



ENABLING A GREEN WORKFORCE

Building a Culture of Sustainability
in the House

A Progress Report

January 8, 2010



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

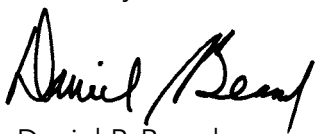
In April of this year, you charged me with expanding the Green the Capitol (GTC) program to House offices.

In the months since, the office greening program has reached nearly 3,000 House staff on Capitol Hill and hundreds more at District offices throughout the country. It is expected to reach another 1,000 House staff by the end of this year and all 7,000 DC-based employees by the end of 2010. By the end of this Congress, 450 of the more than 900 Member District offices will take part in the program.

The program's success to date can be measured in statistics: the diversion of nearly 75,000 pounds of waste from landfills and the cutting of nearly 400,000 pounds of carbon emissions and more than 175,000 kWh of electricity. Perhaps more important is what the program represents: a fundamental transformation of perspective and behavior. The House is changing the way it does business.

I am happy to report we are well on our way to becoming a national leader in resource stewardship and sustainable business practices.

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Beard
Chief Administrative Officer

SUMMARY

In 2007, Speaker Pelosi established the Green the Capitol (GTC) program to make the House a national leader in resource stewardship and sustainable business practices. Since then, the program has spurred a fundamental transformation of perspective and behavior among the institution’s thousands of employees.

At the Speaker’s direction, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) launched a GTC office greening effort in April 2009. In the months since, the program has reached nearly 3,000 House staff on Capitol Hill and hundreds more at District offices throughout the country.

GREENING MEMBER OFFICES

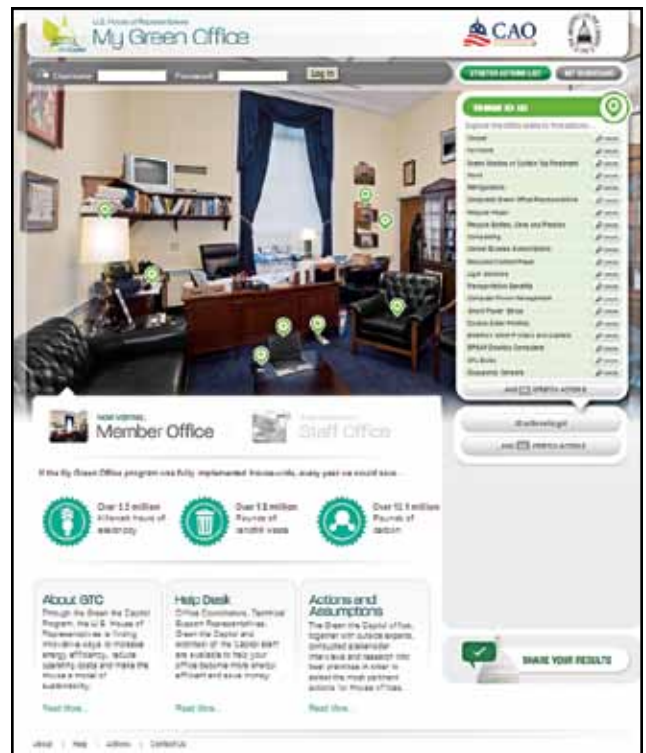
To make office greening as straightforward and quantifiable as possible, GTC created an interactive web-based tracking tool called “My Green Office” (<http://mygreenoffice.cao.house.gov>).

This website visually highlights more than 50 greening actions, from installing compact fluorescent light bulbs and smart power strips to purchasing only ENERGY STAR appliances and green office supplies. The actions are broken down according to ease of completion and greatest savings. “Core Actions” are those considered relatively easy to complete, while “Stretch Actions” are more ambitious. “Already Green Actions” represent initiatives, such as installing solar shades and low-VOC (volatile

organic compound) carpets, completed or underway by the CAO and Architect of the Capitol (AOC).

Participating offices are encouraged to propose new ideas for the actions list. Recent and upcoming additions include: faxing electronically, installing environmentally friendly water filtration systems, and participating in House-wide server consolidation and centralized computer power management programs.

