

COMMUNICATING GREEN LIGHTS SUCCESS



A major benefit of participating in EPA's ENERGY STAR BuildingsSM and Green Lights[®] Partnership is the positive recognition you receive as an environmental leader. Joining ENERGY STAR Buildings or Green Lights can help create better customer relations, a friendlier atmosphere for employees, and a better reputation in your business community. Successfully communicating your involvement in the program is critical to receiving this recognition.



ACTION CHECKLIST

Order EPA's ENERGY STAR[®] Communication Starter Kit to learn how to:

- ✓ Announce Your new EPA partnership.
- ✓ Inform your employees.
- ✓ Communicate milestones.
- ✓ Promote your commitment externally.



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WHY COMMUNICATE ABOUT ENERGY STAR BUILDINGS AND GREEN LIGHTS?

Environmental communications is integral to the success of any organization's environmental and communications program, and your ENERGY STAR Buildings and Green Lights participation makes a perfect story for your environmental communications effort.

Benefits of Environmental Communications:

1. Gaining Top Management Buy-In

Initiating the communications process by sharing information about your partnership to top management will help you gain early support for implementing program steps.

2. Motivating and Informing Employees

Talking up your program with employees both in your department and throughout your organization generates enthusiasm for your organization's involvement. It motivates implementation team members to participate, informs other employees early so they can anticipate

implementation activities and impacts, and helps spread the word of your organization's Partnership.

3. Improving Your Organization's Environmental Image

Organizations working to improve the environment don't receive kudos unless people know about it. Good environmental communications allows others to recognize your contributions and helps to enhance your organization's environmental track record.

4. Strengthening Stakeholder Relations

Organization stakeholders are individuals who directly or indirectly impact the performance of your organization. They include shareholders, employees, customers, community members, and suppliers. Providing these stakeholder groups with relevant information about your organization, such as good news about the environment, can help build relations with them. Improved stakeholder relations means more investors, happier employees, loyal customers, proud community members, and cooperative suppliers.

5. Increasing Sales and Market Share

Consumer behavior has become increasingly dependent on the perceptions of manufacturers' social responsibility practices, such as consumer relations, employee treatment, and environmental practices, and on whether a product itself has environmental attributes. Thirty-one percent of 2,000 consumers polled said an organization's corporate responsibility practices, which include environmental practices, were key in their purchasing decisions (Source: Cone/Roper, 1994); 38 percent of consumers avoid buying products from companies not environmentally responsible (Source: Roper Starch Worldwide, 1995).

6. Communicating Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is good for the environment.

Everyone knows that using energy wisely saves money. What is not well-known is that energy efficiency is good for the environment. This makes your ENERGY STAR Buildings and Green Lights partnership newsworthy. The connection is easy. Energy is often generated by burning fossil fuels. When fossil fuels are burned, atmospheric pollutants such as carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxide are released into the air, resulting in air pollution. As we use energy efficiently, we burn less fuel and pollute less.

Energy efficiency is important to people.

Energy efficiency is emerging as a key concern. Awareness is growing about the link between energy consumption and creation of air pollution, a leading environmental concern among Americans. Americans are

also concerned about other environmental problems associated with energy consumption, such as acid rain and global warming caused by the greenhouse effect.

If you believe that your organization's stakeholders may not care about lighting and other forms of facilities-related energy efficiency, remember that energy efficiency is not just about new technologies and reduced energy costs. It is also about environmental benefits like clean air, and about what your customers can do to realize the same benefits at home. These are the aspects of your ENERGY STAR Buildings and Green Lights story that will appeal to everyone.

Your Partnership with EPA is big news.

Your organization's participation in EPA's programs represents a proactive approach to helping the environment that's voluntary and nonregulatory. It also represents a partnership with EPA - working together to find the best approaches to energy efficiency and pollution prevention. This partnership can serve as an example of the benefits of voluntary programs - something your stakeholders will appreciate.

THE ENERGY STAR® COMMUNICATIONS STARTER KIT.

The ENERGY STAR® Communications Starter Kit step-by-step guide will help you:

- communicate your organization's commitment to energy-efficiency upgrades,
- share information about the upgrade process,
- demonstrate progress toward completing the upgrades,
- and showcase the benefits of improved facilities and energy savings.

The Starter Kit is a collection of strategies, tools, and case studies that can be used by anyone at your organization. Project managers and directors may find the Starter Kit useful to gain support from top management and employees. Communications and marketing staff can learn about the Partnership, the commitments your organizations has made, and what benefits participation brings. Below is a brief outline about the steps included in the Starter Kit.

Step One: Announcing Your New EPA Partnership

Organizations new to ENERGY STAR Buildings and Green Lights can jump-start their participation with a high-profile event or publication. Step one of the Starter Kit provides

samples, explains applicable tools, and offers assistance with planning and staging events. A case study of Walt Disney World shows how these methods were successful. After Disney held a high-profile signing ceremony celebrating its new Partnership, employees were enthused about the new initiative, and the corporate and public community learned of the undertaking from the positive media attention that was generated.

