

ClimateWise, Business Smart



Jeff Barnes and Erin Senseman
Poudre River Public Library District
ClimateWise Platinum Partner
Photos by Cambon Studios



Preparing for the future

2013 Summary of Accomplishments

In thinking back, 2013 was a big year for Fort Collins – a year filled with many accomplishments.

According to the City's recent Citizen Survey, 97 percent of participants believe Fort Collins is a great place to live. That doesn't happen by accident, and local businesses, like yours, deserve recognition for your hard work and willingness to go the extra mile to make this community stand out.

Fort Collins is receiving recognition at the national level. *Time* magazine recently dubbed Fort Collins as "America's Most Satisfied City," partly due to innovative programs like ClimateWise.

Last year, ClimateWise welcomed 52 new businesses. Since 2000, ClimateWise business partners, which range from large to small organizations, have achieved a cumulative savings of nearly \$83 million and avoided nearly 1.2 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

Our community has made it clear that sustainability is an important core value. That's thanks, in part, to the voter-approved Keep Fort Collins Great sales tax revenue that allows ClimateWise to offer resources and support to business partners.

To complement the goals of our greenhouse gas reduction, the City strives to be a leader in innovation and this year, we are placing a renewed emphasis on the "people," or "social" side of sustainability. We've challenged our staff to understand what it really means to be a "world class" city... not just for a select few, but for all of our residents.

With the combined efforts of the City and our business community, we are building a sustainable plan for the future that values the importance of the amazing environment we all love and enjoy here in Fort Collins. Thank you for your contributions and devoted passion.

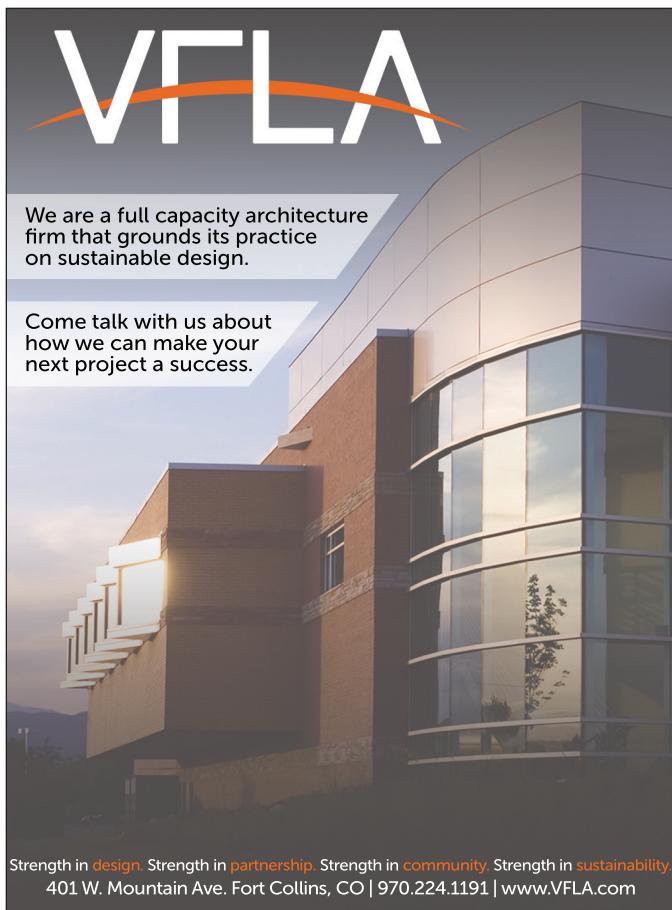
Sincerely,



Darin Atteberry
City Manager



ClimateWise was recognized as "A Top 50 Innovative Government Program" by Harvard University.

