

**HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL
LITTER PREVENTION & RECYCLING
EDUCATION INITIATIVE**

MID-YEAR REPORT

**Fiscal Year 2009
July 1, 2008-December 31, 2008**



HR CLEAN

HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL LITTER PREVENTION & RECYCLING EDUCATION INITIATIVES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HR CLEAN is the recycling and litter prevention education program of Hampton Roads, and is a partnership through the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC). It is a regional coalition of local and regional clean community, recycling, and environmental education coordinators that promotes litter prevention, recycling, community beautification, and general environmental awareness through educational projects designed to reach all sectors of the Hampton Roads region.

HR CLEAN member localities continue to enhance and expand the level of awareness among Hampton Roads residents about the need to reduce waste, prevent litter, and participate in local beautification and recycling programs. Radio, cable, and local television advertisements are the main media sources. Secondary sources are local publications and web advertisements on the media station websites. Using a mix of targeted television, radio, and print advertising, as well as updated website materials, HR CLEAN continues to provide the region with quality stormwater information.

HR CLEAN partnered with WVEC, Creative Recycling, and others to hold a regional e-cycling event. The Project Green E-cycling Event collected and recycled 170,000 pounds of electronics. The partnership was valued at \$70,000. HR CLEAN did not contribute financially beyond time volunteered for planning and staffing the effort.

In FY 2008, HR CLEAN began preparing for the 2009 Regional Conference which will discuss the impacts of plastic bag litter and ways to prevent it. The conference will be held February 27, 2009, in Smithfield. The topic is “Are Plastic Bags Sacking the Environment?”

HR CLEAN continues to be a regional partner in joint environmental education programming with members of HR STORM, HR FOG (Hampton Roads Fats, Oils, and Grease) and HR WET (Hampton Roads Water Efficiency Team), also referred to as HR Green. Prior to HR FOG’s creation, the group was known as HR³. HR STORM promotes stormwater management and pollution prevention. HR WET promotes water conservation throughout Hampton Roads. The HR FOG regional committee works to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and backups caused by fats, oils, and grease improperly entering the sanitary sewer system through drains and grease traps.

Through participation in the HR Green Mini-Grant program, the committee reaches its goal of educating and raising awareness of pollution prevention and the importance of water quality among the youth of Hampton Roads. HR Green awarded a combined \$1,441 to schools and youth groups working on projects related to the missions and goals of HR CLEAN, HR STORM and HR WET.

Through participation in the mini-grant program, over 1700 Hampton Roads youth will be reached. Of that amount, HR CLEAN awarded \$1,150.

The one-page tip and information sheet developed by HR³ was published in the WVEC Channel-13 *2008 Hurricane Watch*. Seventy-thousand guides were distributed to the public at local Dollar Tree stores, through representatives of HR³, and through WVEC Channel-13. WVEC sent out an email blast to 65,000 email addresses encouraging Hampton Roads residents to download the guide. The *2008 Hurricane Watch* was also available on WVEC.com, HRCLEAN.org, HRSTORM.org and HRWET.org.

FAST POINTS

- ❖ **HR CLEAN partners with WVEC, Creative Recycling, and others to collect and recycle 170,000 pounds of electronics. The partnership was valued at \$70,000. HR CLEAN did not contribute financially besides time volunteered for the effort.**
- ❖ **HR CLEAN begins using free social networking tools under the umbrella of HR GREEN to spread HR CLEAN's messages to more individuals in Hampton Roads. The David Wright videos are popular views in the HRPDC YouTube video lineup.**
- ❖ **Radio and television spots continue to be broadcasted to over one million Hampton Roads residents. WVEC and CW Channel-27 continued to air the series of public service announcements that were developed with the help of the New York Met's third baseman, David Wright.**
- ❖ **The HR CLEAN website, www.hrclean.org, continues to provide up-to-date information on recycling and litter prevention techniques. The Recycling Guide was downloaded over 2,500 times.**
- ❖ **HR CLEAN awarded \$1,150 in mini-grants to five organizations. Through this initiative, HR CLEAN will reach 1,700 youth involved in programs related to the goals of HR CLEAN.**

MEDIA

The HRPDC, on behalf of HR CLEAN, continues to contract WVEC, WGNT, and Metro Traffic. Channel-13 will air the HR CLEAN spots during peak viewing times of shows such as *The View*, *Oprah* and *Jeopardy*. A series of public service announcements that were produced by WVEC with the help of New York Met's third baseman, David Wright, in the winter of 2006 continue to air.