My Green Office allows users to set goals, record progress and measure both Office



and House-wide savings in four categories: energy, carbon emission reduction, landfill waste diversion and dollars. A downloadable

ELECTRICITY SAVED SO FAR

177,034 kWh OR THE ANNUAL ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION OF **16 HOMES**



Greening Actions Guide explains the assumptions behind the savings calculations.

To highlight their greening accomplishments to constituents, House offices can also download an icon recognizing their participation in the office greening program.

In-Office Consultations and Follow-Up

More than 100 specially trained CAO and AOC employees are working to introduce House offices to the greening program. Through consultations and workshops, they help staff understand the importance of taking resource conservation actions in their offices and making the House a leader in sustainable practices.

Between May 2009 and the end of the year, office greening teams will have met with approximately 200 Member, Committee and

Leadership offices representing Republicans and Democrats from nearly all 50 states and various territories.

Greening teams keep in touch with a designated staff person at every office they visit. These "Green Office Representatives" educate and encourage their colleagues to take greening actions. They also chart progress on the My Green Office site, and update CAO office coordinators on their offices' participation in the program.

Internal monthly reports track the number of actions attributable to each participating Member office. All communication with the offices – including the status of greening outreach, consultations, follow-up and requests for additional service or information – is logged by a CAO tracking system.

PROFILE

For Cassie Alsfeld, a legislative correspondent for Rep. Anh "Joseph" Cao of Louisiana, office greening hits close to home.

"Our office in particular is very sensitive to these issues," Alsfeld says, describing the new green ethos that emerged in Louisiana in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's environmental destruction.

With the help of an office greening program consultation in May, Alsfeld and her co-workers intensified their recycling efforts and began working toward a paperless office. Now they route faxes to their computers, recycle toner and reply to constituent queries via email whenever possible.

The new practices help the office demonstrate not only a sense of environmental responsibility, but a fiscal responsibility as well, Alsfeld says. "We try to be as conservative with our money as possible."

It's all been a learning process, particularly the subtleties of recycling and the differences in waste. Alsfeld is still getting used to the occupancy sensors that operate the office's lights. Over time though, greening measures become familiar and commonplace. "We've kind of incorporated it into our everyday policies and practices." Alsfeld says.

WASTE DIVERTED SO FAR

**73,644 LBS. OR THE EQUIVALENT OF
FIVE GARBAGE TRUCK LOADS OF TRASH**



Committee and Leadership Greening

Green the Capitol recently led a consultation for the five green office representatives designated to cover the Speaker’s Leadership offices in the Capitol. Consultations have also been completed for the Committee on House Administration, the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Water and Power Subcommittee.

Consultations for Majority Leader Hoyer’s Leadership offices in the Capitol are underway.

GTC aims to complete consultations for all 441 Member offices and all other House offices by the end of 2010.

DISTRICT OFFICE GREENING

The office greening program’s second phase takes it beyond Capitol Hill.

During consultations at District offices around the country, GTC teams encourage staff to participate in the program just as their Washington-based colleagues do. In addition to the current District office Greening Actions Guide, staff at these offices will soon have access to a My Green Office website feature tailored for them.

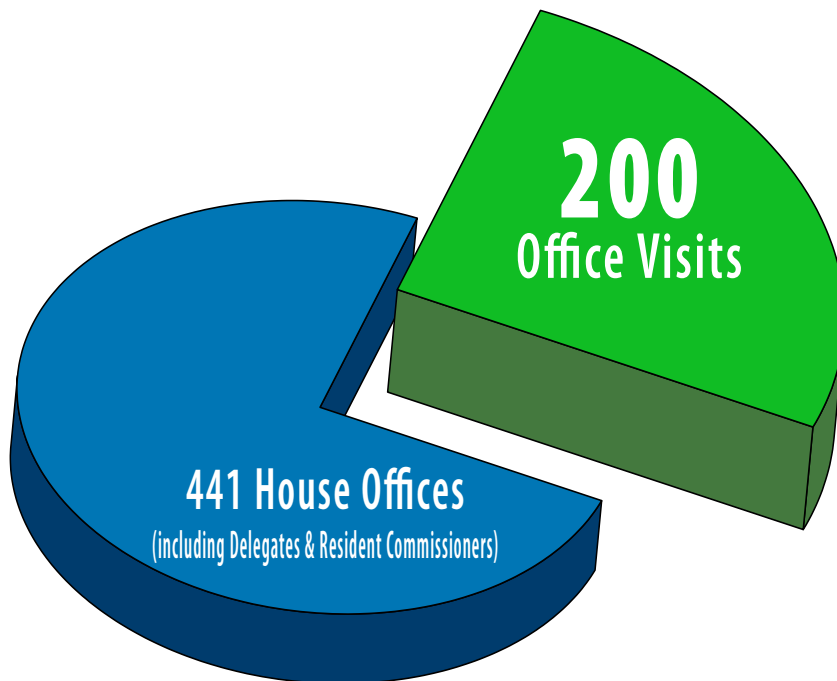
After assessing various methods of outreach to District offices, GTC uses several effective approaches:

