



Newsletter

Environmental Connection

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Clean Utah Boosts Its Conservation Savings

The conservation savings continue to climb, thanks to the combined accomplishments of companies that are Clean Utah partners.



Amanda Smith,
DEQ Executive Director

"I thank all of you for the work you are doing to improve the environment," Amanda Smith, executive director of the Department of Environmental Quality told Clean Utah members at a luncheon in October to honor their accomplishments. "It is very inspirational."

In 2009, a total of 3.3 million kilowatt hours of electricity were conserved — more than double the electricity conserved in the previous year. That collective energy conservation prevented 2,306 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide emissions from entering Utah's air.

Clean Utah is a program designed by a stakeholder group in collaboration with DEQ and consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It is designed as a three-tiered system. At "Entry Level," businesses are committed to develop an Environmental Management System or "EMS" that provides a thorough review of its operations.

Entry Level businesses currently in Clean Utah are: Big-D Construction, Rio Tinto Kennecott Land Company, Nucor Building Systems, Park City Building Department, Red Hanger Cleaner, Tear-A-Part, and Tooele Army Depot. New entry level companies this year are IM Flash and Kennecott Utah Copper Operational Facilities.



Tom Walborn, of Granite Construction gives presentation

At "Partner Level," the company is committed to completing projects aimed at improving their environmental performance. Those companies are: Autovliv North America, Circle Four Farms, Firestone Building Products, Hexel Corporation, Utah Transit Authority, and Xanterra Parks Zion Lodge. USANA and Granite Construction advanced to Partner level this year.

In 2009, Clean Utah Partners achieved significant reductions in pollution, including:

32 metric tons of Nitrogen Oxide;

12.4 tons of dust brick recycled and another 18.8 tons of cardboard and wood pallets;

258,97 pounds of hazardous chemicals reduced;

8.6 million gallons of water saved; and

1,583 tons of solid waste.

Cramer Retires; Hernandez Named as Replacement

Daryl Cramer, the unassuming guy who oversaw the Department of Environmental Quality's massive move into a new building, has moved on to quieter pastures, having retired in September to prepare for a bigger move — Montana's Bitterroots. He is replaced by Diane Hernandez as DEQ's new facilities coordinator.



Daryl Cramer, Diane Hernandez (who replaces Daryl) and Daryl's brother Doug Palmer

Cramer retired after 32 years in state government, having worked for 15 years as the General Services Specialist for the Department of Health. In 1996, he transferred to DEQ to become the facilities coordinator. Prior to his government job, Cramer served four years in the U.S. Navy.

As facilities coordinator, Cramer has been the go-to guy for everything from supervised buildings and grounds activities to hanging up pictures and shelves and ordering furniture. And he did this without making a fuss and often with a friendly smile.

"He quietly goes around doing his job," said Craig Silotti, director of Support Services.

His biggest task was in successfully facilitating DEQ's move from four buildings into one, now housed in the Multi State Agency Office Building it shares with the Department of Human Services.

"It was a challenging task," said Audit Manager Rebecca Troutman who supervised the move.

"Daryl's dealt with all kinds of complaints that ranged from the size of cubicles to limiting the number of boxes employees were allowed to take. It takes a person with patience and passion for details to do the type of job he did."

Hernandez, an 18-year DEQ veteran, is up for the task. Most recently, she has worked in the Division of Environmental Response and Remediation, managing the motor pool and surplus processing, accounts receivables, collections and other tasks.

"I'm looking forward to working with everyone and hope I can live up to Daryl's standards," she said.

"She'll do an excellent job," Cramer said about his replacement.

For Cramer, it was satisfying to complete the tasks at hand. "I like making people feel satisfied," he said. "It's a rewarding job."

He says his plans may include a move from Oakley to Montana in the spring where his father and step-mother resides.

DEQ Employees Volunteer to Build a Trail

Helge Gabert and a small army of volunteers from the Department of Environmental Quality toiled in the September sun to widen a new section of trail at the top of Millcreek Canyon as part of DEQ's Service Day Project this year.

The trail, called the Old Red Pine Road Trail, is taking shape thanks to DEQ volunteers who traded a Friday day off from work for hard labor to make a difference by improving the environment.



"The idea was to do something with our hands, to give something back to the community by doing physical labor," said Gabert, a scientist with the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste.

Each month, DEQ's Green Team encourages employees to do their part to improve the environment — from carpooling or taking mass transit to increased recycling and making their homes and offices more energy efficient.

In September, the Green Team partnered up with the nonprofit organization Cottonwood Canyons Foundation whose mission is to improve the Wasatch Front's mountains through environmental stewardship and education programs.

