

GREEN

ON THE CAPE & ISLANDS



BUSINESSES SEEING GREEN

Written By Susan Spencer

Whether your office is in your spare bedroom or at a major corporation, you can make the workplace – and the world – more sustainable. Cape & Islands Green, a step-by-step verification program coordinated by the Sandwich, Hyannis Area, and Cape Cod chambers of commerce, helps businesses meet environmental goals.

Momentum is building as the first dozen businesses to go through Cape & Islands Green Level I verification share their experience and more businesses join the movement. "We're trying to create a ripple effect," says Amanda Converse, who oversees the program and provides technical assistance to businesses pursuing verification.

Structuring the program with achievable steps has proved helpful to organizations making eco-friendly changes. "We're so busy doing our daily things, we don't always realize our impact on the environment," says Dawn Lucier, a physical therapist and neuro-education coordinator at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital Cape Cod in Sandwich. Lucier co-chairs the hospital's Green Team with physical therapist and outpatient manager, Sharon Gale.

The challenge for hospitals' energy-saving efforts is that they run 24/7, Lucier says. Spaulding staff members now turn off equipment that's not in use. Working with vendors, the hospital has reduced supply shipments and catalogs, and switched to green cleaning products. Kitchen waste is composted. And when staff became aware of the state's anti-idling statute through Cape & Islands Green, they contacted their primary ambulance company to request that waiting vehicles be turned off.

Cape Cod Five, which has for some time implemented green practices including recycling, reducing energy use and using electronic transactions, was eager to lead the way when Cape & Islands Green was launched. "As a relatively prominent business, it was appropriate for us to get in there right away," says Chief Operating Officer Robert Talerman. "The only way it works is if everybody does their piece.

This offered us the opportunity to do more."

Talerman says Cape & Islands Green's tiered progress levels make it business-friendly. "The hurdle of getting in isn't that daunting."

Besides working across the bank's multiple sites, Cape Cod Five demonstrates commitment to sustainability through its charitable foundation. For instance, it supported a green building program at Cape Cod Regional Technical High School and a recycling project by CHAMP Homes.

While some businesses face more challenges than others to go green, Ellen Brady's Cheap Chic Interiors in Hyannis is green by its very nature. "I use what people already have," says the certified interior home redeesigner and stager.

Still, she's seen improvement since participating in Cape & Islands Green. Brady says, "The energy audit was especially revealing because my business is out of my house. We didn't have any insulation in our walls."

Brady plans to insulate her home and make it more energy efficient. She's incorporating more sustainability into her work, too, like giving clients a list of how to recycle anything. "I definitely want to move on to Level II verification," she says.

Dorothy Torrey, an alkaline food and lifestyle educator in Sandwich, says connecting with Cape & Islands Green is one way businesses can act locally to change the world. "It's not just insulating the house and changing light bulbs: it's changing a lifestyle."

Torrey is using less paper and cutting waste in her home business. She's also reducing solid waste from plastic water bottles – only 12 percent are

VERIFIED GREEN

Congratulations to the following business leaders for being the first to have completed requirements for Level I verification with Cape & Islands Green:

Horsely Witten Group, Sandwich, 508-833-6600, www.horselywitten.com

Jill Neubauer Architects, Falmouth, 508-548-0909, www.jnarchitects.com

g Green Design Center, Mashpee, 508-477-7988, www.ggreendesign.com

La Plaza Del Sol Hotel, Mashpee, 508-477-0238, www.laplazadelso.com

Agway, Sandwich, 508-888-0044, www.capegardencenter.com

Cape Cod Five, Sandwich, 508-833-8837, www.capecodfive.com

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Barnstable, 508-362-3977, www.stmarys-church.org

Cleangreen, Dennis, 508-939-1300, www.cleangreencapecod.com

Cape Cod Beer, Barnstable, 508-790-4200, www.capecodbeer.com

Alive With Water, Sandwich, 508-888-6677, www.alivewithwater.com

Rehabilitation Hospital of the Cape and Islands, Sandwich, 508-833-4000, www.rhci.org

Shift Boutique, Barnstable, 508-775-2652, www.shiftboutique.com

Cheap Chic Interiors, Barnstable, 508-367-5334, www.cheapchicinteriors.com

recycled – by introducing people to healthy water from their tap.

Cape & Islands Green is going Cape-wide through a new collaboration with the Lower Cape's Community Development Partnership (CDP). On March 11, the initiative, called "Smart Energy for the Lower Cape" will host a sustainability conference at Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, along with Cape Light Compact and Cape & Islands Self-Reliance Corporation. The event will offer tools for small businesses to make significant changes in reducing their energy consumption. The Lower Cape CDP will offer their workshops beginning in mid-March. Visit capecdp.org/info/workshops.php for dates and time.

Another Cape & Islands Green Level I workshop will be held April 5 at Spaulding Rehabilitation of Cape Cod in Sandwich.

Visit www.capeandislandsgreen.org or the group's Facebook page for news and events. **cha**