

RiverCentre and Xcel Given "Sustainable Saint Paul" Award



- ✓ Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and the City Council presented officials from Saint Paul RiverCentre with their first-ever Sustainable Saint Paul Award.

The award was created by the Mayor in 2007 to honor outstanding achievements of individuals, businesses and organizations that are protecting and restoring the environment in Saint Paul.

- ✓ "The Saint Paul RiverCentre has made amazing progress this past year in environmental conservation," Mayor Coleman said. "Along with Xcel Energy Center, their efforts in waste prevention, reduction, recycling and related infrastructure is work that I greatly admire. I am happy to be giving the Waste Reduction and Recycling Award to an organization that works every day to help make Saint Paul a national leader on environmental policy."

Officials at Saint Paul RiverCentre, in partnership with Xcel Energy Center, declared their intent to become a regional leader in sustainability in April 2009. The initial phase of the collaborative effort, branded as "50-50 in 2," is aimed at reducing the amount of trash generated at Saint Paul RiverCentre, Xcel Energy Center, and The Legendary Roy Wilkins Auditorium by 50 percent while increasing the amount recycled to 50 percent by the summer of 2011.

As a first step, more than 280 recycling bins were purchased and positioned throughout the campus to create a nearly 1:1 ratio with trash cans. Composting was integrated into all campus kitchens and concessions at all three facilities. Compost receptacles were added to public areas of RiverCentre - one of the first convention centers in the nation to do so - and there are plans to do the same at Xcel Energy Center soon. To protect the integrity of the process, the operations team utilizes a color-coded bagging system to sort the variety of waste streams. A promotional campaign was launched in tandem to educate fans and guests and teach them how to participate in the effort.

Since July of 2009, the venues have successfully diverted 885,140 pounds of trash; the goal is 1.2 million pounds per year. Nine months into the initial waste-reduction program, trash has been reduced by 46 percent and the recycling rate risen to 38 percent, more than double the measured rate before the project began. Additionally, 121.5 tons of cardboard, 77 tons of compost and 71.4 tons of bottles and cans have been recycled.

<http://www.rivercentre.org/50502/>