DEQ Executive Director Amanda Smith welcomed the idea, offering volunteers an incentive — four hours of annual leave.

"We take our mission to heart — to protect and enhance our air, land and water," said Smith. "Our employees are dedicated to doing that and look for opportunities to make a difference outside the typical office setting."

Don Verbica, a program manager with the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste, was among the 14 DEQ volunteers. "I've never worked so hard," he said. "But I'm glad I had the opportunity to do it. It was great to work with and get to know some of my fellow DEQ employees. Everyone was very nice, helpful, happy, and they worked really hard. No wonder so much gets accomplished at DEQ."

Others enjoyed getting out in the fresh air and working alongside colleagues.

"It was kind of nice bonding with those who worked on the trail," said Gabert.

The organizers with the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation were impressed with how much was accomplished, noted Frances Bernards, another DEQ volunteer.

Plans are under way to open the new trail next spring. And Gabert can't wait.

"I plan to hike it," he said. "It will be gratifying to see the trail finished and know we had a hand in making it happen."

DEQ Finds Commonality with Nature Conservancy

The Department of Environmental Quality and the Nature Conservancy have many things in common: Both advocate using a science-based approach to solving environmental problems while working collaboratively with stakeholders to achieve success.

"All hands are needed on deck in regards to dealing with environmental issues today," said Dave Livermore, state director of the Nature Conservancy, who spoke to DEQ employees in mid-October as part of the Leadership Development Speakers' Series.

DEQ and The Nature Conservancy also share similar missions — protecting Utah's air, land and water by working with industry, governments and citizen groups.



"We don't litigate," Livermore said. "We use science when working with our partners and land managers like DEQ and the Forest Service and other agencies."

The similarities don't end there. DEQ Executive Director Amanda Smith worked at the Nature Conservancy for 11 years with Livermore.

"Dave has been an important mentor in my career," she said. "I've learned most about conservation and policy from Dave. He's been the state director for 30 years and has influenced conservation in the West."

Consider the successes in Utah that include:

Protection of nearly 900,000 acres of habitat in Utah.

Purchase of the Dugout Ranch near Canyonlands National Park. Today, the ranch, spanning more than 305,000 acres of private and public land, is the foundation for the ground-breaking Canyonlands Research Center.

Created 4,000-acre Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve near Layton.

Acquired 5,800 acres along the Strawberry River for habitat protection.

Protect 2,700 acres of wildlife habitat along the Virgin River near Zion National Park.

The non-partisan Nature Conservancy also worked with DEQ and others on the successful passage of HB 343 in 2010 that led to the creation of the Great Salt Lake Advisory Council, whose diverse stakeholders advise on the sustainable use, protection, and development of the Great Salt Lake.

And its work doesn't stop there. The Nature Conservancy is about to launch its next major initiative in Utah that focuses on critical watersheds most at-risk.

Livermore applauded DEQ for doing its part to help protect and improve the environment.

"For those of us in the environmental movement there's no more important work than what you do every day protecting our air, land and water," Livermore told DEQ employees. "I salute you for that great endeavor."

Environmental Health Association Honors Bruce Slater

Some make a big splash because of their larger than life personalities and actions. They force change that might not otherwise happen. In the environmental field, we recognize that much more is done by those who quietly and steadily do their jobs, performing thankless but critical tasks at just the right time. These are the environment's true heroes.

Bruce Slater was such a man; DEQ's own "Steady Eddie." If you think of the work that we do in terms of flying a small plane, Bruce would be the passenger in the middle seat who was there to provide balance and to keep the plane from rolling. One side would be DEQ Administrators; on the other local health departments or EPA. Often, his job was simply to ensure we "stayed the course" and he did this well. He was really at his best, however, during those times of turbulence when a good facilitator was needed. In such times, Bruce quietly rose to the occasion, calmly working to resolve differences. He was trusted by all — and wise enough to give credit to others for the solutions he'd brokered.



Bruce Slater Family, accepting the Presidential Award of Merit at the Utah Environmental Health Association's fall conference.

Bruce loved this State and its natural environment and recognized the important role that was played at the federal, state, and local level in assuring its protection. He left his mark by helping to shape DEQ planning processes from the very beginning. He worked tirelessly to help develop, and then implement, the Environmental Service Delivery Plan which outlined roles and responsibilities of DEQ

and local health departments. He also helped shape and then see to the implementation of the Performance Partnership Agreement between DEQ and EPA.

