



## NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION

# Neighborhood Environmental Project Case Study Form

Neighborhood/Community Name Maple Leaf Golf and Country Club

Project Coordinators: Natural Resources Committee

Project Contact

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## PROJECT INFORMATION: *Track 5 Community Awareness -2018-19 Green Initiatives on Waste-Energy and Recycling*

**Please provide an overview of the project. Why did you choose it? What were the conditions like before and after implementing the project?**

Maple Leaf Golf and Country Club (MLG&CC) is a senior community of over 2200 people, an “Audubon Certified Golf Course and Green Neighborhood member. The community has more than 70 different clubs and conducts over fifteen major social activities. Not included are numerous block parties, pot luck suppers and smaller social events. Three clubs and Party in the Park conduct fundraisers that distribute food to over 4000 people using Styrofoam and plastic containers. Most community functions are held at Corporate buildings that do not provide recycling receptacles. The Corporate restaurant uses a significant amount of non-recyclable disposable dishware. Homeowners discard food waste using sink garbage disposal units. A significant number of pharmaceutical drugs are thought to be put in the garbage or flushed down the toilet. Our Corporate electrical bill exceeds \$200,000 annually and facility users fail to turn off lights or lower the thermostat during off hours. There have been a few incidents of improper disposal of oils, greases, and chemicals. The Natural Resources Committee (NRC) is proactive on promoting changes that improve our community environmental footprint. Last year MLG&CC was the proud recipient of the ‘Nature Award’. The Project will address community awareness and conduct an information campaign directed at club officers and the Corporate Board of Directors.

**Please list your goals for this project:**

- Reduce the use of Styrofoam and plastic containers
- Redirect recycling materials away from water waste streams.
- Reduce the amount of improperly disposed of toxic waste
- Reduce the Corporate utility bill for energy consumption
- Reduce the disposal of food waste and pharmaceuticals to the water stream
- Increase use of reusable dishware
- Increase community awareness

**What specific steps did you take to implement your project? What kind of ongoing maintenance will it require? (Please give sufficient detail so that someone interested in duplicating this project could do so.)**

- Prepare and distribute articles in Accents, the local community monthly newsletter.
- Send a letter to all club Presidents on methods to reduce food and dishware waste.
- Prepare and distribute information that explain how to improve recycling at events
- Petition the Corporation to invest in recycling containers at buildings and pay for pick up.

- Committee letter to the Board promoting the installation of LED fixtures and programmable thermostats.
- Contact local police force to coordinate a bi-annual drop-off/pickup of unwanted pharmaceutical drugs.
- Promote the Fire Club metal recycling program
- Present data at homeowner meetings
- Promote the use of compostable dishware at Club food events and Corporate restaurant
- Promote the use of household dishware at pot lucks, block parties and social events

This program requires annual review and continuous messaging. *Examples of messaging attached.*

**Describe the results you achieved. What were the environmental benefits? Please be as specific as possible about any tangible results (i.e., numbers of acres naturalized, new species observed, or number of fledglings).**

Some pot luck venues request residents to bring their own dishware. Many club social events are now using resident recycling containers to capture glass, wine bottles and recyclable containers, The Garden club offers an extra door prize ticket for “bring your own mug”. The Fire club has placed can recycling containers at all main buildings. The Corporation has adopted an LED light replacement policy. The Fire club has a metal recycling program for large appliances and metal furniture. The Corporation has upgraded BMP’s and handling facilities for chemical, fuel and toxic waste containment and disposal. The Port Charlotte Sheriff’s office has agreed to conduct two drug collection days To early to evaluate the move to compostable dishware and reduced electricity bills. NRC will attempt to measure the use of compostable dishware at next year’s major fundraisers.

**How did people respond to the project? How did you communicate your actions and results?**

Community residents support the initiative in principle. Practical support is harder to achieve. The NRC will publish or announce measured results using the available reporting mechanisms (Accents, Channel 1995, Facebook, newsletters and public announcements.

**What, if anything, would you do differently if you were to do the project again?**

**What would you recommend to others implementing this project?**

It is premature to recommend changes at this stage. We will measure the Project effectiveness by surveying club events and reviewing resident feedback. We can monitor the electrical billing and usage over time to evaluate progress.

**How much did it cost to implement this project?**

There were no major costs to implement this program. There will be Corporate costs to initiate recycling collection and pickup at buildings. We project no significant increase in costs for clubs to switch to compostable dishware. There will be a minor cost increase for garbage disposal as these products are about 15 % heavier than Styrofoam.

**What are your anticipated or actual financial savings?**

Cannot estimate financial savings at this time. We predict a 5 % saving in electrical costs through implementation of LED lights and programmable thermostats. The use of LED fixtures in street lights reduces electrical usage, but garners no financial savings as the lights are on flat rate billing. There is a reasonable expectation of savings for sport field lighting. The actual savings can only be measured after a few years of use. The project goals primarily target moral objectives as opposed to economics.