FY 2009 Media Breakdown:

MEDIA	CONTRACT
WVEC CHANNEL-13	\$ 15,000
METRO TRAFFIC	\$ 15,000
CW WGNT CHANNEL-27	\$ 5,000
TOTAL	\$ 35,000

Through the various stations in Hampton Roads airing Metro Traffic announcements, HR CLEAN sponsored spots gaining the attention of the listening audience. The HR CLEAN messages continue to be aired during peak drive times, reminding citizens about the need for waste minimization and beautification. The stations of Metro Networks in FY 2009 were as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| WAFX - FM | WNOR - FM | WXEZ - FM |
| WGH - FM | WNVZ - FM | WXMM - FM |
| WGH - AM | WPTE - FM | WXTG - FM |
| WHRO - FM | WVBW - FM | WXTG - AM |
| WHRV - FM | WVKL - FM | |
| WJOI - AM | WWDE - FM | |

The HR CLEAN website is enhanced and updated frequently with information received from members and gathered by staff. From the website, users are able to apply for an HR³ Mini-Grant, email local representatives, and learn about the 3Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Seasonal information and local recycling facilities are also found on the site. The following information was gathered for the first half of Fiscal Year 2009:

WEBTRENDS FOR JULY 1 – DECEMBER 31

- ❖ Visits – 118,492
- ❖ Average Visits Per Day – 100
- ❖ Direct Traffic – 92%
- ❖ Visitors from USA – 87%

Most frequently viewed pages:

1. HR CLEAN Homepage
2. Virginia Statewide Litter Program
3. Recycling Drop-Off Center Locations
4. What's New
5. Mulch Mowing Information

Most frequently downloaded pages:

1. Recycling Directory (2,545)
2. *We All Live on the Water* NIE (2,179)
3. HR CLEAN Annual Reports (631)
4. eCycling Flyer (431)
5. Activity Pages from the Family Activity Book (380)
6. Litter Law Fact Sheet (254)



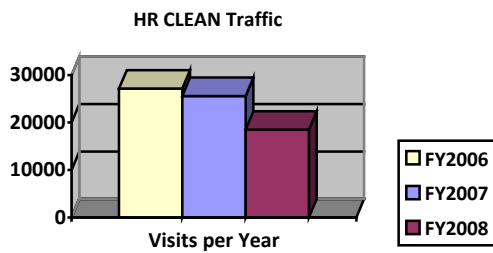
The **number of visits** represents the number of times the site was visited by individual users. If an individual visited six times in the fiscal year, and clicked on ten pages each time, the number of visits counted would be six. Visits by non-humans (spiders, web crawlers, bots, etc.) were removed from the total number of visits.

The **direct traffic** represents traffic to the website in which the visitor typed the domain name directly into their browser, or the visitor bookmarked the site. The percentage of direct traffic increased dramatically during the last half of 2008, from 46% in July 1 to December 31, 2007 to 92% in 2008.

Each of the downloaded documents received a spike in downloads near the time a link to the document was posted on Twitter, demonstrating that Twitter users are interested in receiving information from HR CLEAN and will download additional information.

Web traffic has decreased in the last couple years. The website will be undergoing a major transformation to better serve the public seeking information provided by HR CLEAN in Fiscal Year 2009. The Committee will begin utilizing Web 2.0 social media sites like YouTube and Twitter to draw more traffic to the site. The Committee will also evaluate key

terms used in the site to improve search engine optimization and help more users find the HR CLEAN site.



Social Networking

In July 2008, HR CLEAN began using social networking tools to reach a wider range of Hampton Roads residents year-round. Ad campaigns on television and the radio are effective, but expensive. To supplement the existing media campaign, the HR Green committees began posting items to sites such as YouTube, Digg, Twitter, and Delicious.

YouTube

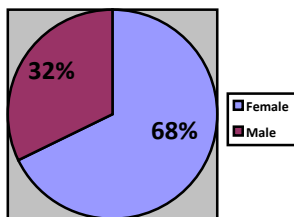
HR CLEAN posted video to YouTube at www.YouTube.com/HRGreenVA and www.YouTube.com/HRPDC. HR CLEAN's David Wright public service announcements draw traffic from YouTube searches, embedded video players on other sites, and other sources. From July 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, HR CLEAN videos on YouTube were viewed 1,751 times. Traffic comes first from users in Virginia, followed by New Yorkers. HR CLEAN also posted WVEC's commercial announcing the effectiveness of the Project Green E-Cycling Event HR CLEAN partnered with WVEC in providing.

