



2010

Maryland Green Registry Leadership Award Winner



Union Hospital of Cecil County



106 Bow Street
Elkton, MD 21921
410-392-7045
www.uhcc.com

The Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards recognize organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the implementation of sustainable practices, the demonstration of measurable results, and the continuous improvement of environmental performance. Read here how these award winners achieved their environmental successes and continue to move their organization forward along the path to sustainability.

What innovation or set of results are you most proud of?

Union Hospital is most proud of the progress that we have made to adopt sustainable agricultural practices into our food service department. We have signed the Healthy Food in Health Care pledge and adopted a climate change strategy through our commitment to the Balanced Menu Challenge, both administered by Health Care Without Harm.

How do you involve employees in your environmental programs and projects and keep them motivated?

For the past two years, we have developed Earth Day activities to communicate and engage all employees, as well as the community. The Union Hospital Green Health Initiative committee communicates to staff, visitors, and the community through bulletin boards within the hospital, and recognition on the Hospital internet site. The Green Health Initiative was also invited to speak at the last Board of Directors meeting to involve all partners in our environmental stewardship. We also have employees volunteer for our green team which has worked out well, as they are fully engaged with our mission.

How do you measure and ensure continuous improvement in environmental performance? What have you learned from this process?

When we initiated our green team, we established benchmarks for current year statistics. We will utilize these benchmarks to measure our success with programs such as our single stream recycling initiative and medical waste reduction strategies. To ensure continuous improvement we have developed a scorecard which outlines each initiative which we score by labeling “not yet implemented,” “good progress,” “near completion,” or “fully implemented”. We utilize this scorecard to communicate our progress with staff and the community.

We have learned that it was important to prioritize projects and maintain a record to coordinate several initiatives running at the same time.

What is the first step you would recommend that someone take when starting to green their organization?

We would strongly recommend calling in the experts to begin the process of implementing a green team. At our



Holly Emmons, Union Hospital Food Service Manager, on left, speaking at 2010 Clean Med Conference.

institution, we utilize Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (MD2HE). They were invaluable in providing us information and getting us started in the right direction.

We would also recommend working with the local municipal recycling center. Tanya Adam, Recycling Coordinator with Cecil County Recycling and Environmental programs through the Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Management Division, has been extremely helpful and supportive with all of our recycling efforts. Through the development of our environmentally preferred purchasing policy, we have developed new relationships with vendors which were instrumental in establishing good environmental practices.

What future innovations would you like to see in your industry and what is your vision for your organization?

We would like to see continued development with the patient care centered healthcare buildings, which are environmentally friendly and focused on high quality patient care. As an institution, we have heightened our responsibility for the entire cycle of providing care, from developing and implementing environmentally preferred purchasing policies, integrated pest management programs, single stream recycling, and other environmentally preferred methods to our commitment reduce, reuse, and recycle.

For more information on environmental best practices at Union Hospital of Cecil County, visit the Maryland Green Registry website at www.green.maryland.gov/registry and click on List of Maryland Green Registry Members to view member profiles.



Union Hospital's green team organizing recycling efforts at a hospital golf tournament.



Earth Day planting at Union Hospital.

The Maryland Green Registry is a voluntary program that promotes and recognizes environmentally sustainable practices in organizations of all types and sizes across the State. Visit the Maryland Green Registry website at www.green.maryland.gov/registry for tips and resources designed to help organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability.



Smart, Green & Growing