



Reduce Your Waste Stream Challenge for Waukesha County Schools 2011-12

Waukesha County conducted a Reduce Your Waste Stream Team Challenge in fall 2010. Thirty-two families **reduced their waste by an average 49% and increased recycling by 66%** over 4 weeks. *Imagine if hundreds of families could be motivated to try the Challenge and find out what a positive impact they can have on the environment and their community through some simple changes!*

What: Households conduct weekly weigh-ins for their trash and recycling for one week before the Challenge starts (baseline) and 4 weeks during which they try to reduce their trash and increase their recycling as much as they can.

Why: Engage families of school children in a new Challenge that benefits their school and the community. The Challenge ties in with curriculum in science, engineering and math, project-based learning, and state standards. Not only do participants conserve resources and energy, they help reduce their community's trash disposal costs and increase recycling rebates!

How: Schools sign up to participate at recycling@waukeshacounty.gov or call 262-896-8300. Schools with at least 25% of the families in the school completing the Challenge receive a \$1,000 grant under the Waukesha County Green Schools Program.

When: During the 2011-2012 school year. Schools can select timing of their Challenge to coincide with Earth month or other school or community events.

Waukesha County will provide:

1. Reduce Your Waste Stream website for participants to sign up, report their weekly weights, blog and ask questions.
2. Education
 - a. Kickoff event /announcement
 - b. Tips, weighing protocol, blog site
 - c. Colorful posters for classrooms
3. Grant funds once project is completed and publicized
4. Discounts for participants on home compost bins at Retzer Learning Center
5. Incentives for families to participate: drawing for a local waterpark, zoo and theater passes

Challenge school will:

1. Promote Challenge, determine timeframe, and recruit families
2. Publicize results via press release, school/district website, school newsletter, etc.
3. Integrate Challenge in curriculum wherever possible.