To: Club Presidents, Maple Leaf Golf and Country Club

As you may know, your Maple Leaf Natural Resources Committee has been involved in projects related to birds, plants, trees, wildlife and water.

As a registered Audubon Green Community, the Committee is instructed to promote improvements in conservation and waste disposal practices.

The Committee believes significant opportunities exist for better waste and recycling outcomes by changing current methods in the delivery of food and beverage at events held in our Community Centers.

The Committee requests your support and consideration to implement a few green recommendations. Some Clubs may already be practicing such measures and that's great! The proposed steps do not require major changes, should be easy to implement and not cause any significant financial differences.

- a) Aluminum cans should be collected separately and given to the Fire Club if no Fire Club receptacle is available.
- b) Groups should switch to compostable plates-cutlery and cups (avoid Styrofoam) so these items will eventually degrade in a landfill site.
- c) Groups may consider asking people to bring their own plates, cutlery and cups and take them home for washing when finished.
- d) Bring resident garbage and recycling containers to events if feasible.

We are petitioning the Corporation to investigate ways to provide recycling containers at all major event facilities. In the meantime, if none are available, residents can take recyclable items such as wine/drink bottles home for self disposal.

We appreciate input and suggestions. If you have ideas on how we can improve our waste streams from Community Center events, please let us know.

Comments can be sent to the NRC Co-Chairperson Email: [mcomba@comcast.net](mailto:mcomba@comcast.net)

or by contacting any member:

go to (<http://mapleleafgcc.net/>).

Click on "Our Community" then click on Natural Resources Committee.

## PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN

By the MLGCC Natural Resources Committee - March 2018

*"We're in a giant car heading towards a brick wall and everyone's arguing over where they're going to sit" (David Suzuki).*

*Approximately 40% of the lakes in America are too polluted for fishing, aquatic life, or swimming. The Mississippi River carries an estimated 1.5 million metric tons of nitrogen pollution into the Gulf of Mexico each year, creating a "dead zone" about the size of New Jersey. Each year 1.2 trillion gallons of untreated sewage, storm water, and industrial waste contaminate US waters – and four billion pounds of garbage end up in the ocean – add to this 49 million tons of electronic waste.*

*Time to change our consumer consumption and waste practices. The shortsightedness of the "dilution" philosophy is now evident. In 2010, recycling and composting measures prevented 85 million tons of material of being disposed of as waste compared to 8 million tons in 1980. Here is how you can continue to help.*

Do not flush pharmaceuticals (prescribed medication) down the toilet. Unfortunately, both Walgreen's and CVS do not offer a "take back drug program" in this area. Pharmaceuticals are active compounds with numerous chemical properties. Drugs flushed down the toilet end up in Charlotte harbor. Unused medications can be taken to the Charlotte County Sheriff's Department drop box located at 3280 Tamiami Trail in the Promenades Mall. NRC plans to initiate a community collection service next year.

Don't dispose of food waste using your sink garbage unit (garburator if your Canadian). Food contains a large amount of soluble nutrients and organic carbon. Disposal via waste water has a marginal economic advantage compared to landfill and the environmental costs are not factored in. Put your waste in the garbage. Compost food waste when possible.

Don't use Styrofoam and plastic bags. Both are non-biodegradable. Twenty-five billion Styrofoam cups -and other Styrofoam products occupy 30 % of landfill capacity - and many of the four billion plastic bags end up as litter! *(Marine creatures swallow plastic bags because they think they are edible jellyfish).*

Increase your use of recyclable materials and reusable cloth bags. Club events can feature "bring" your own cutlery and organizers can arrange to bring their home recycling bins to most events. Take recyclable materials (glass bottles, cans, paper etc.) back home for disposal. Utilize the Fire Clubs' can recycle program as most buildings have receptacles. Your efforts will reduce Corporate waste costs.

Why buy bottled water – it's no better for you than tap water. Fill a re-use container – even a plastic one from your tap or refrigerator (most are equipped with chemical filters).

Reduce energy consumption. Turn off lights and raise the thermostat temperature in park buildings after your event finishes. Replace your burnt out light bulbs with LED bulbs – they last about 8 times longer and use one eighth the electricity. Your NRC promotes the use of programmable and sensor enabled equipment in our buildings.

Don't dispose of oils, toxic waste, electronics, and pesticides by dumping them unto the ground or placing them in waste bins – they eventually enter the environment. Take hazardous waste to the hazardous waste depot at 19765 Kenilworth Blvd. near Veteran's Blvd. and Cochran Blvd in Port Charlotte.