- **Customized Meetings in District Offices**

Direct office visits provide a more intimate and interactive format while delivering much higher rates of participation. GTC teams hold centralized workshops to reach multiple District offices simultaneously.

- **District State Staff Institute Outreach**

GTC staff have incorporated an abbreviated consultation into the District State Staff Institute held quarterly in Washington, DC by the Congressional Research Service. This type of consultation promises to drive interest in office greening efforts.



Nearly half of all Member offices in Washington, DC are scheduled to receive greening consultations by the end of 2009.

CO₂ EMISSIONS CUT SO FAR

**392,898 LBS. OR THE EQUIVALENT OF REMOVING
36 CARS FROM THE ROAD FOR ONE YEAR**



• **Video Conference Consultations**

Video conferencing is the most principled way to demonstrate the message of sustainability (e.g., by cutting carbon emissions from air travel). We expect this approach will be a critical part of outreach, especially for geographically distant offices.

Green the Capitol staff plan to dramatically increase the number of District office visits. Visits through the rest of the year are tentatively scheduled to reach an additional 86 offices representing 36 Members. This will bring total outreach to 76 Members and 175 District offices.

GREENING OF THE CAO

Just as the House should serve as a symbolic example of sustainability to the nation, the CAO is striving to set a green standard for the House. The CAO is the logical choice for



CAO employees learn about recycling at a green office training session.

PROFILE

Rachel Stein, a staff assistant to Rep. Michael McMahon of New York, sees office greening as an imperative.

“We need to be an example,” Stein says. “This has to be the mainstream.”

After a consultation with office greening program representatives, Stein set to work making environmental office practices mainstream among her colleagues. At staff meetings, she explained how to use various color-coded recycling bins, the importance of double-sided printing and the need to turn off lights when not in use.

Change doesn’t always come easy though. For example, it took time for Stein’s coworkers to get used to compostable coffee cups. “That was a huge deal,” Stein recalls.

Adjusting to sustainable business practices doesn’t need to be difficult. The My Green Office website helps simplify the process because it provides a comprehensive checklist of waste-cutting actions and easy ways to track progress. “What GTC does works,” says Stein.

PAPER SAVED SO FAR

**1 MILLION SHEETS PER MONTH OR THE EQUIVALENT OF
1,000 TREES IN ONE YEAR**



this role because its employees touch virtually every aspect of House operations, from the food in the cafeterias to the computers in the offices.

So far, GTC's office greening program has reached more than 40 CAO offices representing more than 30 departments. Managers are trained to green both their office spaces and their respective business units, designating one or more employees as a green office representative. The CAO as a whole is committed to achieving all of the more than 50 office greening program actions.

The effort goes beyond managers and office representatives. All CAO employees are educated and empowered to incorporate sustainability and environmentally conscious decision making in every facet of their working environments.

By the end of this year, Green the Capitol will have conducted workshops for all CAO departments. Additionally, follow-up consultations will be scheduled to check progress and offer assistance to those green office representatives who have already participated.

IF ALL HOUSE OFFICES IN WASHINGTON, DC WERE TO CARRY OUT THE 15 "CORE" GREENING ACTIONS, WE ESTIMATE THAT THE HOUSE WOULD REDUCE OVERALL ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION BY 10%, DIVERT OVER 1,000 TONS OF LANDFILL WASTE AND SAVE NEARLY \$1 MILLION ANNUALLY IN REDUCED ENERGY AND PROCUREMENT COSTS.





Visit <http://cao.house.gov/greenthecapitol/> for more information about Green the Capitol programs or to join the Green Team.