Step Two: Informing Your Employees

Once your organization is ready to implement energy-efficiency upgrades, it can earn the support of employees by familiarizing them with the process. The second step of the Starter Kit suggests holding meetings and events, using employee newsletters and memos, or applying other ideas to motivate and inform. Tools available include templates for articles and presentations, ready-made brochures and materials, and EPA-hosted workshops and events. Siemens Business Communications Systems shares how it succeeded in informing and involving employees by creating an Energy Conservation Team, educating workers about energy use and the team's goals, and holding Earth Day events to celebrate and inform. This effort developed pride internally about the company's energy savings and environmental benefits through the Partnership, which enhanced Siemens' positive community image.

Step Three: Communicating Milestones

Promoting major accomplishments in implementing facility upgrades will maintain and build internal support, produce recognition of your achievements, and generate enthusiasm for new upgrade projects. Step three of the Starter Kit presents both simple and innovative ways to update employees and stakeholders of your organization's progress, honor project implementors, and communicate the energy and environmental benefits achieved so far. In addition to the samples of newsletter articles, videos, events, and advertisements provided in this section, the Partnership also can assist in communicating milestones through EPA publications and awards (see insert on the Partner and Ally of the Year Contest). A case study on Westinghouse Electric Corporation, a 1996 Green Lights Partner of the Year, demonstrates how communicating upgrade savings and success can transform poor program visibility and support into a motivated company-wide push for further implementation.

Partner and Ally of the Year Contest

Every year, EPA recognizes a few organizations for their outstanding efforts in implementing quality energy-efficiency upgrades and communicating the benefits to their employees, customers, and the community. Winners of the annual ENERGY STAR BuildingsSM and Green Lights[®] Partner and Ally of the Year contest have received national publicity in the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Fortune* magazine. Both well-known organizations such as McDonald's and the University of Cincinnati, as well as smaller participants such as Davenport Community Schools and St. Joseph Hospital in Pennsylvania, can claim to be past Partners and Allies of the Year. Following a comprehensive communications strategy could help your organization join this elite group.

Step Four: Promoting Your Commitment Externally

Your organization can boost its public and corporate image by reaffirming its commitment to the community and the environment. The fourth step in the Starter Kit shows how to advertise and celebrate these accomplishments and introduces tools for additional assistance. Improving your organization's image can do a lot for the bottom line, as illustrated by the grocery store chain Larry's Markets. The company conducted presentations and workshops on energy savings and environmental achievements, and generated customer awareness with information on the benefits of completed upgrades and use of Partnership logos. A poll conducted by a local university determined that 90 percent of Larry's Markets customers increased their patronage because of the store's positive environmental image.

How to order the ENERGY STAR Communications Starter Kit

To order the Starter Kit, you may call the toll-free ENERGY STAR Hotline at 1-888-STAR YES (1-888-782-7937), contact your account manager, or visit one of our Web pages on the Internet at: www.energystar or www.epa.gov/buildings.

PARTNER COMMUNICATION EXAMPLES

Following are three examples of how Partners have communicated their involvement and success with the Green Lights Program.



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GREEN LIGHTS®

A Bright Investment in the Environment

Green Lights, one of several ENERGY STAR programs, is sponsored by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and encourages major US corporations and other organizations to install energy-efficient lighting technologies.

Organizations that make the commitment to Green Lights will profit by lowering their electricity bills, improving lighting quality, and increasing worker productivity. They will also reduce the air pollution caused by electricity generation.

For more information, contact the Green Lights program office.

Green Lights Program
US EPA
401 M Street, SW (6202J)
Washington, DC 20460

ENERGY STAR Hotline

☎ 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937)
Fax: (202) 775-6680

Green Lights Homepage

www.epa.gov/greenlights/

ENERGY STAR Homepage

www.epa.gov/energystar/

Communicating Green Lights Success is one of a series of documents known collectively as the *Lighting Upgrade Manual*. Other documents in the Manual are Listed below.

LIGHTING UPGRADE MANUAL

Planning

- *Green Lights Program*
- *Implementation Planning Guidebook*
- *Financial Considerations*
- *Lighting Waste Disposal*
- *Progress Reporting*
- *Communicating Green Lights Success*

Technical

- *Lighting Fundamentals*
- *Lighting Upgrade Technologies*
- *Lighting Maintenance*
- *Lighting Evaluations*
- *The Lighting Survey*

Appendices

- *Upgrading Tenant Spaces*
- *Green Lights for Federal Participants*
- *Requesting Proposals*

☞ To order other documents or appendices in this series, contact the ENERGY STAR Hotline at 1-888-STAR-YES. Look in the ENERGY STAR *Update* newsletter for announcements of new publications.

