



Case Study of Kentucky American Water

Keys to Success



Project Description



Economic Value



Challenges & Advice



Benefits



Stewardship Meaning



Energy usage is a major expense for most businesses, including Kentucky American Water in Lexington. The company partnered with Sustainable Energy Now from the Kentucky Pollution Prevention Program to do an evaluation of the energy usage of the main office and pumping stations.

“We are committed to reducing energy usage by 2.5 percent each year for the next 10 years,” says David Shehee, Superintendent, Water Quality and Environmental Compliance and leader of the company’s Green Team. “Our pumps use 98 percent of the company’s energy, so data loggers were installed on the pumps to evaluate their efficiency. This should give us a really good jump on energy usage, trimming it where we can. Also, we are evaluating several variable-speed pumps to get better energy efficiency.”

“We promote the environment and encourage people to make small changes at first,” says Susan Lancho.

customers less than \$0.01 per gallon.

Working to minimize energy usage in other areas, the company requested an energy audit, which has led to replacing T-12 and metal halide lights with T-8 and fluorescents. Motion sensors are on the lights in every room of the buildings.

Kentucky American created a Green Team of 18-20 employees to lead the company’s environmental efforts. The company is involved in several projects, including the planting of native grasses on four of the property’s 85 acres to encourage more wildlife, get rid of nuisance

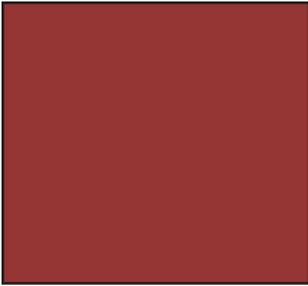
plants, decrease the amount of mowing needed and to beautify the area. Home to deer, foxes, geese, a variety of birds and other animals, the property has been designated as a “Wildlife Friendly Habitat” by the Kentucky Department of Forestry and the Department of Fish & Wildlife.

WaterFest is held annually at the company’s Lexington property for

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Kentucky American Water pumps an average of 40 million gallons of water daily, has 137 employees and charges



the public and draws about 600 people. There are exhibits, tours of the plant and activities to focus on protecting waterways.

“Our goal is to show that we do more than ensure our customers have clean drinking water,” says Susan Lancho, External Affairs Manager for the water company. “We promote the environment and encourage people to make small changes at first.”

Recycling is a major project for the company. Shehee says the goal is to recycle 10 percent more than the previous year. Items that are recycled include computers, monitors, old meters, batteries, CFLs, paper, glass, cardboard, cans, plastic, cell phones, plastic bags, office paper and used oil.

Kentucky American partnered with the local government in its



An employee shows piping to a young WaterFest visitor.

Med Toss/National Take-Back Day to collect old prescription drugs. The water company collected 397.4 pounds, which was more than any other location that day.

A few other projects include participating in Adopt-a-Highway, using rain barrels to collect rainwater to water flowers, an annual river sweep, tree planting with Reforest the Bluegrass, environmental grants program and scholarships.



Through some of its projects, the water company is saving money and lessening its environmental impact by using energy-efficient lights and pumps. The waste stream is decreased through recycling, which incurs fewer landfill expenses. By planting native grasses on four acres, the company mows less, saving on gasoline and labor expenses.



“The biggest challenge is getting people to buy into going green,” says Shehee. “Start out with the low-hanging fruit. Once people start buying into the positives, then you can go beyond to larger things. In KY EXCEL, you can learn from other members.”



Kentucky-American Green Team cup



The Kentucky American Water projects help to protect the waterways and educate the public about the importance of not polluting the streams. The recycling program donates old cell phones to the local police department and ensures that other items are disposed of properly. Wildlife habitats are being restored to benefit animals in the area.



“If you teach people how to do the small things, they can have a huge impact on the environment,” says Shehee.

HELPFUL HINT: Start with small changes and work your way up to larger projects. Make these changes a permanent part of your life.