

# **Munson Senior Center Environmental Management Planning**

**DRAFT – 4/5/10**

**Munson Senior Center  
Las Cruces, NM**

**Environmental Management System**

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## **Structure and Responsibility**

The Robert Munson Senior Center has served as the City of Las Cruces' community focal point for senior services for more than thirty-three years. The Center's structure is overseen by the City's Public Services Department and administered by the Senior Programs Administrator and Center Manager. Within this structure are the Volunteer, Nutrition, Long-Term Care, and Transportation Programs.

The Center's overall annual budget for operation and a staff of 25 is approximately \$500,000. Munson Center operates Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 12 noon – 4 p.m. Evening programs are scheduled, as requested.

Over the past five years, the Center has steadily drawn new participants to its diverse recreation and education programs. In particular, creative arts and health promotion activities draw record numbers of participants. During 2009, Munson Center was the center of choice for more than 4,000 senior citizens. The daily count of 600+ customers includes an average of 150 congregate diners with increasing numbers each month. This ever-growing number of participants and their increased demand for new activities has prompted the City to initiate an expansion of the Munson Center.

In 1995, the National Council on the Aging (NCOA) published *Senior Centers in America: A Blueprint for the Future*. The purpose of this report was to highlight changes in the aging population and offer suggestions on how senior centers could address these changes. It identified the following five key issues for senior centers to address:

1. Attracting Baby Boomers
2. Fostering Diversity
3. Linking the Generations
4. Redefining the Image of Senior Centers
5. Partnering for Resource and Community Development

If the Munson Center is to continue to play a vital role in the lives of older citizens, all expansion plans need to take into consideration all five issues. The Center will reflect the broad range of interests, needs, perceptions, attitudes and values of its customers in the design of the facility and the development of all - programs and services.

As a major step toward incorporating these values, the Center's administration formed a "Green Team" in 2008 to initiate, operate and maintain this EMS with representation from Center management, facilities, nutrition, arts and crafts, the City's recycling and water conservation programs, and NMSU/IEE. All recommendations from the Team are reviewed by Senior Program administration and implemented by Center and Program Managers. The Center Manager also tracks all waste and energy activities and related costs. **The Green Team encourages any and all seniors and staff to become members of the Team and to provide input into the EMS.**

In January 2010, a carbon monoxide leak in the HVAC system, which caused several Munson Senior Center staff members and seniors to receive medical treatment, closed the Center. Initially, City officials thought the closure would only be for a few days, but inspectors with the New Mexico Construction Industries Division determined that the building had to be indefinitely closed because the broken HVAC system posed a public health and safety risk. Munson's reopening was postponed twice because of delays in the repairs and finally reopened on March 15, 2010. The total cost of the repairs was \$54,163.

## **Munson Senior Center Mission Statement and Goals**

The *Mission* of the Munson Senior Center is to engage individuals over 50-years of age through innovative and diverse programs that promote and enhance the physical, intellectual and social well-being of those who live in Las Cruces, New Mexico

The *Goals* of the Center are to promote:

**Strong Community** - all persons 50+ will feel welcome and have a sense of belonging through membership in the City's Senior Programs

**Health & Wellness** - all persons 50+ in Las Cruces will be healthy longer through participating in lifestyle health and wellness opportunities provided at the Center

**Safety & Security** - persons 50+ living in Las Cruces enjoy a safe and secure environment, enriched by their participation in safety related events at Munson Senior Center

**Nutrition** – all persons 50+ will be provided with nutritious, appetizing and tasty meals at the Center or delivered that same meal through the Meals-on-Wheels Program

**Transportation** - those 50+ in Las Cruces can obtain transportation to desired activities with the support of the Center

**Enrichment** - Munson Senior Center and the City of Las Cruces will provide outlets for the social needs of all persons 50+ through innovative, diverse programming and social activities

**Operations & Administration** - the staff of the Center will be good stewards of resources in support of all individuals 50+ in the City through professional, efficient, courteous and responsive facility and program operations

## **Munson Senior Center Environmental Policy**

The Center will employ management systems and procedures specifically designed to prevent activities and/or conditions that pose a threat to human health, safety or the environment. The Center will minimize risk and protect all employees and the communities in which they operate by employing safe technologies and operating procedures, as well as being prepared for emergencies.

The Center will strive to prevent releases to the atmosphere, land or water. Staff and seniors will minimize the amount and toxicity of waste generated and will ensure the safe treatment and disposal of waste. This commitment to environmental quality will be communicated to all employees, vendors and customers.

**The Center will promote energy, environmental quality and waste-reduction considerations during any and all re-design and construction operations.**

The Center will continuously seek opportunities to improve adherence to these principles, and will periodically report progress to all stakeholders.