Demographics:

Gender:

Female – 68%

Male – 32%



Age:

13-17 – 15%

18-24 – 11%

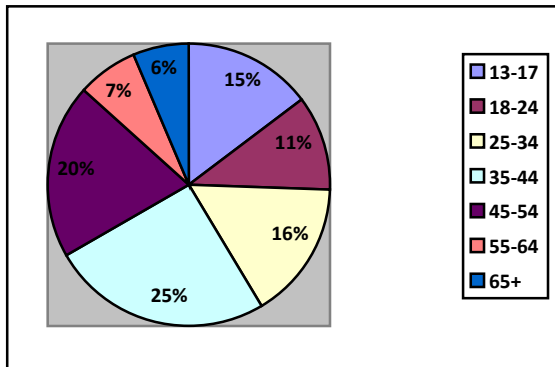
25-34 – 16%

35-44 – 25%

45-54 – 20%

55-64 – 7%

64+ – 6%



The demographic of those who view the HRGreenVA and HRPDC channels are spread throughout the age ranges. The videos are most popular with women and those in the 35-54 age range. YouTube is a free service that allows the committees to provide a visual message to those in Hampton Roads, year-round.

Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site that allows users to post short messages to followers. Messages can be sent or received using the internet, the computer desktop, or a cell phone. Individual users choose accounts to “follow”, so those receiving the “tweets” are interested in the message content. HR Green set up an account at www.twitter.com/HRGreen or @HRGreen. Regular messages updating followers about programs, tips, events, and website content are distributed to users. Twitter users are technology savvy, so they regularly follow links in Twitter posts directly to www.hrcline.org and other HRPDC sites. Since August 2008, @HRGreen has gained 185 followers. A large portion of the Followers are from the Hampton Roads area. Other local government Twitter accounts also follow @HRGreen, including: @CityofVaBeach (City of Virginia Beach Media and Communications Group), @CVB (City of Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau) and @NorfolkKNB (Keep Norfolk Beautiful). Twitter users have contacted @HRGreen through the medium to find information on recycling locations and mini-grant programs and to encourage the group to keep up the good work.

From @Missy_Schmidt (Norfolk): when/where can our office discard old computer hard drives and monitors, etc.? Thanks, Missy@HRP.org.

From @Finndandi (Virginia Beach): Love this site. Great concept! I am sending you to my daughter’s high school as a referral... [referring to mini-grant tweet]

Through Twitter, HR Green’s nearly 200 followers receive approximately five messages a week – messages they requested to receive, unlike advertisements on television or in newspaper ads. @HRGreen has sent out 107 trackable messages resulting in 1533 click-throughs from Twitter to a site link provided. Each post receives an average of 14 click-throughs, directly increasing site traffic to the HR Green websites and the YouTube account. Of those, 516 click-throughs went to HR CLEAN content.