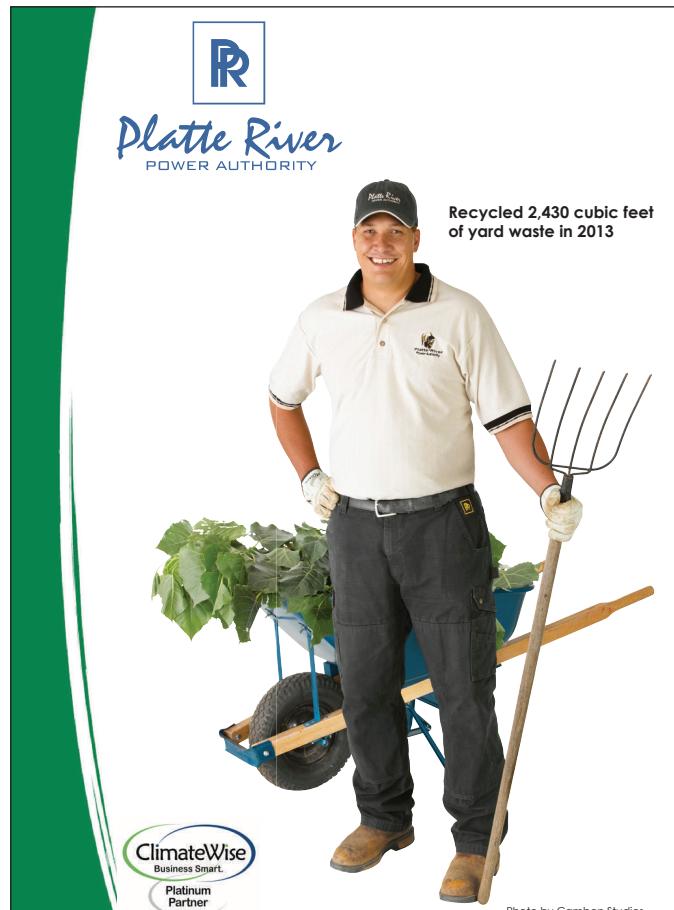


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PR
Platte River
POWER AUTHORITY

Recycled 2,430 cubic feet of yard waste in 2013

ClimateWise
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Photo by Combon Studios

Social Superstar: Cargill, Inc.

Home-grown Foodies

When Cargill Fort Collins' gardening enthusiasts enlisted a few cohorts to plant the first employee garden, they scaled their commitment to nourish the world into digestible dimensions. Some tomato plants, zucchini and a couple rows of sweet corn produced a harvest of more than food; it also delivered camaraderie, interdepartmental interaction and a strengthened sense of community.

Results

The Food Bank for Larimer County, a local nonprofit, became the beneficiary of the garden's bounty. "In one growing season, the Cargill gardeners brought 1,300 pounds of healthy, fresh produce," said Bruce Wallace, programs director for the Food Bank for Larimer County. "It was an offer we couldn't have afforded without their generosity."

Not only was Cargill's garden an environmental success, it was an unexpected social asset. Steve Stadelmaier, Cargill's Fort Collins facility manager, described it as an opportunity for employees to make connections and share knowledge. The effort also earned recognition from the ClimateWise Social Superstars program.

Looking Ahead

What's happening in the Cargill garden this year? "The garden has grown, and so has the harvest goal," reports Candace Carter, Cargill greenhouse technician. "We're proud of our 2013 results, but this year we want to provide more produce to the Food Bank."

Stadelmaier ticks off this year's garden stats, "there are ten 100-foot rows, 250 feet of tomatoes and 200 feet of peppers."

Recommendations

"Just do it," says Stadelmaier when asked for his best advice on starting an employee garden. "Start small and grow into it. Don't get overwhelmed. This is a wonderful tool for bringing people together."

Carter adds, "Find two or three leaders who are passionate about produce and solicit input from everyone.

To keep the project from dying on the vine, find a garden champion and let people have fun. It's so cool to see everybody out in the garden at peak harvest."

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Cargill is committed to nourishing the world's growing population and protecting the planet, and Cargill has been a responsible steward of natural resources since its founding. An important piece of Cargill's ongoing success is a daily commitment to the environment.