## **Identifying Environmental Aspects**

The Munson Senior Center formed a "Green Team" in 2008 with the assistance of New Mexico State University's Institute for Energy and the Environment (IEE). The Team has identified the following environmental aspects to be considered in this EMS:

- Solid Waste
- Recyclables
- Organic Waste
- Energy and Lighting
- Water and Wastewater

All aspects, their impacts and how the Green Team will address each is discussed in the **Environmental Management Program** section below.

### **Legal and Other Requirements**

The Center will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and will implement programs and procedures to assure compliance. Strict compliance with environmental and health standards will be a key ingredient in the training, performance reviews and incentives of all employees. Where existing laws and regulations are not adequate to assure protection of human health, safety and the environment, the Center will establish and meet its own quality standards.

Information on legal requirements will be obtained from the City of Las Cruces and State of New Mexico regulatory agencies, professional trade groups and associations, the Internet and newsletters, attorneys, customers and vendors.

### **Objectives and Targets**

The Green Team has identified the following Objectives and Targets of this EMS:

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
Reduce production of solid waste through diversion of recyclables/ compostables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce solid waste amounts by 20% in 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diversion rate of 30 cubic yards/month (360 cubic yards/year)</b></li> </ul>
Increase recycling of paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase diversion of recyclables by 50% in 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>10 recycling bins</b> placed throughout Center; City Recycling bin located at Center</li> </ul>
Implement composting of cafeteria food scraps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate food scrap composting program in 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>4400 pounds</b> of food scraps composted at Fair Light Gardens in 2009</li> </ul>
Reduce energy use and lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce electricity use by 10% in 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in electrical charges by \$1767 <b>from 2008-09</b></li> <li>• Reduction in gas charges by \$8940 <b>from 2008-09</b></li> </ul>
Improve water conservation efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce water use by 10% in 2009</li> <li>• Implement additional water conservation measures and activities in 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water use reduced by 910,000 gallons</li> <li>• Combined water/waste water charges reduced by \$2400</li> </ul>

<p>Improve staff and seniors' awareness of EMS and related environmental/energy issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct two (2) EMS awareness training courses in 2010</li> <li>• Continue EMS information in Center newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 articles in <i>Senior Messenger</i> in 2009</li> </ul>
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### **Environmental Management Program**

For each of the functional units at the Munson Senior Center, the Green Team has made the following observations and recommendations for Best Management Practices (BMPs) based on on-site assessments conducted in 2008-09 and in compliance with the goals of the EMS:

#### **Kitchen, Food Storage and Dining Areas**

Deliveries of dry goods, fresh and frozen food are made twice per week to the Center and stored in three separate storage areas. The Senior Programs Nutrition staff prepares a total of **850 meals comprised of three meal sites and Meals on Wheels**. The Munson kitchen staff prepares meals for the Munson congregate dining and Mesilla Park. A total of 220 meals are served daily in the Munson Center dining room. Leftover food is placed in trays, frozen, and distributed by the Meals-on-Wheels Program.

The cantina serves coffee daily and has a soda machine; **only paper products are now being ordered for use in the cantina**; an aluminum can recycling container is located nearby and is emptied twice monthly for delivery to a can recycler in Las Cruces.

Newspaper and cardboard are currently being recycled and are placed in a 6-cu. yard recycling bin located outside of the kitchen for collection by the City three times per week. Some plastic containers are already re-utilized for bulk storage of dry goods and seasonings in the kitchen. Janitorial and kitchen-cleaning supplies are also stored on shelving near the kitchen.

#### ***Recommendations:***

- **reduce water flow in commercial dishwasher**
- all kitchen faucets to be changed out to low-flow heads

#### **Arts and Crafts Studios**

Seniors are provided work areas for ceramics, painting and lapidary production. Shaunna Foster, Recreation Leader, stores and re-uses plastic milk jugs, glass jars, Styrofoam, cardboard and newspaper. **The studios have a total of 6 wash sinks**. The nearby Thrift Shop offers secondhand and recycled clothing and accessories for purchase by the seniors. Items not sold within a certain amount of time are donated to La Casa.

The lapidary shop has 2 wash sinks plus 6 stone-cutting saws and grinders. The resulting rock dust is mixed with oil and stored in buckets; the oil is decanted and reused.

