

LOWELL GREEN RESTAURANT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



3rd Annual Regionalization Toolkit Conference

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TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- Purpose
- Project History
- Partners

- Process
- Progress
- Next Steps



PURPOSE

- **Consumers are requesting to know more about green.**

- 40% of shoppers desire more green information at the store level.

Source: BBMG Conscious Consumer Report, 2009.

- **Green restaurants and businesses have a competitive advantage.**

- 53% indicated they would choose a restaurant that is socially and environmentally responsible over another which isn't.
- 23% said they would make the same choice even if the wait time was longer.
- 47% said they expect to pay more at a restaurant with a social and environmental focus.

Source: SCA's Tork Brand 2011 Survey, June 2011.

- **Green certifications are viewed as more legit.**

“Green certifications are an unbiased way to let your customers know your efforts are genuine and authentic,” said [Tork Green Hygiene Council™](#) member Joshua Radoff. “Consumers are increasingly wary of greenwashing and are looking to claims that are substantive and backed by third party certifications wherever possible.”

Source: SCA's Tork Brand 2011 Survey, June 2011.

did you know?

- 1** Last year, almost 30% of all meals (and 40% of food dollars) were eaten away from home.
- 2** Nationwide the restaurant industry consumes 1/3rd of all retail electricity use.
- 3** Demand for organic foods is growing at 25% per year.



PROJECT HISTORY

January 2010 – City Councilor requests Green Building Commission to investigate Best Practices Guide

February 2010 – Subcommittee formed to develop guide

2010 – 2011 – Monthly meetings held – guide turns into certification program

April 2011 – Request NMCOCG's assistance to create formal program. Funding from DLTA



PARTNERS

- Lowell Green Building Commission
- City of Lowell – Department of Planning and Development
- Lowell Restaurants
 - Mambo Grill
 - La Boniche
 - Life Alive
 - Brew'd Awakenings Coffeehaus
 - Fio's Pizza
 - Espresso Pizza



PROCESS

- Researched restaurant and business certification programs
- Common themes and components:
 - Scoring
 - Green measures
 - Process for certification
 - Cost
 - Benefits
 - Staffing



PROCESS

- Created program process and checklist that combined needs with green goals
- Introduced program at Green Restaurant Summit
- Gathered feedback from restaurants and stakeholders



PROCESS – PROGRAM GOAL

To assess a restaurant based on the green initiatives they have implemented to reduce energy use, conserve water, recycle or reuse products to keep them out of the waste stream, eliminate harmful toxins from our air and water, and overall, to reduce their carbon



PROCESS – GETTING CERTIFIED

How to Become a Lowell Green Restaurant:

- Contact the Green Certification Coordinator to express interest
- When ready to apply, submit the enrollment form and completed checklist
- Upon completion of the enrollment form and checklist, schedule a site visit with the Green Certification Coordinator
- Once successfully cleared by the Green Certification Coordinator, Lowell Green Restaurant Certification recognition will be awarded

How to Maintain Your Certification:

- Continue to implement items on the checklist
- After Year 2, complete an assessment to verify that the Lowell Green Restaurant standards are being met.
- Work with the Green Certification Coordinator to identify additional green initiatives that can be undertaken.



PROCESS – PROGRAM BENEFITS

Program Benefits:

- Publicize “being green” with window decals
- Post Lowell Green Certification logos on websites/marketing material
- Listing in Green Restaurant Directory
- Energy/money savings
- Increase in business
- Promotion – websites and promotional materials
- Mentoring from fellow restaurants
- Networking – learn best practices from your peers
- Become more Sustainable
- Access to Energy and Sustainability resources
- More buying power



PROGRESS

- Developed more interest from Summit
- Continue to meet monthly to network and learn
- Identified 3 issues to work on collaboratively
- Meeting with key stakeholders in Lowell about the program
- Created Google group to communicate and share best practices between meetings



NEXT STEPS

- Establish administration for program
- Identify sustainable funding source
- Continue meeting to guide restaurants through the checklist and implement **green** measures
- Investigate regionalizing the program



LESSONS LEARNED...TO-DATE

- Have a clear champion
- Research, research, research
- Establish common understanding of the program goals and objectives
- Who's we? Find a program home early
- Be flexible with communication methods and meetings times for restaurants
- Create an equal playing field



QUESTIONS???



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DRAFT

Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Process

June 2011

To get certified by the Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Program, restaurants need to follow a couple of simple steps:

How to Become a Lowell Green Restaurant:

1. Contact the Green Certification Coordinator to express interest
2. When ready to apply, submit the [enrollment form](#) and completed [checklist](#)
3. Upon completion of the enrollment form and checklist, schedule a site visit with the Green Certification Coordinator
4. Once successfully cleared by the Green Certification Coordinator, Lowell Green Restaurant Certification recognition will be awarded

How to Maintain Your Certification:

1. Continue to implement items on the checklist
2. After Year 2, complete an assessment to verify that the Lowell Green Restaurant standards are being met.
3. Work with the Green Certification Coordinator to identify additional green initiatives that can be undertaken.

