and check for and repair leaks often. Monitoring your water bill will help.
 - Use water saving spray heads and adjust spray heads to keep the water where it is meant to go (not on pavement, walkways)
 - Don't overwater. Adjust zonal water volume based on plant type, time of the year (increase number of days between watering in spring and fall), topography, and orientation to the sun.
- Have a professional help with proper layout and equipment selection for your irrigation system.

Plant health improves with proper irrigation and more water is not always better. Infrequent deep irrigation encourages deep root growth (depending on soil) which enhances the plants' resilience to heat and drought. Healthier plants require less herbicides and pesticides.

Xeriscape

"Xera" is from the Greek word meaning "dry". There are seven basic principals of xeriscaping:

- Proper planning and design
- Soil and site analysis
- Appropriate plant selection
- Practical turf areas
- Efficient irrigation
- Use of mulches
- Appropriate maintenance

Xeriscape gardens are not just rocks, they can be colorful and attractive season-long. In mountain areas such as ours, it is best to plant either immediately after the last frost or during the rainy season (source: CSU extension). Purchasing plants too early is a common mistake and should be avoided. There are many drought tolerant plants that thrive in our area.

Turf

Incorporating lawns into the landscape is often desirable, both from a functional and an aesthetic standpoint. Turf has environmental benefits such as reducing soil and wind erosion and runoff. Turf also plays a role in breaking down pollution (D. Whiting et.al.), improving soil structure, and converting CO2 into oxygen. When properly and wisely used and managed, turf can be part of a sustainable landscape design. There are many lawn/grass varieties. A valuable source of information when researching turf and other xeric plants is the Colorado State University Cooperative Extension website www.ext.colostate.edu.

To LEARN MORE, sign up today for the mini-workshop on September 10th at the Yampa River Botanic Park.



About the Program

To date, **65 businesses** have participated in the Sustainable Business Program, one of the most

accredited, diverse and encompassing programs of its kind in Colorado. Established in March of 2007 as a collaborative effort between the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association and Environmental Solutions Unltd, the Sustainable Business Program has been changing the nature of business in the Yampa Valley. The program focuses on sustainability and the Triple Bottom Line - a new way to define business success. The Triple Bottom Line includes: financial success, social responsibility, proactive environmental management, and the inter-relationships between them. Our goal is to leave our planet in as good or better shape for future generations.

As part of the program, the Chamber program provides professional sustainable business coaching as well as a format for networking, sharing of ideas and practices, and for channeling collective energies amongst the business community that further the goal of achieving sustainability and a vibrant, economically sound community.

*Green Link is published by the Steamboat Springs Chamber quarterly.
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