#### ***Recommendations:***

- **install energy-efficient window in quilting studio**
- newspaper, brown paper and cardboard waste to be placed in recycling bin outside of kitchen
- **install air venting** from studios to assure good air quality as part of Center remodeling project
- all wash sink faucets to be changed out to low-flow heads
- glass is not recyclable, but procedures should be put in place to reuse as much as possible at the Center

### Meeting Rooms and Library

Currently, all meeting rooms have access to recycling bins for paper and/or cans. The library recycles magazines and books and now has access to recycling bins.

### Administration Offices

Currently, **all office workers** are recycling paper and ink cartridges on their own. The staff kitchenette has a paper and small organic waste stream which is now being recycled. Recycling bins are now in place in all recreational areas. **A used eyewear box is available for donations to the Lions Club.**

#### **Recommendations:**

- **battery recycling box (to include hearing aid batteries) to be placed in lobby**
- pool players to be advised on recycling program

### Landscaping and Water Use

The facility is currently receiving 85 psi of water pressure; some commodes are low-flow info red units with a spraying system. Irrigation audit needs to be conducted by the City.

A recent garden park remodel resulted in a good size of sod removal which should show a net water savings over time. New plantings will require establishment watering during this first year so we may or may not see it during the time frame of this study.

#### **Recommendations:**

- add adjustable pressure reducer after meter and drop to 50 psi
- monitor subsequent facilities operations
- change out all restroom faucets to low-flow heads and re-set infrared units on all commodes
- check on donations from hardware stores for some plumbing retrofits.

#### General Steps Taken to Implement Recommendations:

- **Center Manager continues to record baseline amounts** for waste disposal, organic waste composting, energy and water use and related costs on spreadsheets stored on her computer; goal is to reduce number of trash pick-ups per week by the City and realize related cost savings
- Volunteers have been trained to clear dining tables and to separate compostables from non-compostables; bins for this organic waste stream and milk cartons are now placed near the dishwashing station. About 25 pounds per day are collected by the kitchen staff and transported to the Fair Light Community Gardens for composting and utilization as soil amendment. As of March 15, 2010, approximately 4,675 pounds of organic waste have been diverted for composting and reuse.
- **As of September 1, 2009, the Center will be purchasing certified green cleaning products, including micro-fiber mops, for use throughout the Center (??)**
- Center has provided 475 shopping totes, made from recycled material, for use by all seniors
- Center continues to replace all incandescent bulbs with CFLs, utilize green-tipped fluorescent bulbs and participates in the City's lamp take-back program
- City of Las Cruces has begun a remodeling effort at the Munson Center to include many of the recommendations made by the Green Team **including painting the Center's roof white**
- **Center to apply for any and all utility rebates for replacement of windows, doors, lighting and heating/cooling units**
- Center to promote glass reuse as alternative to recycling glass

## **Training and Awareness**

The Center initiated its pollution prevention efforts at a Kick-Off event on December 17, 2008, held at the Center with City Department directors, the City Manager, Mayor and Dean of the NMSU College of Engineering in attendance. The event was designed to emphasize the City's commitment to waste and energy reduction and to provide information on the Munson Center's role as a model facility for other City departments. After greetings and introductory comments, Chris Campbell of NMSU's Institute for Energy & the Environment gave a brief introduction to pollution prevention and the steps to be taken to achieve successful environmental management at the Center.

A Munson Center Green was then formed and arrangements made to initiate a preliminary environmental assessment of the Center which was conducted on February 5, 2009 and resulted in a Feedback Report which continues to be up-dated by the Team.

On May 28, 2009, the Green Team and IEE conducted a training on environmental management systems for the City of Las Cruces and other community groups. Based on IEE's work at the Munson Center to identify waste streams and establish an EMS there, this training was conducted by Chris Campbell and Thomas Vinson from the University of Texas at Arlington who provided numerous examples of EMS implementation at other public entities as well as the benefits of EMS in reducing the City's environmental footprint and associated costs, too. The session was attended by 25 City employees, Munson Center staff and volunteers as well as representatives from non-profit groups in Las Cruces.

**The Munson Center Administration and Green Team plan to include an EMS component in all new-employee training as well as additional trainings for staff and seniors in 2010.**

All of this collaborative work between the City and IEE is funded through the generosity of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VI's Pollution Prevention Program.

## **Communications**

Green Team meetings are to be scheduled for every two months, are announced by the Center's administration and are open to all staff and seniors. Signs are posted throughout the Center instructing staff and seniors on proper methods of recycling and segregating organic waste. Articles on EMS and sustainability are now appearing regularly in the Center's newsletter, *The Senior Messenger*.

## **EMS Documentation, Monitoring and Measurement**

Documents utilized to track all waste disposal, recycling, water and energy use are produced and maintained by the Center's administration and are to be updated on a monthly basis. These tracking spreadsheets are reviewed by the Green Team and IEE and should be utilized to gauge the success of all EMS activities and establish priorities for environmental improvement.