Topical Campaigns

- **Project Green Recycling Event** - HR CLEAN partnered with WVEC to hold the Project Green Recycling Event. It was held at six Grand Furniture locations on October 11, 2008. HR CLEAN provided advice and direction, volunteers, and event promotion at the local level. In return, HR CLEAN received partner status on all advertising valued at \$35,000 and electronics recycling valued at \$30,000. The Hampton Roads region benefited from a regional recycling event that kept 170,000 pounds of electronics out of area landfills. The event collected electronics from residents and businesses. No proof of residency was required, speeding the drop-off process and alleviating potential frustration from residents. WVEC obtained sponsors to finance the \$10 disposal fee for the first 600 televisions. WVEC also obtained sponsorship from a trucking company to haul the electronics to the Creative Recycling Systems plant. HR CLEAN promoted the event through a segment on WVEC's "Dialogue", posts on Twitter, and the HR CLEAN website. A summary video of the event is posted on the HRGreenVa YouTube site: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7VzoneCbIY> HR CLEAN was brought in as a partner because of the committee's longstanding relationship with WVEC through the HR CLEAN media contracts. The event brought a total value of \$70,000 to the Hampton Roads communities.
- **Regional Conference (Plastic Bags)** - HR CLEAN prepared for the annual Regional Conference. A subcommittee was formed to work out the conference details. Lorna Frazier-Lindsey (Gloucester), Mayi Henriquez (Newport News), Tammy Rojek (Williamsburg), and Ralph Anderson (Isle of Wight) staffed the subcommittee. The topic of the conference is "Are Plastic Bags Sacking the Environment?" The event will be held at the Smithfield Center on February 27, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The subcommittee has prepared the conference agenda and is finalizing speaking arrangements.
- **Print Ads** - A one-page tip sheet, which combines the messages of the committees, is used in a variety of regional publications such as the WVEC Channel-13 "Hurricane Watch," which was distributed to the public at local Dollar Tree stores, through representatives of HR Green, and through the WVEC Channel-13 website. WVEC distributed 70,000 copies and sent out 65,000 permission-based emails throughout Hampton Roads encouraging residents to download the guide.
- **Promotional Materials** - Along with the member community events, HRPDC staff also provides information to those who call directly. HRPDC staff distributed materials such as the HR CLEAN This Kid Fight Litter Sticker and Litter Law Factsheet to representatives from organizations such as Lynnhaven River Now, the Retail Alliance, the Chesapeake Chamber of Commerce, and the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The following is a listing of the items distributed by the HRPDC staff. In the future, HR CLEAN items will not be distributed to Virginia Beach venues since Virginia Beach no longer participates in the program. Additional HR

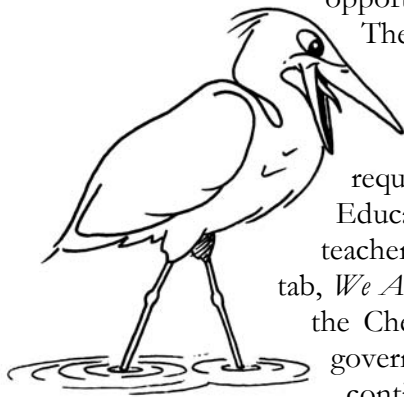
CLEAN promotional items distributed through the HR WET trailer are not included.

HR CLEAN PROMOTIONAL GIVEAWAYS		
ITEM	Jan - Jun	Jul -Dec
Bookmark	75	0
FAB	5453	1253
Hurricane Guides	0	580
Litter Fact Sheet	370	400
Mini-Grant Bucks	500	430
We All Live on the Water NIE	0	493
This Kid Fights Litter Stickers	100	500
Total	3755	7698

HR GREEN PARTNERSHIPS

HR CLEAN continues to be an active partner with HR FOG, HR STORM and HR WET, the HRPDC's other three other environmental education committees. Combined, these four committees form what we refer to as HR Green. By combining messages, the committees are able to save resources by pooling funding for a larger media impact.

Newspapers in Education (NIE) – NIE is a nationally recognized educational program that brings the newspaper into the classroom. The local newspapers work with various Hampton Roads school systems in the distribution of a tabloid-style newsprint document. While many pre-developed pieces are available to the schools, HR Green sought this opportunity to educate the region's 3rd graders on a local level.

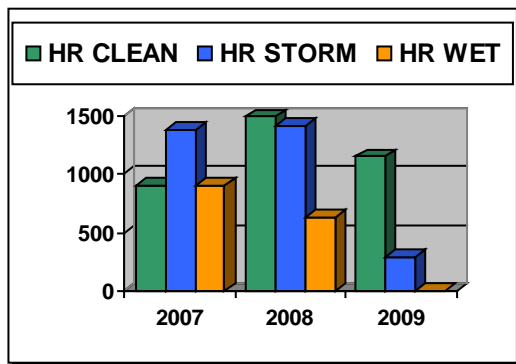


The HR Green piece entitled *We All Live on the Water* was distributed in the spring of 2008 to all public school 3rd grade classes. The committees used this initiative to incorporate the watershed and water quality SOL requirements developed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) along with region specific information. A teacher guide was also developed and distributed. The FY 2008 tab, *We All Live on the Water*, was partially funded through a grant by the Chesapeake Bay License Plate Fund and matched with local government contributions and HRPDC staff time. HR Green continued to distribute overruns of the tab until they were

depleted. Since July 1, 2008, 3,000 copies were downloaded from HR Green websites. HR STORM and HR WET would like to reprint the piece and redistribute it in August 2009. HR FOG and HR CLEAN are considering participating in the project.