Being successful as a liaison required that Bruce was always in the right place — not just at the right time but every time. He attended countless health officers meetings, CLEHA meetings, UEHA meetings, and meetings with the Utah Association of Local Boards of Health. In his role as the senior DEQ Environmental Planner, he also represented the Department in a statewide planning initiatives most notably Utah Tomorrow, the Aging Initiative, and the Quality Growth Commission.

Bruce was successful because he listened, because he practiced proactive communication and because he genuinely cared about the people in the all the organizations he was assigned to work with. Bruce was frequently teased because he kept every piece of paper associated with those meetings. Thank goodness for that — for as our unofficial historian, Bruce knew not only what had happened but also why it happened

Bruce was the quintessential gentlemen — a kind smile, a hand shake, and words of interest or encouragement were his trade marks. His compassion for his co-workers and the passion he had for his work made him exceptionally deserving of the UEHA Presidential Award of Merit. Our only wish is that he could have been here today to accept this award. We welcome his kind family who will be accepting this award in his behalf.

This article was written by Lori Walker, outreach coordinator for DEQ's Office of Planning and Public Affairs. Bruce Slater died May 14, 2010.

Halloween Celebrations



DEQ Employees Celebrate Halloween

New Dishwashing Detergent Law Goes Into Effect

The dishwashing detergent you buy in the stores will no longer contain high levels of phosphorus as a result of a new law that took effect July 1.

The 2009 Utah Legislature passed House Bill 303 to help prevent phosphorus from being discharged into Utah's rivers, lakes, and streams through publicly-owned wastewater treatment plants and individual septic tank systems. Random inspections will be performed at retail outlets which sell dish detergent in order to determine compliance. Retailers who have not removed these detergents will be notified and can ultimately face fines if they fail to meet the legal intent.

The law, which has the support of the Utah Food Industry Association and Utah Association of Special Service Districts, is part of a nationwide effort to reduce phosphorus levels in our nation's waters. Utah joins 16 other states which have enacted similar laws.

Phosphorus helps spur the growth of algae which clogs waterways and depletes the oxygen needed for fish to survive. Unsightly algae blooms also reduce the appeal of Utah's recreational waters and raise the cost of treating drinking water. The two pictures of East Canyon Creek (before and after) near the Jeremy Ranch Golf Course, show dramatic changes as a result of removing nutrients from the waterway. The removal of nitrogen and phosphorus was performed at the Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation Facility. It meets one of the most stringent treatment limits in the state for removing nutrients.

"The reduction in phosphorus entering the waterways is a huge benefit. It's good for Utahns and Utah's environment" said Walt Baker, director of the Division of Water Quality. For more information about the law.

For more information about the law.



East Canyon Creek before and after the removal of nitrogen and phosphorus was performed at the Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation Facility.

Other Significant DEQ Retirements in 2010

- Sharon Thompson, office technician for the Division of Water Quality (DWQ), retired Jan. 16 after serving 23 years in state government.
- Jim Smith, environmental scientist for the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste (DSHW), retired Jan. 16 after 31 years of service.

- Shelly Andrews, environmental scientist with DWQ, retired June 16 after 22 years.
 - Blake Robertson, environmental engineer with DSHW, retired July 16 after serving 20 years.
 - Mike Reichert, environmental scientists with DWQ, retired Aug. 1 after 33 years.
 - Tom Toole, environmental scientist for DWQ, retired Aug. 16 after 21 years in state government.
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Radiation Control Board Recognizes Radon Tee

The Radiation Control Board in mid-September joined the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 movement to raise radon awareness and action in Utah. The Radon Tee, hosted by the Utah Division of Radiation Control (DRC) and sponsored by Cancer Survivors Against Radon (CanSAR), is a social media project to educate Americans about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to protect their homes and families.



Radiation Control Board Promotes Radon Shirts

During its monthly meeting, the Radiation Control Board recognized select members of the community for their enormous effort to reduce the dangers of indoor radon gas. Those recognized included: Canyons School District for running an extensive radon testing program throughout all schools within its district; Utah citizen and lung cancer survivor Laura Longhurst for her courageous advocacy against radon; Knight West Construction, Inc. for building radon resistant homes in Utah; and the Utah County Environmental Health Division for its leadership in promoting radon awareness throughout its community.

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas that leaks into homes. Elevated levels in the home may affect the health of the family. The only way to know if your home has elevated levels of radon gas is to test for radon. To order a \$6 radon test kit, go to www.radon.utah.gov. EPA and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention recommend that homes with radon levels at 4.0 picocuries of radon per liter of air (pCi/L) or higher be fixed.

This article was written by Christine Keyser, radon coordinator for the Division of Radiation Control.