

Mayor, City Council honor local environmental efforts with Third Sustainable Saint Paul Awards

Written by

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SAINT PAUL – Celebrating Earth Day, Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and the City Council presented the City's third Sustainable Saint Paul Awards on Wednesday, created by the Mayor to honor outstanding achievements of individuals, businesses and organization that are protecting and restoring the environment in Saint Paul.

"Whether being environmental or just smart about how we live and work on the bluffs of the Mississippi River, Saint Paul and its residents and businesses historically have sought ways to be more efficient and sustainable in our practices," Mayor Coleman said. "Recognizing the people and organizations with these awards brings to light their efforts on the local level that are making an impact on a global issue. I am happy to be giving these awards to people and organizations that continue to make Saint Paul a national leader on environmental policy."

The awards pay tribute to individuals and organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship through leadership in their respective categories. By sponsoring these awards, Mayor Coleman hopes to encourage all residents, businesses, community groups and non-profits in Saint Paul to implement similar projects. Replication of these efforts will further enhance the City's quality of life and make Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America.

Mayor Coleman has taken bold action to make Saint Paul one of the greenest cities in the country. Under his administration, the city has its first Sustainability Coordinator as well as the first Energy and Water Resource coordinators. Mayor Coleman has committed the city to reducing CO2 emissions 25 percent by 2020 and investing \$1 million into an Energy Conservation Investment Fund to retrofit and build city-owned buildings with energy efficient systems. New city-owned buildings are also designed to environmentally sustainable standards, including the new fire headquarters and station on West 7th Street and the Western District Police Station, the first LEED-certified police station in Minnesota.

2009 Sustainable Saint Paul Award Winners:

Water Quality or Conservation Award: Community Design Center of Minnesota

The Community Design Center of Minnesota's East Side Youth Conservation Corps and Garden Corps have been steadily improving water quality by installing rain gardens along Payne Avenue, restoring habitat at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, increasing the amount of enjoyable green space at Hamm and Triangle Parks, increasing the availability of healthy, local food, and educating thousands of local youth and residents of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood.

Green Spaces Award: Ramsey County Master Gardeners

The space around the AIFC building was unsightly, eroding and reflected poorly on the community environment and community morale. Ramsey County Master Gardeners joined with the American Indian Family Center to create a garden that reflected the pride, heritage and needs of the community. Where there was once just poor soil, now grew corn blanketed with

flowers and native Bee Balm and Pussy Toes and Swiss Chard grew adjacent to native grasses

Clean-up and Beautification Award: Riverview Economic Development Association's Streetscape Program

The Riverview Economic Development Association's Streetscape Program is seeking to clean, maintain and green the streetscape of the District del Sol Commercial Corridor. The Streetscape program engaged 26 businesses and over 50 volunteers to pick up over 60 bags of litter and plant three public gardens and coordinate the hanging of flower baskets throughout the District del Sol Commercial corridor.

Residential Green Building Design: Neighborhood Development Alliance – Winifred Twin Homes

Neighborhood Development Alliance has been leading the effort to bring “green” “sustainable” building practices to low and moderate income neighborhoods on Saint Paul's Westside. These attractive twin homes, designed by LHB Engineers and Architects and built by BCB Construction, received the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design “Gold” standard and have solar hot water heaters use half the energy of typical home.

Retail Green Building Design: Cub Foods designed by Oppidan Inc.

The new Cub Foods is the most sustainable store in the company and recently received the U.S. Green Building Council's “Gold” rating. Supervalu teamed up with Oppidan Inc and Kraus Anderson to cut the store's carbon footprint in half. The store has 44 skylights that maximize the amount of natural daylight in the store, uses 50% less water for irrigation and is made from 20% recycled building materials. As you can see from this picture, the parking lot's LED lights not only save energy but reduce light pollution into the surrounding neighborhood.

Commercial Green Building Design: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

Wilder Center has made a significant contribution to restoring Saint Paul's urban landscape at the corner of University Avenue and Lexington Parkway North. Wilder's new building was designed to meet the needs of people today while protecting tomorrow's environment through its sustainable design. Wilder Center exemplifies that sustainable design is affordable, practical, replicable and can generate a significant return on investment. Congratulations also to Duke Construction and Perkins + Will and the leadership of the Wilder Board of Directors.

Waste Reduction and Recycling: GreenGatherings

Studies show that events of all sizes can have a significant impact on the environment. Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul wanted seize the opportunity to green events starting with the Republican National Convention but also provide assistance to neighborhood festivals like

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Cinco de Mayo, Rondo Days and Irish Fair, block club parties and high school graduations. The Ramsey County Board showed tremendous leadership and commitment to the project by providing funding for a consulting team from Richardson Ritcher. Momentum grew and the collaboration expanded to include Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Environmental Protection Agency Region 5.

Green Product: Ecolab

Ecolab's Green Seal-Certified Wash'n Walk Floor Care System, a no-rinse floor cleaner system, saves an average restaurant more than 7,000 gallons of water per year – the equivalent of 300 showers, and, if every restaurant in the U.S. used Wash'n Walk for just one day, the savings would be more than 6.5 million gallons of water. Ecolab is a local Saint Paul company but its scope and positive impact on the environment are global.

Transportation Options: St. Paul Smart Trips

The quality of our air is an environmental issue that effects all Minnesotans. Over 30 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota come from cars and trucks. The Smart Trips Summit-U program addressed the need for better air quality by encouraging participants to reduce their drive-alone travel, thereby reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental Education and Awareness Award: Saint Paul Port Authority – Rock-Tenn Community Advisory

The unintended consequences of good public policy, Rock-Tenn, Minnesota's largest paper recycler, faced the loss of its energy source. The Saint Paul Port Authority involved and partnered with Rock-Tenn, District Energy, Xcel Energy, the surrounding District Councils, organized labor and concerned citizens and created a win-win renewable energy solution for the community. The Port created a model transparent decision making process that used an inter-active website, list serve, community forums, door-to-door outreach and public meetings to engage citizens in this important issue

Youth Leadership Award: Youth Farm and Market Project

Youth Farm and Market Project engaged and taught more than 350 youth about sustainable agriculture and the impact of locally grown produce. The students maintain a 24-foot by 24-foot year-round greenhouse on the grounds of Cherokee Heights Elementary West Side School of Excellence and grew and sold more than 2,500 pounds of locally grown produce to El Burrito Mercado.

For more information about Sustainable Saint Paul, go to www.stpaul.gov and click on "City Projects."