

The best way to protect the environment is for all of us to take action wherever we can – at home at school and in our businesses and communities. “Greening” your school can save money, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and teach students how to be better stewards of the planet.

Ready to get started?

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) suggests following a simple five-step process to help your school’s green initiative succeed.

Visit the following Web sites for tips, resources, and examples of how other schools are helping the environment. Some addresses listed here may have changed. If you find that an address no longer works, use a search engine to find additional information. Try searches that use combinations of terms like “green”, “greening”, “schools”, “environment”, or “energy.”

- “Go Green” Resources for schools: [www.gogreeninitiative.org](http://www.gogreeninitiative.org)
- 7 Steps to Green your school: [www.greenschools.net](http://www.greenschools.net)
- Benchmarking How To Guide: [www.pge.com/benchmarking](http://www.pge.com/benchmarking)
- Youth Venture: [www.genv.net](http://www.genv.net)
- NRDC: The Green Squad: [www.NRDC.org/greensquad](http://www.NRDC.org/greensquad)
- PG&E: [www.pge.com/myhome/environment](http://www.pge.com/myhome/environment)
- PG&E Energy Management for School Facilities: [www.pge.com/schools](http://www.pge.com/schools)
- Earth Team: [earthteam.net](http://earthteam.net)
- PG&E Energenius Curriculum for grades K – 8 [www.pge.com/energenius](http://www.pge.com/energenius)



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January 2010  
CTM-1209-0307



# The Green School

A Guide for Getting Started



# 1

## Build Your Team

The most successful Green Teams often extend beyond the campus. Invite parents, local businesses, and community members to participate along with students, school staff, and faculty. An environmental club can provide the structure for their involvement. Create roles like an Adult Ally or Club Sponsor for supporters who might help with legal issues, community outreach, or donations.

**To begin, elect or appoint a group leader or chairperson and recruit members.**

# 2

## Choose Your Projects

Once you've assembled a core team to lead the effort, choose some specific projects. Find out if there are any projects already underway and invite the people involved to work with your group. Consider what resources you have and what achievements would make the most difference for your school, community and the environment. Then identify the activities that will help you meet your goals.

**Create goals that excite people and a range of jobs for people who want to pitch in.**

# 3

## Dive In!

It's time to turn your vision into actions. Modify your plan when you need to, but use it as a guideline to keep you on track.

# 4

## Evaluate

Your plan should include milestones and a regular schedule for checking your progress. Some useful questions:

- What did the team do well and not so well?
- Where can we improve?
- What has our environmental impact been? For example, how much CO<sub>2</sub> was kept out of the air, or how many tons of garbage were picked up?

**Keep track of your accomplishments and let community stakeholders know what you are doing.**

# 5

## Keep It Alive

Expand your influence beyond the school grounds. There are many benefits to forming partnerships with a variety of interested individuals and groups like local businesses, neighbors, and community organizations. Partners can provide support funding and networking opportunities.

**Remember to show appreciation to the people and businesses that give their time, money, and talents to your program.**

## Green Project Ideas

### Develop a gas and electricity conservation plan

- Write or revisit your school's energy policies
- Form an energy patrol of students and custodians to turn off lights that aren't needed and unplug unused appliances
- Ask PG&E for a free energy audit
- Apply for PG&E incentive and rebate programs for energy efficiency upgrades
- Benchmark your school's energy usage against other schools

### Start a school garden

- Incorporate a green curriculum at the garden, such as composting and organic pest control
- Grow food for your school cafeteria
- Donate to Food Banks in your community

### Manage waste more efficiently

- Promote recycling in classrooms and administrative offices
- Use compost from the school cafeteria in the school garden, or participate in a local composting program
- Partner with a local business to reuse outdated promotional items or unused supplies
- Ask your local waste management departments for a free waste audit

### Develop a water conservation plan

- Have custodians check for leaks, drips, and running toilets
- Educate teachers and students about saving water
- Put in a drip system for watering plants
- Ask the local water district to perform a free water and irrigation audit

