

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SEARHC to host Earth Day activities on week of April 21-25

SITKA, April 17, 2008 — Earth Day is Tuesday, April 22, and the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) will launch a new green initiative with a weeklong celebration on April 21-25.

Our environment plays a major role in our health, and taking care of our environment by reducing our carbon footprint makes all of us healthier. A new employee-led SEARHC Green Team is looking at ways SEARHC can reduce its consumption of resources, become more environmentally responsible, set a positive example and be a community partner as we look for ways to become better stewards of our environment. Eventually, SEARHC hopes to become a green-certified organization.

During the week of April 21-25, SEARHC will be focusing on small changes each individual can make to become better stewards of the environment. Each day will have a specific focus activity for SEARHC employees to follow, and we invite our SEARHC friends to join us in their own communities. Our highlight events are:

- **Monday, April 21** — **Take an online eco-footprint quiz.** SEARHC employees are being sent links to two quizzes to find out their individual carbon footprints, and community members also can take the quizzes from their own computers. The online quizzes can be found at <http://www.earthday.net/footprint/> and http://www.conservation.org/act/live_green/Pages/ecofootprint.aspx.
- **Tuesday, April 22** — **Find alternative transportation to work.** Instead of driving by yourself to work, join a car pool, take the bus, ride your bike or walk. The Sitka Community Ride bus service will be offering “free” rides during Earth Week, and the schedule can be found at <http://publictransit.sitkatribes.org/>. In Juneau, schedules for Capital Transit can be found at <http://www.juneau.org/capitaltransit/index.php>.
- **Wednesday, April 23** — **Turn off all unnecessary lights.** When you leave a room, turn off the lights and other unnecessary appliances to save energy. If you can work without the lights, don’t turn them on.
- **Thursday, April 24** — **Pick up trash around your community.** SEARHC employees will be picking up trash around their local SEARHC facilities and around their local communities.
- **Friday, April 25** — **Recycle within your office or home.** Separate out paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, and other items that can be recycled or reused. Find out what recycling options are in your community.

In addition to these selected activities, there are several other easy-to-take actions people can take to help the earth. These include limiting paper consumption, bringing your own mug and silverware to work to cut down on styrofoam and plastic use, taking the stairs or walking whenever possible, using a reusable water bottle instead of buying a new bottle of water each day, etc.

The SEARHC Green Team is using what it calls the Five-R Framework to plan its new initiative — Restore, Respect, Reduce, Reuse and Recover. SEARHC already has seen savings in fuel costs by updating the controls at Mt. Edgumbe Hospital and with a paper recycling program at the Community Health Services building. These programs will expand to include purchasing habits, using fewer hazardous and more green-based cleaning products, more recycling and waste reduction, finding more efficient or alternative energy solutions, and others. To learn more about SEARHC’s green initiative, contact Director of Facilities Services Shawn Sorenson at 966-8321 or shawn.sorenson@searhc.org.

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