

THINKING “GREEN” IN PUBLIC SAFETY

OK, I need to get this out of the way right off the top, “It’s not easy being green!”. Thank you Kermit, thank you students for understanding.



What does thinking about and being “green” really mean to those of us in the police, fire and emergency management fields? We all have become more aware of our human impact upon the environment. The activities that we pursue every day, from the food we eat to the vehicles we drive, has an affect on where we live and work; some good, some bad. The National Association of Counties (NaCo) has taken on a leadership role on how government can react to the economic, environmental and the social¹ aspects of thinking green. NaCo divides the definition of “Green Government” into seven different sections for our consideration.

- Green Buildings and Energy Efficiency
- Green Fleet and Alternative Fuels
- Climate Protection and Air Quality
- Purchasing and Procurement
- Waste Management and Recycling
- Land Use and Conservation
- Water Quality and Conservation

Students, please, go to the following website and find the downloadable document named: **NACo Green Government Initiative Overview** . Read the slides.

[http://www.naco.org/Content/NavigationMenu/County_Resource_Center/
New_Technical_Assistance/Green_Government_Initiative1/
Green_Government_Initiative.htm](http://www.naco.org/Content/NavigationMenu/County_Resource_Center/New_Technical_Assistance/Green_Government_Initiative1/Green_Government_Initiative.htm)

¹ NaCo, <http://www.naco.org/> , 4 December 2008

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As public safety professionals and individuals that live on planet earth we have a responsibility to consider our operations and to look at ways we can REDUCE consumption and waste. We need to think about ways we can REUSE the tools of our operational efforts, and we need to RECYCLE items that we use.

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

Technology has been an enormous help for us in the public safety sector. Years ago, many many years ago, as a young police officer all of my reports were handwritten. They were turned into a supervisor for approval and then went to a records section where they were typed, returned to us for a signature and then filed in these large rotating drum file cabinets by the year and case number. If there was follow-up to be done on the report, the original and its typed version had to be retrieved from the records section, copied and the process stated again. A follow-up report was handwritten, typed and then filed. Most law enforcement agencies in Pierce County embarked on a laptop computerization program several years back. The laptops gave the officers the ability to receive information from the 9-1-1 center over the internet that populated certain fields in the police officers report. The officer could type in a narrative and forward his/her report to the supervisor who reviewed the report online before it was entered into the automated records management system. An investigator or another officer could pull up the report on their own computer and later enter their own follow-up information.

In Puyallup we had a standard operating procedures manual. Each officer had a three ring binder with the rules and regulations of the department. This document was two or three hundred pages of material. As new information or changed information occurred the manual was updated by copying new pages and entering them into the 54+ copies that we had. An automation project changed our whole approach. There is only one master copy of the Puyallup Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual and it is kept on a server at city hall. Every officer and employee has access to that manual by retrieving the information they need through their laptop or desktop computer. Updates are accomplished through email. All the paper from the 54+ paper manuals was shredded and recycled.



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Franklin and Marshall College is a small liberal arts college located in Lancaster, PA. As a college they have redeveloped their mission statement to include the way the college and the students have an impact on their environment locally and globally. They actively use the Three R's of thinking green in their campus life. We can all do the same thing in our own personal lives if we are committed to making a difference in the way that we consume and discard our resources. Students, review the following document offered by the Sustainability Committee from Franklin and Marshall College²:

<http://www.fandm.edu/x4724>

Find and download the document "Think Green Booklet", and review the Sustainability Committee's work.

Thinking Green has created a whole new set of job skills. The City of Seattle recently completed a jobs study related to that skill set. Some of you are majoring in the fire sciences, criminal justice or the new Homeland Center for Excellence degree programs. We are including the think green idea in your course of study so that as managers in the public safety sector you might think and use methodology that can create new, more efficient, ways to complete our mission.

www.seattlejobsinitiative.com/policy/publications/documents/SJIJobTrendsReportJuly08FINAL.pdf

Find, download and review the City of Seattle's Job Trends Report.

So, paper bullets, sustainable wood product batons, recyclable turnout gear, are these the solutions for public safety managers? Or, should we consider putting emergency management forms and processes on computers, or make the information downloadable from the internet. There are hundreds of other ideas available.

These are all considerations that we should make even small ones such as recycle containers in the emergency operations center and using paper instead of styrofoam mugs. What are you doing at home, in your office or through your classroom work?

GO ON TO THE ASSIGNMENTS BELOW

² Think Green Booklet, Facilities and Operations, The Campus Sustainability Committee, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, 2004.

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JOURNAL (Drop box)

I would like you to think about how you have an impact on the environment for one twelve hour period. Keep a journal of your activities at home, on the job, or at school for a twelve hour period. Under three columns make a list of how you do or could REDUCE, REUSE, or RECYCLE.

REDUCE	REUSE	RECYCLE

This assignment is due on Wednesday, June 10th. Use the text block below or attach your file to complete the assignment.

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DISCUSSION BOARD

Formulate three questions based on the written material and links from the unit on Thinking Green in Emergency Management. Post your questions in the discussion board area for week ten.

1. Your questions should be thought provoking and open ended, yes or no questions are not acceptable.

2. One of your questions should be directed at the idea of the Three R's.

3. Post four responses in total to other peoples questions.

1. Post SIMPLE responses to at least three classmates' discussion questions. These responses can be comments, questions in return, suggestions, etc.

2. ENGAGE in the discussion called for by one classmate's question. This discussion should be more detailed, thoughtful, and engaging.

Please post your questions on or before Sunday, June 7th.

Please post your responses on or before Wednesday, June 10th at midnight.