What is the goal of the Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Program?

The aim of certification is to assess a restaurant based on the green initiatives they have implemented to reduce energy use, conserve water, recycle or reuse products to keep them out of the waste stream, eliminate harmful toxins from our air and water, and overall, to reduce their carbon footprint.

What are the (potential) benefits of becoming a Lowell Green Restaurant?

1. Certified restaurants can show off their “green-mindedness” with [window stickers](#).
2. Post Lowell Green Certification logos on websites or marketing material
3. Listing in our [Green Restaurant Directory](#).
4. Energy/money savings
5. Increase in business
6. Promotion – websites and promotional materials
7. Mentoring from fellow restaurants
8. Networking – learn best practices from your peers
9. Become more Sustainable
10. Access to Energy and Sustainability resources
11. More buying power

How is a Lowell Green Restaurant identified?

Lowell Green Restaurants can proudly display “Lowell Green Restaurant” window stickers upon successfully completing the [steps above](#). They can also use this logo on their website and marketing materials. Additionally, in the future, patrons will be able to search for Green Restaurants in Lowell, and region-wide.

How long does it take?

Restaurateurs can expect to spend about 4-6 hours to complete the checklist and overall certification process. Some preparatory work is required by the restaurant in order to assemble evidence for initiatives completed in the checklist. The verification visit with the Green Certification Coordinator will probably take about an hour.

Who runs the Green Restaurant Certification Verification?

The verification is overseen by _____. *Include details about who they are and how they were involved. What are their credentials?*

What's on the checklist and how are restaurants assessed?

The checklist includes five General Practices and ____ Green Initiatives broken down into five categories. The General Practices, which must be met by all Green Certified Restaurants, include:

1. Track water and energy usage and solid waste generation.
2. Adopt a written environmentally preferable (or green) purchasing policy.
3. Establish a 'green team' that can help guide efforts to green your business.
4. Inform your customers about your efforts as part of the Lowell Green Restaurant Program.
5. Assist at least one other business in learning about the Green Restaurant Program and encourage them to enroll.

Restaurants must then accomplish three (3) of the initiatives in each of the five (5) categories below (so at least 15 initiatives):

1. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
2. Energy Conservation
3. Water Conservation
4. Pollution Prevention
5. Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Check out the [Checklist](#) to get a full overview.

How do you weight checklist initiatives?

No one category is more important than another. Certification requires that a restaurant achieve at least three (3) of the initiatives in each of the five (5) categories and adhere to the [General Practices](#) in order to achieve certification.

What kind of evidence is required for recertification?

Evidence could be in the form of energy/water bills, invoices, and contracts with suppliers to recertify that the restaurant is in good standing with maintaining the 5 [General Practices](#) and 15 (or more) green initiatives stated in the initial checklist. A site inspection will be conducted to verify in-house practices. The onus is on the restaurants to continue with the practices during the two years of certification.

Do you offer advice or guidance before or during the certification process?

Yes – we want you to be a successful restaurant! This program is not only beneficial for you but it boosts the local economy by having more green restaurants and helps the City achieve its sustainability goals.

In addition to advice and guidance, we also offer a mentoring program through volunteer efforts of certified green restaurants. This provides further direction and expertise and could include ideas on waste management, help with an energy audit or carbon footprinting, or a long-term strategy for energy conservation and efficiency.

Is the Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Program open to independent and chains alike?

Absolutely! The Program is open to all restaurants in Lowell. We encourage any restaurants interested in “saving green” and “being green” to participate.

Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Program - DRAFT

How to Become a Lowell Green Restaurant:

1. Contact the Green Certification Coordinator to express interest
2. Submit the [enrollment form](#) and [checklist](#). Restaurants must adhere to the [General Practices](#) and implement 3 initiatives in each of the 5 categories on the checklist
3. Upon completion of the enrollment form and checklist, schedule a site visit with the Green Certification Coordinator
4. Once successfully cleared by the Green Certification Coordinator, Lowell Green Restaurant Certification recognition will be awarded

Click here for Green Tips:

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Energy Conservation

Water Conservation and Protection

Pollution Prevention

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

How to Maintain Your Certification:

1. Continue to implement selected items on the checklist for 2 years
2. After Year 2, complete an assessment to verify that the Lowell Green Restaurant initiatives are still being met.
3. Work with the Green Certification Coordinator to identify additional green initiatives that can be undertaken.

