

Mass Envirothon 2008 Community Awards "To Do" List for Teams

Preparing for the Community Awards takes a little extra work, but teams say it is worth it! As with the Envirothon competition, Community Awards should represent the team's effort, with your coach as a valuable resource person.

To earn the Community Action Award, you must first complete the requirements for the Community Research Award. *Items in italics refer the Community Action Award.*

Fall

___ Plan your Current Issue research using the Community Research Award Checklist. This way you will make sure you have included all the kinds of research necessary.

___ *As you research, watch for possible community action projects related to the current issue. Who is doing what to address the issues? What needs to be done? Are there ways your team could help?*

Winter and Early Spring

___ Continue your community research. Plan far ahead to arrange interviews or visits.

___ *Plan Community Action projects: What's the problem you want to do something about? What will you do, and how will it benefit your community? Will you partner with people in the community? When will you do the work? What do you need to make this project happen?*

___ *As part of the action planning, identify a community contact person who will be able to write a letter describing the benefit of your action project to your community. This should be someone from outside your school who is familiar with your project. If your project is a partnership with a community organization, this letter should be written by someone from that organization.*

Four weeks before the Envirothon

___ Hold a team meeting with Community Research Award checklist to fill in the blanks and see what you still need to do to qualify for the award.

___ Designate one or two team members who will be your team's Community Awards contacts. They can coordinate the tasks below and will be responsible for answering questions when you register for the Community Awards on the day of the Envirothon. This may be a task where your team alternate can take a lead role.

___ Request a letter about the benefits of your community action project from your community contact person. This should be in your hands at least a week before the Envirothon so all team members and coaches can have a chance to read it before they sign the Community Action Award form. Assign a team member to follow up and be sure to get a signed paper copy of the letter.

Two weeks before the Envirothon

- ___ Have a team member contact the Envirothon (wsnyder@umext.umass.edu or 413/545-3876) to let us know that your team plans to qualify for one or both awards. This gives us time to prepare award certificates for you.
- ___ Collect and double-check names and addresses for Community Awards publicity. Fill in the blanks on the front of the Community Research Award form.
- ___ *Prepare a simple (1-2 page) news release about your community action project. For some helpful hints, see the back of the Community Action Certification Sheet.*
- ___ Prepare your **Envirothon Story** - just one page about your team's Envirothon experience this year, for distribution to other teams. Bring copies with you to hand out at the Envirothon's lunchtime Roundtables session.

Before the day of the Envirothon

- ___ Have a team (with good handwriting) complete both sides of the Research Award *Certification Checklist* (except signatures).
- ___ *Assign a team member (with good handwriting) to complete the Action Award Certification Sheet (except signatures).*
- ___ Have each team member and coach sign the Research Award Certification Checklist, *and the Action Award Certification Sheet*, certifying that all requirements for the award have been met.
- ___ Hold a final meeting of all who have been involved (team members, alternates, coaches) to discuss what materials to bring for the lunchtime display and to ensure that everyone is agreed that all requirements for the award have been met. This would be a good time to get everyone's signature on the *Certification Checklist(s)*.

At registration on the day of the Envirothon

Your whole team should come to the Community Awards registration table if possible. If not, at least send your community awards contacts. Whoever comes should:

- ___ Bring your completed and signed Community Research Award *Certification Checklist*, stapled to a copy of your one page summary, to the Community Awards registration table.
- ___ Bring your completed and signed Community Action Award *Certification Sheet*, stapled to a copy of your news release and a copy of your community letter of support (for the Envirothon's records), to the Community Awards registration table.
- ___ Be ready to answer questions about your research *and action projects*. And don't forget to bring your Envirothon stories to the Roundtables session at lunch!