



Share the Green

Making the Most of Your Groundwater Guardian Green Site Designation

A Public Relations Toolkit



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Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program

Public Relations Toolkit

Make the most of your designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site! The Green Site program was created to recognize highly-managed green spaces like yours for your groundwater stewardship. Your site's participation in the Green Site program is an excellent opportunity to communicate your site's groundwater-friendly practices to the public.

Why Publicize?

In an era where being "green" is hip and trendy, promoting yourself as a "Green Site" can be especially beneficial. New visitors will be drawn to your site, and returning visitors will also appreciate and respond to your efforts to help protect the environment. The publicity surrounding your Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation will not only promote your site as an environmentally responsible good neighbor, but will also increase your site's visibility within your community.

The Groundwater Foundation has developed some tools, tips, and suggestions to get you started. If you have any questions about the items below, contact Green Site program staff at 402-434-2740 or guardian@groundwater.org.

An electronic version of this kit is also available on The Groundwater Foundation's website at <http://www.groundwater.org/greensites.html>.

This toolkit includes:

- **Make Your Mark**
Using the Groundwater Guardian Green Site Logo (page 5)
Suggestions for using the distinctive Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo on your site.
- **Who, What, Why, When, Where, and How?**
News Release Template (page 6)
Use this template and the suggestions for working with the media to help promote your Green Site designation to the public.
- **Get the Facts**
Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program "Quick Facts" (page 9)
Use this fact sheet to share basic information about the Green Site program with site staff and the media, including the program's purpose, process, and important dates.
- **Celebrate!**
Organizing A Local Designation Celebration (page 11)
Includes suggestions and guidelines for organizing a celebration of your Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation.



- **Picture This**
Using Photographs to Tell Your Story (page 13)
A picture is worth a thousand words! Provides suggestions for ways to use photographs to help promote your site's groundwater stewardship locally, and nationally by providing photos to The Groundwater Foundation.
- **Share the Green**
Additional Suggestions for Publicizing Groundwater Guardian Green Site Designation (page 14)
Make the most of your Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation by utilizing these suggestions to further promote your site's participation.



Make Your Mark

Using the Groundwater Guardian Green Site Logo

By earning Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation, you are entitled to use the distinctive Green Site name and logo. Doing so can maximize the visibility of your participation in the Green Site program, recognize your site for its groundwater-friendly practices, and help raise groundwater awareness. Included with this kit is a CD with the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo in a variety of digital formats, in both high and low resolution. If you'd like a camera-ready copy of the logo, call 1-800-858-4844 or email guardian@groundwater.org.

The Groundwater Foundation encourages Groundwater Guardian Green Sites to proudly display the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo throughout your site and on your own promotional materials. Consider including the logo on:

- Your website
- Email signature lines
- Letterhead
- Signs, banners, flags, and window clings posted at your site
- Employee apparel and nametags
- Posters
- Brochures
- Displays
- Maintenance equipment
- Event programs and promotional materials
- Newsletters
- Magazine and newspaper articles
- Pens and pencils
- Water bottles, key chains, coffee mugs, tote bags, golf balls, or other promotional and/or giveaway items
- Certificates
- Presentation materials
- Television advertising
- Radio advertising
- Sports equipment

The use of the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo is strictly reserved to currently designated Groundwater Guardian Green Sites only.

The Groundwater Foundation currently has reflective road signs bearing the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo available for purchase (available in our online catalog at www.groundwater.org). The Foundation is looking at developing additional items bearing the logo, such as window clings, stickers, and other items to help you easily incorporate the Green Site logo on your site.

Be creative – what are some other ways you can use the logo on your site to promote your designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site? We want to hear from you – send an email to guardian@groundwater.org and tell us how you've used the logo. Better yet, send us photos of how you've used the logo on your site!



Who, What, Why, When, Where, and How?

News Release Template

To help spotlight the good work you do, The Groundwater Foundation sends a news release to your local media contact once you are designated as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site. To help build on that momentum, you may want to send a follow-up news release to local media that contains additional specific information about your site and its practices, as well as any plans you may have to celebrate your designation locally. Feel free to edit and modify the news release below to fit your site's specific needs. Areas where site-specific information should be included are noted in *[brackets and italics]*. The brackets and italics should be removed before submitting the release to local media for publication. A copy of this news release is also included on the CD that accompanies this kit.

You might also consider developing local and regional media lists to assist you in your publicity efforts. Media lists should include contact information for daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, television stations, local or regional magazines, radio stations, industry newsletters and magazines, and other publications or outlets specific to your type of site. To develop your media list, start with the local telephone directory or library reference books of media outlets. Check with your state's press or newspaper associations or a local public relations firm if you need additional information for your lists. Make sure you keep the contact information in these lists up-to-date!