Cargill provides food, agriculture, financial and industrial products and services to the world. The company believes that being a successful business also means being a great neighbor. That's why focusing on the efficient use of energy and water, along with sourcing power from renewables are among the many important steps Cargill takes to benefit the environment and communities in which it operates.

"One of the benefits of being a ClimateWise member is the networking opportunities," explained Stadelmaier. "We make more connections within our community, and our employees are proud to be part of a company that values community."

Questions?

If your company is interested in a project that nurtures employee interaction, email Candace Carter at Candace_Carter@Cargill.com. Candace is happy to share the bountiful ideas the Cargill employee garden has produced.

Candace Carter, Cargill, Inc.
ClimateWise Gold Partner
Photo by Cambon Studios

The employee garden produced 1,300 pounds of produce for the Food Bank for Larimer County.

The garden also built camaraderie, interdepartmental interaction and a strengthened sense of community.



Energy Savings: Food Bank for Larimer County

Totally Tubular - Daylighting for Energy Savings

In the interest of amping up efficiency and continually serving the community, the Food Bank for Larimer County began a daylighting project to provide direct sunlight to its warehouse. The warehouse was undergoing a roof replacement, so the Food Bank seized the opportunity to reduce its environmental impact and enhance the facility atmosphere.

The results of this project have not been quantified yet, but Bruce Wallace, programs director for the Food Bank for Larimer County is happy to report some of the unmeasurable benefits. "We know there will be energy savings from the daylighting project later as we leave the lights off during those hours we can channel daylight down the tubes. Right now there are advantages like a safer work environment from increased light and employees who seem to be in better moods."

This project is just one of the Food Bank's many accomplishments. The organization also composts any unusable food and strives to provide fresh local produce to those in need.

2.9 Million Pounds of Food Rescued

The food bank's Food Rescue program is part of their effort to provide fresh local food. In 2013, 60,000 pounds a week were diverted – rescued if you will – from the landfill.

The bananas turning from yellow to brown, day-old bakery goods, fresh produce blemished with minor bruises and dented canned goods are all perfectly good, safe, nutritious food products. These products would normally be discarded, tossed out and lost, so the Food Bank's Food Rescue project collects, inspects and passes the food to those in need.

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The vision of the food bank is a hunger-free Larimer County. The agency's mission is to provide food to all in need through community partnerships and hunger-relief programs. In 2013, the Food Bank for Larimer County provided 8.7 million pounds of donated food to low-income residents through three programs: Food Share, Food Link and Child Nutrition/Kids Cafe. Over 48 percent of this food comes from local sources.

Since 2009, the Food Bank for Larimer County has partnered with the City of Fort Collins' ClimateWise program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, operate more efficiently and better serve the community.

"As we divert usable food from the landfill, we are being climate wise. At the same time, we have more food on our shelves to distribute, and without direct costs, the return on investment is high. That's business smart," declares Bruce.

Bruce also is thankful that "as a ClimateWise partner, the Food Bank is able to make good connections with other local businesses that help us with all of our sustainability programs."

Questions?

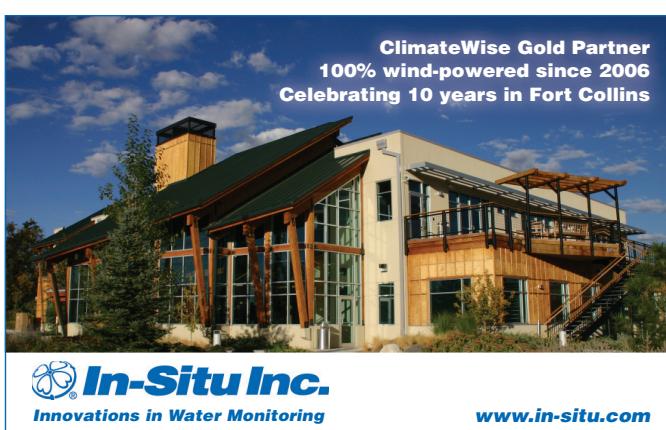
You, too, can help divert food from the landfill. Bruce says if you know of a grocery store or local grower who has food that needs to be rescued, contact him.