The Center's Nutrition Director, Facility Manager and administration are responsible for tracking of all environmental activities, related costs and reductions and reporting current measurement data to the Green Team.

## **Nonconformance and Corrective / Preventive Action**

The procedure for the Green Team to improve and/or correct activities that are not in conformance with this EMS is as follows:

- **Develop a Problem Statement** to identify the issue and how it fails to conform to the goals and principles of the Center's EMS and why it needs to be resolved
- **Identify the Most Likely Causes** of the failed activity or procedure

- **Develop and Implement Corrective/Preventive Solution(s)** that will result in improved BMPs and performance
- **Assign Staff Responsibility** for the implementation of the solution(s) and preventive actions
- **Maintain Records** of all corrective actions and related improvements to the EMS

A corrective action tracking log should be devised as follows:

### **CORRECTIVE ACTION TRACKING LOG**

Problem (Date)	Requested By	Issued To	Plan Due (Date)	Plan Completed (Date)	Corrective Action Completed (Date)	Effectiveness Verified (Date)	Closed (Date)

#### **EMS Auditing and Management Review**

Annual environmental assessments will be conducted at the Center by the Green Team and IEE to update EMS goals and activities, review BMPs and to verify all reductions, cost-savings and other results. The Center’s EMS will reflect all updates and results of the annual audit and will contain current recommendations made by the Green Team, staff, seniors and IEE.

Updates on all environmental activities and the Center’s EMS will be presented to City of Las Cruces officials and representatives for review and use as a model program for further implementation in the City.

#### **Emergency Preparedness and Response**

In the event of an emergency situation, it is the responsibility of City of Las Cruces Senior Programs staff **to ensure that high-quality, shelf-stable food is available to seniors.** Emergencies will be considered those situations in which crucial senior services are suspended or unavailable, due to inclement weather; community disaster; utility shut down; critical repairs at meal sites; or epidemic illness among senior program staff, seniors, and/or the general population.

Meals on Wheels clients will be considered at-risk in emergency situations. In addition, Congregate clients assessed as at-risk will be targeted for emergency services. Emergency services will be provided unless either the senior or caretaker contacts the City with confirmation that the senior has adequate food and other necessary assistance.

#### **Command Structure**

The chain of command, initiated in cases of emergency is as follows:

1. Senior Programs Administrator
2. Senior Centers Manager
3. Senior Nutrition Manager
4. Long-Term Care Manager

The Senior Programs Administrator will coordinate all media communication through the City's Public Information Office. Radio and newspaper announcements will be prepared to notify seniors of service delivery plans, including the time frames for services.

Emergency Procedures for Serving At-Risk Clients:

In an emergency situation, when at all possible, either a hot meal or alternative frozen meal, will be delivered to Meals on Wheels clients and any Congregate client who has been identified as at risk. At all times, the program will strive to maintain at least two hundred (200) frozen meals in its inventory.

As a contingency plan for those situations when meal delivery is not possible, in November of each year, Senior Programs will secure and deliver at least three (3) days of shelf-stable lunch and breakfast meals for at risk seniors, to be available through the winter. If no emergency occurs necessitating the use of these meals, seniors may use the food as needed, before the expiration date on the food packages. Receipt of shelf stable foods will not affect the delivery of regular meals if no emergency requires the use of these foods through the winter.

In the event of an emergency, a crew will work from the office at Munson Center to handle calls and respond to questions. Staff will assist clients to the greatest extent possible. The staff will ensure the safest and least disruptive plans are implemented for meals delivery.

Emergency Situations and the On-Site Preparation of Food:

In the event that one center kitchen is out of operation, meals will be prepared at another center. Depending on circumstances, emergency meals will be prepared in our center kitchens. When possible and appropriate, emergency meals will be served at congregate sites. If it is not possible to serve at one center, those respective participants will be directed or transported to another center. If necessary, additional serving sessions will be initiated to handle any overflow of diners.

Refrigerators and Freezers, as back up space, may be utilized from the Community Action Agency or the Las Cruces Public Schools, if available and needed.

Emergency Procedures for Congregate Sites:

Should an emergency occur while seniors are at a meal site, emergency plans at the center will be implemented in accordance with posted Evacuation Plans. Staff will insure all seniors are safe and comfortable. Seniors will be transported home, as needed.

Coordination of Services:

All other City of Las Cruces resources, including Fire, Police, and Transit will be utilized, as needed. In addition, City of Las Cruces emergency services will be coordinated with other community resources, including EMS and Red Cross services, on an as-needed basis.

**DRAFT – 4/5/10**