Keep in mind that in order to effectively promote your site and its Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation, you target specific media to submit your news releases to. Trade publications, local publications, local television and radio stations, and environmental publications or stations are excellent media for publishing your sites Green Site status. Your local community will benefit from your groundwater-friendly practices, so the audience you address through those local publications will be engaged with and attentive to your message. Trade publications are a great place to showcase your forward-thinking practices, and environmental publications will especially care about your beneficial practices. You want to ensure your message is not only published, but also that it reaches the right audience. Targeting your audience through the appropriate publications will provide the most beneficial publicity for your site.

Please send a copy of any news release publicizing your Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation to The Groundwater Foundation at P.O. Box 22558, Lincoln, NE 68542-2558, fax to 402-434-2742, or email to guardian@groundwater.org.



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: *[Date]*

Contact: *[Site manager/public relations contact name, phone number, e-mail]*

[Site Name] Goes Green!

[Site Name] is going green!

By practicing good groundwater and environmental stewardship, *[Site Name]* was recently designated as a *[program year]* Groundwater Guardian Green Site by The Groundwater Foundation. *[Site Name]*'s groundwater-friendly practices include *[include information about specific practices]*.

Groundwater Guardian Green Sites are essentially places with a lot of green space – like golf courses; ball fields; educational campuses; and residential, recreational, and office parks – that implement groundwater and surface water-friendly practices to maintain the site. *[Site Name]* completed an application to evaluate and document its groundwater-friendly practices to earn this exclusive designation.

By *[include additional information about site-specific practices, such as selecting plants adapted to the region's climate, tracking irrigation water use, maintaining a no-application zone around surface water and active wells, and applying fertilizer based on nutrient needs]*, *[Site Name]* is going "green" and helping to protect and conserve local water supplies.

[Program year] is *[Site Name]*'s *[first, second, third, etc.]* year as a designated Groundwater Guardian Green Site. *[If the site was also designated in 2007 as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site Pilot Site, include verbiage such as "Site Name was also designated in 2007 as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site Pilot Site."]*

Groundwater Guardian Green Sites is a program of The Groundwater Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Lincoln, Nebraska with a mission to educate and motivate the public to care about and for groundwater. The program began in 2007 to recognize good stewards of groundwater by encouraging managers of highly-managed green spaces to implement, measure, and document their groundwater-friendly practices.

[Include a quote or two from the site manager about the importance of groundwater protection, the site's groundwater-friendly practices, the value of the Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation, or other pertinent information.]

Other interested sites are encouraged to get involved in the Groundwater Guardian Green Site online at www.groundwater.org/gg/greensites.html, e-mailing guardian@groundwater.org, or calling 1-800-858-4844.

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For more information about *[Site Name]'s* operation, please contact *[Site manager or public relations contact name]* at *[phone number and/or email address]* or visit *[website]*.

The Groundwater Foundation is a non-profit organization based in Lincoln, Nebraska with a mission to educate and motivate the public to care about and for groundwater. Since its inception in 1985, the Foundation has offered various educational programming for youth and adults. To learn more, visit www.groundwater.org.



Get the Facts

Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program “Quick Facts”

Program Purpose

- Recognize the groundwater stewardship of highly-managed green spaces.
- Encourage green space managers to implement, measure, and document their groundwater-friendly practices.
- Educate site managers and visitors about groundwater.
- Connect practices on the land’s surface to their potential impact on groundwater.

Eligibility

- Open to all managers of highly-managed green spaces.
- No team is required for participation.

Process

- Site managers complete the Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program Application and submit it to The Groundwater Foundation via e-mail, fax, or mail. Sites must earn at least 70% of the total applicable points on the application to be eligible for designation as a Green Site.
- Groundwater Foundation staff process the application and notify the site of their score within one to two weeks of receiving the application.
- Upon designation, each site’s name is added to The Groundwater Foundation’s website.
- Site managers can begin using the exclusive Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo and name once they have received notification of their application score.
- A news release announcing the site’s designation is sent to local media contacts.
- Sites receive an exclusive Groundwater Guardian Green Site plaque upon designation.

Potential Sites

- Golf courses (municipal, privately owned, country clubs, golf resorts, etc.)
- Ball fields (natural turf football, soccer, baseball/softball, rugby, etc.)
- Educational campuses (college or university; community college; individual elementary, middle, or high schools; school districts)
- Residential parks (condominium/townhome complexes, apartment complexes)
- Recreational parks (city/municipal parks)
- Office parks
- Municipal sites
- Places of worship
- Hotels/resorts



Important Dates

- January 1 – Yearly program application made available.
- November – Currently designated sites recognized for their efforts at the Groundwater Guardian National Designation Celebration, generally held as part of The Groundwater Foundation’s National Conference.
- December – Program application reviewed and revised, if needed. Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program Technical Advisory Committee reviews site applications and makes suggestions for improving groundwater-friendly practices.
- By December 31 – First-time sites submit completed application to be designated in that program year. Continuing sites review previous year’s application for accuracy and make changes, if necessary. Applications received after December 31 will be designated in the following program year.

