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“Greene’s March to Green” Celebration Begins Initial Effort to Recycle 52 tons of Waste in a Year

XENIA – With a hopeful eye toward a greener tomorrow, Greene Memorial Hospital (GMH) kicked off its “Greene’s March to Green” campaign Monday afternoon, March 1, in the hospital cafeteria. Employees were given the opportunity to see several display items that encourage a greener lifestyle at GMH.

“Our aim is to reduce our landfill waste by 25 percent in the first year,” said Marcy Winnenberg, March to Green campaign coordinator for the hospital. “We produced 209 tons of waste last year, so that means we are shooting for about 52 tons less right away. Then we want to just keep getting better.”

Enthusiastic employees rocked out to a live DJ and had a chance to purchase reusable plastic cups that keep Styrofoam out of the landfill. But the star of Monday’s celebration was the tool that can help the hospital reach its 52-ton goal – one of the green-colored, single-stream recycling bins the hospital is placing into service this week.

Valued at \$1,100, a total of 45 bins were donated by the Greene Memorial Auxiliary group and are being placed throughout the hospital. These containers can take paper, plastic or glass. Virtually all items other than hazardous waste, Styrofoam and food can go in the containers.

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“The containers will really help us by making recycling easier because they take almost all of our recyclable materials in one place,” said Greg Henderson, President of GMH, a member of Kettering Health Network. “We deployed a similar system at Grandview and Southview medical centers. Our Network can get hundreds of tons of waste out of our landfills, and we are doing all we can to accomplish that.”

“We will actually save money on our waste collection if we have good participation in this program,” said Rene Boyer, Network Green Team coordinator. “Waste Management has made this a priority, and recent improvements in automated sorting and screening make it possible.”

Display boards at Monday’s celebration highlighted Nutrition Month as well as greener ways of making family dinner or packing school lunches. These methods include cooking methods that reduce energy usage, utilizing organic foods, and packing items in reusable storage containers instead of using disposable items like juice boxes and pudding cups.

Displays also featured sustainable foods – ways of raising food that are healthy for consumers and animals. These sustainable methods do not harm the environment, are humane for workers, respect animals, provide a fair wage to the farmer, and support and enhance rural communities.

In addition to the single-stream recycling bins, Greene Memorial has started a battery recycling campaign. Hospital departments may bring boxes of used batteries of all types to the receiving dock, where Batteries Plus has agreed to pick them up once a month.

“We are really only scratching the surface of what we can do to make our communities greener,” Boyer said. “Our administrators have been very encouraging of our efforts, and the employees are just jumping in with both feet. I’m confident that we will be sharing new ways to eliminate even more waste in the coming months.”

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