Connect with Bruce at bwallace@foodbanklarimer.org.

Bruce Wallace, Food Bank for Larimer County
ClimateWise Silver Partner
Photo by Cambon Studios

The Food Bank's solar tubes reduce energy and save money.

The organization has also diverted 2.9 million pounds of food from the landfill by reuse and composting.



Waste Reduction: Poudre River Public Library District

All wrapped up

In considering projects to reduce its environmental impact, the Poudre River Public Library District faced unique challenges and opportunities in coordinating various facilities. When the District wanted to reduce solid waste, it enlisted the help of ClimateWise. In 2013, as part of its Employee Recycle Challenge, the library district asked ClimateWise to conduct an assessment of the district's administration building, which resulted in an invitation to join the City of Fort Collins' pilot project to recycle soft plastics including: shipping materials, bubble wrap, shrink wrap and plastic bags.

The overall goal of the pilot was to divert soft plastic materials from the landfill. In keeping with the district's commitment to ensuring environmental responsibility, employees in all three libraries and the administration building took up the challenge and began collecting soft plastics.

The plastics were taken to the pilot drop off site during normal travel between library district facilities, so there was no increase in travel or staff time. Adding soft plastics to the district's recycling program was a simple step toward a larger solid waste reduction.

Jeff Barnes, of the Poudre River Library District, commented that the project's results have been amazing. He said the library district takes a 30-gallon bag to the pilot drop off site every week and the only additional resource required was a separate collection container.

Recommendations

The Poudre River Public Library District recommends a ClimateWise assessment to determine which materials, such as soft plastics, can be eliminated from the landfill.

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The Poudre River Public Library District serves more than 180,100 people across 1,800 square miles in northern Larimer County. Anchored by three libraries and an administration building in Fort Collins, the district is dedicated to matching diverse needs, interests and priorities with exceptional opportunities for learning, intellectual stimulation and personal enjoyment. The organization is committed to creating a community where innovation is encouraged and environmental responsibility is ensured.

"ClimateWise staff is always there to answer questions and provide guidance as we've developed our employee recycling challenges. The ideas we get from ClimateWise programs and partner tours greatly help us with our sustainability goals."

Jeff Barnes, Poudre River Public Library District

Questions?

Thinking of starting a soft plastics recycling program? Louise Mosnik would be happy to talk more about the Poudre River Public Library District's project. Contact her at Lmosnik@PoudreLibraries.org.

Call ClimateWise at 970-221-6700 for more information about a zero waste audit.

Soft plastics diverted from the landfill:

- Weekly: 30 gallons
- June 1 – Dec. 31, 2013: 1,200 gallons



Jeff Barnes and Erin Senseman
Poudre River Public Library District
ClimateWise Platinum Partner
Photo by Cambon Studios

Alternative Transportation: Tetra Tech, Inc. Fort Collins

Biking for Burgers

To encourage the use of alternative transportation, the Tetra Tech office in Fort Collins implemented a bike-to-work program that not only earned corporate kudos, it also inspired Tetra Tech offices nationwide to embark on similar projects. The program challenged employees to forgo their cars a minimum of one day per month and provided the added benefit of camaraderie as they gathered to discuss biking success stories at a monthly lunchtime BBQ.

Results

The benefits of this celebratory BBQ extended beyond merely clocking miles. Employees gained a deeper sense of community and environmental stewardship. Friendly competition and gift certificates were used to inspire participants in various categories. One month, the rider of the coolest bike, however that might be described, was a winner. The next, it was the staffer who rode to work in the craziest costume. The goal was good, clean fun paired with environmental stewardship – and Tetra Tech excelled in every category.