General Practices for all Certified Restaurants

These standards must be met by all Green Restaurants:

1. Track water and energy usage and solid waste generation.
2. Adopt a written environmentally preferable (or green) purchasing policy.
3. Establish a 'green team' that can help guide efforts to green your restaurant.
4. Inform your customers about your Green Restaurant initiatives.
5. Assist at least one other business in learning about the Green Restaurant Certification Program and encourage them to apply

Website:

www.lowellgreenrestaurant.org

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Total Initiatives Needed

5

- Reduce** Ask customers if they have their own utensils before providing them with take-out orders
- Offer incentives for customers to bring their own coffee mug or bag - communicate incentive
- Post menus and daily specials in a single location using a chalk board, white board or verbal communication instead of printing them
- Eliminate use of individually wrapped items. Use bulk condiments, salt, pepper, sugar, etc.
- Establish a program to compost organic kitchen wastes for use as soil amendment in gardens, for farm animal feed, or other compost program
- Reuse** For full-service restaurants, use cloth napkins and tablecloths
- Donate excess edible food to a food-bank
- Recycle** Use recyclable or compostable take-out containers and utensils for to-go orders
- Use Paper products (napkins, paper towels, tissue) with 50% post-consumer recycled content
- Print Menus on paper that contains 50% PCW recycled content
- Eliminate the use of plastic bags. Use paper bags containing 40% PCW or BPI certified compostable bags ([link](#))
- Create and support an on-site recycling program
- Collect and recycle grease/oil/fat

Lowell Green Restaurant Certification Program - DRAFT

Energy Conservation Total Initiatives Needed: 3

- Install Programmable Thermostats to control room temperature
- Install Night Sensors for all lights
- Use Occupancy sensors for (please check all that apply):
 - Restrooms
 - Walk-in Refrigerator
 - Storage Closet
 - Office(s)
 - Special Occasion/Banquet Room
- Implement a Day-lighting strategy - this could include investing in day-light sensors for dining, kitchen and office spaces
- Install Energy Star appliances (this can be everything from a microwave to dishwasher to refrigerator - consider two categories)
- Develop and implement a Cleaning, Operations and Maintenance Program
- Insulate Water tanks and pipes

Click here for Green Tips:

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Energy Conservation

Water Conservation and Protection Total Initiatives Needed: 3

- Use 1.6 gallons per minute (gpm) or less on pre-rinse valves to rinse dishes
- Install low flow aerators of 0.5 gpm or less (kitchen and restroom)
- Use an environmentally responsible linen service (i.e., a service that is a member of LaundryESP)
- Install toilets 1.6 gallons per flush (gpf) or less
- Implement stormwater best management practices that are realistic for your site. This could include: Do not wash cars/equipment/floor mats into storm drains, install rain barrels, plant vegetated swales or boxes to utilize rain water, use porous pavement, etc.
- Be dishwasher savvy - Ensure dishwashers are not using more than 25 psi and are fully loaded before turning them on
- Create and implement a maintenance plan for identifying and fixing leaks in faucets, steamers, dishwashers, etc.
- Implement a water conservation policy for food servers. Serve water in bars and restaurants only upon request. Promote these practices to your customers

Water Conservation and Protection

Pollution Prevention

Pollution Prevention Total Initiatives Needed: 3

- Use low toxic cleaning products such as those that are approved by Green Seal (www.greenseal.org) or receive at least an 8.1 rating on the GoodGuide (www.goodguide.com)
- Purchase unbleached and/or chlorine-free paper products including: parchment paper, deli sheets, pastry bags, coffee filters, napkins, paper towels, etc.
- Practice integrated pest management (IPM) techniques to treat pest problems inside and outside facility
- Replace standard fluorescents with low mercury fluorescent lighting or LED. If using fluorescent lighting, please recycle when the bulbs have expired (Visit <http://earth911.com/> for recycling locations)
- Become a fragrance free or chemical free restaurant by eliminating chemical and aerosolized air fresheners/deodorizers. To freshen air, open windows or adjust fan speeds in restrooms and kitchens
- Use organic, fair trade or sustainably harvested food products and beverages
- Use environmentally preferred or non-toxic chemicals for landscaping, turf management and/or site maintenance (i.e., fertilizers, herbicides, de-icing products, etc.)

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Website:

www.lowellgreenrestaurant.org

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint Total Initiatives Needed: 1

- Implement a Commuter Benefits Program for the employees - <http://www.commutercheck.com/Home.aspx>
- Install Bike Racks
- Use locally grown food products and beverages
- Create a policy for purchasing furniture and other non-food products that are locally and/or sustainably crafted
- Post signage encouraging patrons to conserve resources and reduce their carbon footprint
- Provide a discount for customers that walk, bike or take transit to your establishment