

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



**Southside Elementary
School
1224 Murfreesboro Road
Lebanon, TN 37090
(615)444-6330**



**1-800-734-3619
www.tdec.net/oea/tp3**

Southside Saves Trees and Reduces Waste

The Member

Southside Elementary is a K-8 public school located in Lebanon, TN, in Wilson County. The current enrollment in January 2009 is 857 students. Recycling pick-up is not available at our school, so we have tackled paper use and waste with a source reduction and re-use strategy. Plastic bottles are another large waste stream that is using volunteer labor from the Beta Club.

The Story

Southside teachers recognized the need to reduce the amount of paper being used and/or wasted in the school. We also wanted to expand the small plastic bottle recycling program to make it school wide. The following projects were developed to meet these needs.

Save a Tree Project

The goal of this project was to reduce the amount of paper being used throughout our school. Teachers and students have become actively involved. Signs, such as the one shown here, are posted by the copiers. Teachers have developed their own individual plan for how they will reduce paper use in their classroom, such as using email to contact parents, putting information on Teacher Web, reducing the copy size of papers from one entire page to using one half page, and by duplexing our copies. The junior high student newspaper has become an online publication.

In an effort to reuse paper, the junior high Art Club collects used mixed paper from each classroom weekly.

Plastic Bottle Recycling Project

Our recycling efforts have skyrocketed this year. Our school year began with only one junior high classroom recycling plastic bottles, most of which are water bottles. Through the efforts of the Beta Club, we are proud to say this project is now school wide. These volunteers promote plastic bottle recycling, collect the bottles, graph their results, and transport bottles to the convenience center.

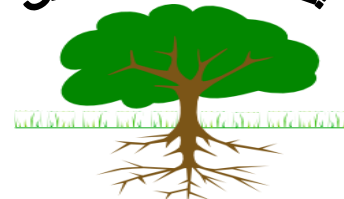
To further educate our teachers, students, and staff on how to become waste reduction stewards, TNSWEP presented a school wide program during our Celebrate Earth Week. Bulletin boards and visual aids about our environmental projects are proudly displayed throughout our building.

The Success

Everyone was enthusiastic about our "Save a Tree" project, which prevents destruction of forests. Mixed paper is reused by all K-8 students on a daily basis in the Art Room. This saves new paper from being 'misused' for projects such as paper mache, collages, paper-making, free art and general art projects. According to the art teacher, paper re-use has tripled this year with the 32-gallon used paper bin being filled and emptied 10 times. Any leftover paper at the end of the year will be recycled at the nearest convenience center.

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SAVE A TREE!



Reduce size or use both sides when you copy!

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Beta Club collects and graphs plastic bottle recycling

The Pollution Prevented

Since the waste reduction process began, we are better environmental stewards by doing our part to reduce solid waste destined for the state's landfills. We used 120 reams, or 60,000 sheets, less paper compared with last year. According to www.printgreener.com/earthday.html, one tree makes 16.67 reams of paper, so we saved 7.2 trees this year. The paper re-use project prevented 320 gallons of paper from going into the trash. The plastic bottle recycling increased to 155 pounds of plastic so far this year. Each step we take leads to planning new pollution prevention projects for the future, such as recycling juice pouches and encouraging students to use reusable water bottles to reduce waste.

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