

IMPLEMENTING “GREEN BUSINESS” PRACTICES AT THE SANTA BARBARA ZOO

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Introduction

The Santa Barbara Zoo has a long history of community involvement and paving the way for environmentally friendly practices in the Santa Barbara area. The Zoo initiated the first community recycling program more than 20 years ago. In 2007 The Zoo created an in house peer-committee “Sustainable Operations Committee (Green Team)” to review and establish responsible environmentally responsible practices. The county of Santa Barbara has been recognizing and awarding various business, schools and non-profits since 1994.

Methods

The zoo had multiple inspections on zoo property of the animal nutrition facilities, food services, maintenance (service areas), machine shops and office spaces. For the purpose of green certification the zoo’s Animal Kitchen was classified as a restaurant/food services for inspections. The inspections focused on six main categories; General Standards, Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling, Environmentally Preferable Purchasing, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation, and Pollution Prevention.

Results

The Santa Barbara Zoo- Food Services and Animal Nutrition Departments received the Santa Barbara County Green Business Partnership in the fall of 2012.

Conclusion

With minimal financial invest we were able to green certify a commissary that was converted from an administrative building in 1997. There were minimal challenges to continue to adhere to all AZA and USDA standards in regards to food preparation and sanitation while still maintaining green business standards.