Recommendations

Mark Bishop, ClimateWise representative for Tetra Tech's Fort Collins office and organizer of the bike-to-work challenge, advises starting with a ClimateWise assessment and talking to employees before developing goals. When employees foster ideas and top-level managers support them, projects have the greatest opportunity for success. Most importantly, Bishop stressed the importance of finding a passionate project champion whose enthusiasm is contagious.

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Tetra Tech is a leading provider of consulting, engineering, program and construction management, and technical services worldwide. Employing 14,000 people in 330 offices, Tetra Tech seeks sustainable solutions that improve quality of life.

A ClimateWise partner since 2009, Tetra Tech has implemented several sustainable changes to its office, including the installation of coffee airpots to reduce coffee ground waste and replacing the refrigerator and dishwasher with more energy-efficient models. They also replaced paper plates and plastic utensils with dishes and silverware and installed a backyard digester to manage organic waste. While these upgrades made large strides toward improving office sustainability, it's the Bikes and BBQ project that scored the highest points with employees.

Questions?

Is your company interested in combining social responsibility and environmental stewardship?

Mark would be glad to share how Tetra Tech Fort Collins reduced greenhouse gas emissions by garaging cars one day – or more – each month.

Mark can be reached at mark.bishop@tetrtech.com.

4,700 vehicle miles avoided by Tetra Tech's bike-to-work challenge.



Mark Bishop, Tetra Tech, Inc.
ClimateWise Silver Partner
Photo by Cambon Studios

Water Conservation: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service

They've got the beet

Sugarbeets have a two-year cycle for producing seeds, which means the beets used for research have to go through vernalization – a cold treatment that replicates the effects of a winter in the field. The sugarbeets also need to be thoroughly washed to remove soil.

As a group, the Sugarbeet Research Unit is acutely aware of sustainability issues, and the amount of water that was used to clean the sugarbeets was a concern. The group took it upon themselves to design a new wash stand that would use less water and save time washing each beet, as well as decrease physical stress and injuries for those using it.

Results

Success! Using ideas gathered from the entire group, the newly invented washing system uses only 6 gallons per minute (GPM) compared to older wash stands that use between 10 and 15 GPM. It cleans the beets twice as fast, and the estimated water savings over the first year of use is 10,000 gallons.

The older stands require users to pull water nozzles to the beets, which was a constant strain on shoulders, wrists and hands. The new washing stand allows users to hold the beet under the nozzle, greatly reducing the risk for injury. The new design is simple, and requires less down time for repairs.

Faster and kinder to the environment, as well as people, the new washing stand conserves water, time and money. It is a prime example of the strong commitment to sustainability and environmental management held by USDA sugarbeet research employees.

Recommendations

Not every company has a need for a sugarbeet washing stand, but Lee Panella, supervisory research geneticist at the Fort Collins USDA Agricultural Research Service, and Travis Vagher, field manager, offer advice for projects of a similar nature.

They recommend the use of all available resources and soliciting employees for ideas. This helps ensure the project is

more effective and efficient. Flexibility is also important, because what is thought to be workable in the beginning may need to be modified.

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Sugarbeets account for approximately 55 percent of U.S. sugar production. The USDA Fort Collins Sugarbeet Research Farm unit is dedicated to clearly defining diseases that can devastate the crop. The goal is to develop and distribute enhanced seeds with unique stress resistance genes to meet the diverse and changing needs of the U.S. beet sugar industry.

While the washing stand has great conservation potential, Shanna Henk, USDA safety and occupational health specialist, credits the ClimateWise program with equally great contributions to the research station's overall sustainability goals in other areas. Through the connections made at ClimateWise events, she picks up "cool ideas" that help develop better practices for the organization.

10,000 gallons of water saved annually with new sugarbeet washing system.

Questions

The sugar beet research team would be glad to field questions about the inventive process they used to develop their new washing stand.

Connect with Shanna Henk at shanna.henk@ars.usda.gov.



ClimateWise Business Partners Make a Difference

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