Print Ads - A one-page tip sheet, which combines the messages of the committees, is used in a variety of regional publications such as the WVEC Channel-13 Hurricane Guide, which was distributed to the public at local Dollar Tree stores, through representatives of HR Green, and on through WVEC Channel-13 website. HR FOG did not participate in this initiative.

Mini-Grants - HR Green also offers the region joint programs such as funding through the popular mini-grant program and educational print pieces. With the Mini-Grant Program, schools and youth groups are eligible to receive up to \$500 toward environmental projects that meet the goals of HR CLEAN, HR FOG, HR STORM and HR WET.



In the second half of 2008, HR³ awarded a combined \$1,441 to six different youth groups working on projects related to the missions and goals of HR CLEAN, HR STORM and HR WET. Through participation in the HR³ Mini-Grant program, over 1,700 Hampton Roads youth were reached. HR CLEAN awarded \$1,150 of the grant dollars. Larchmont Elementary School in Norfolk began a recycling program that involves the pre-k through 5th grade students. Washington Middle School in

Newport News started regular litter cleanups in the Salters Creek watershed. In Portsmouth, Emily Spong Preschool and Mt. Hermon Preschool created a “Litter Cops” program. Finally, Norfolk Highlands Primary in Chesapeake will be creating a garden on school property using the pumpkin seeds collected at Halloween. The pumpkins grown will be used in school projects next school year.

HRAEE (Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education) - Members continue to participate in HRAEE events and networking opportunities. The 2008 conference was held at the Virginia Aquarium during the month of September. The Mini-Grant Project of the Year Awards were distributed at the luncheon ceremony. The **2008 Mini-Grant Project of the Year** was awarded to Thalia Elementary School for the Fifth Grade Oyster Gardeners Project. Patricia Sare coordinated the project and applied for the



mini-grant. The project was funded by HR STORM. The students were able to raise and plant nearly 1,400 oysters in the Lynnhaven River. Boy Scout, Tim Costello, built steps to the stream to allow the students safe access. The project helped him earn the ranking of Eagle Scout along with three of his friends. The Eagles

were the cover story on the June 1, 2008 edition of the *Beacon*. An outdoor teaching area was also built.

The **Honorable Mention** was awarded to Jane H. Bryan Elementary School for the First Grade Butterfly Garden Project. HR CLEAN funded this beautification project. Ms. Christine LaPointe coordinated the project and applied for the mini-grant. She said of her first grade students, “The children loved being able to dig in the dirt. Many of them had

never done that before or even seen a worm! . . . They could not believe there were worms in the dirt!”

CONCLUSION

HR CLEAN member localities continue to enhance and expand the level of awareness among Hampton Roads residents about the need to reduce waste, prevent litter, and participate in local beautification and recycling programs. Members also represent the region on various national, state and local committees such as:

- The National Recycling Coalition (NRC)
- North American Association of Environmental Education (NAAEE)
- Keep America Beautiful (KAB) and Keep Virginia Beautiful
- The Virginia Recycling Association (VRA)
- The Virginia Council for Litter Prevention and Recycling
- The Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board
- Hampton Roads Alliance for Environmental Education (HRAEE)
- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)
- American Public Works Association (APWA)

HR CLEAN concluded 2008 with its annual retreat and holiday luncheon. Members used their time together to review past and current programming, generate new ideas, and discuss successes in their own community programming and ways to broaden those programs to the entire Hampton Roads region.



Members of HR CLEAN in December 2008

Holly Miller, Lorna Frazier-Lindsey, Chad Oxtan, Holly Carson, Becky Holland, Debbie Blanton, Gail Bradshaw, Mayi Henriquez, John Deuel, Jennifer Privette, Julia Hillegass, and Tammy Rojek.

Not Shown: Ralph Anderson, Dan Baxter, James Charity, Deborah Everitt, Laurie Halperin, Tracy Hofmeyer, John Jenkins, Tom Kriedel, Rhonda Mack, Russell Pace

HR CLEAN member localities continue to enhance and expand the level of awareness among Hampton Roads residents about the need to reduce waste, prevent litter, and participate in local beautification and recycling programs. Education and awareness of these environmental needs remains a goal of HR CLEAN. “Hampton Roads is Too Good to Waste” and HR CLEAN is committed to educating local citizens and visitors about the importance of keeping Hampton Roads beautiful.