Program Contacts

Jennifer Wemhoff, Program Manager
jwemhoff@groundwater.org

Jamie Oltman, Program Manager
joltman@groundwater.org

On the Web

Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program Information, Sample Applications, and Other Resources

<http://www.groundwater.org/gg/greensites.html>

Groundwater Guardian Green Site Program Application

http://www.groundwater.org/gg/docs_gggs/greensitesapplication.doc (MS Word)

http://www.groundwater.org/gg/docs_gggs/greensitesapplication.pdf (PDF)

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Celebrate!

Organizing a Local Designation Celebration

A local designation celebration is an opportunity to let site visitors, your neighboring community, and site staff know that you have earned Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation for your site's groundwater stewardship. It will also help build momentum for sustaining your site's groundwater-friendly practices into the future. The Groundwater Foundation encourages each Groundwater Guardian Green Site to celebrate its Green Site designation in some way each year. What your site chooses to do for a local celebration is completely up to you – be creative and have fun!

The current trend toward being "green" makes promoting yourself as a "Green Site" extremely beneficial. New and returning visitors alike will appreciate your steps to protect the environment, and the publicity gained from such efforts will draw more and more visitors to your site.

Your local celebration will depend on your site's needs and resources. These celebrations can vary greatly from year to year, with more elaborate celebrations held to mark outstanding achievements and anniversaries.

A local celebration should follow official notification from The Groundwater Foundation of your site's designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site. Local celebrations are not mandatory; rather, they are voluntary and their format, scale, and what they entail is entirely up to you. The simplest local celebrations are those that are done in conjunction with an existing event; just make sure there is an opportunity for your site's designation to own the spotlight!

You may also choose to hold a celebration independent of another event. Such an event could include a breakfast, lunch, or dinner to recognize site staff and their roles in protecting groundwater. Another idea is to hold a news conference to announce the official designation. Perhaps you could organize a special tournament or half-time give-away in celebration.

When planning any kind of designation celebration, remember it should be fun and rewarding for site staff and any others attending the event. The celebration is an opportunity to share what you and your staff have done to protect groundwater and generate interest in and support for your site and groundwater protection. Relax and, most importantly, have fun!

- **Invite a special guest or guests**

Having a special guest at your celebration can add to the importance of the event. This special guest could be an expert in your industry, a groundwater expert, a local celebrity, or a local government official. Make sure the guest knows enough about your groundwater-friendly practices to congratulate you on your work.



- **Thank your supporters with something special**

Food is a great ingredient for a successful celebration. A casual meal can provide a nice atmosphere where site staff can congratulate themselves for their groundwater protection efforts. You may also want to present certificates or other recognition items to staff members involved in the Green Site designation. Groundwater Foundation staff can help with ideas for these items if you'd like.

- **Hold a session at an industry-specific meeting, conference, or other event**

Show off your designation among your peers by having a celebration at an industry event. You could hold a session about your designation, arrange for a presentation at a banquet or dinner, or set up a booth at a trade show to announce your designation and encourage your peers to follow your lead and get involved in the Green Site program.

- **Use the logo**

Proudly displaying the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo helps raise awareness about what your site is doing to protect and preserve groundwater. There are many ways your site can use the logo during a local Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation celebration, such as printing the logo on stationary, invitations, banners, or other promotional pieces; including a copy of the logo with a news release announcing the celebration; and featuring the logo in a decorated cake or other type of artwork.



Picture This

Using Photographs to Help Tell Your Story

A picture is truly worth a thousand words. Pictures are yet another way to help raise awareness about the good things happening on your site. Utilize pictures with news releases, a local designation celebration, displays, websites, articles, presentations, and special events to help tell your story.

The Groundwater Foundation is building a Groundwater Guardian Green Site photo library to help promote the program and recognize individual Green Sites, and your photographs can help us build awareness. The Foundation is looking for a variety of photographs, such as:

- Use and incorporation of the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo on site.
- Site staff implementing groundwater-friendly practices (i.e. maintaining setback distances around surface water and wells, calibrating and/or inspecting application equipment, collecting water samples, etc.).
- Constructed groundwater protection features (i.e. turf or no-application green zones around surface water, wells, and parking lots; chemical and fuel storage, etc.).
- Vegetation (i.e. native grasses, low input plants, rain gardens, xeriscaping, etc.).
- People using and visiting your site (i.e. golfing, having picnics, playing sports, educational activities, etc.).
- Scenic views of your site.
- Events, presentations, or displays related to the Groundwater Guardian Green Site program or groundwater protection.
- Local designation celebrations.
- Site staff posing with your Groundwater Guardian Green Site plaque.
- Other events, images, or illustrations of your site and its groundwater-friendly practices.

E-mail your digital pictures to The Groundwater Foundation at guardian@groundwater.org. Prints may be mailed to The Groundwater Foundation, P.O. Box 22558, Lincoln, NE 68542-2558. All photos submitted become property of The Groundwater Foundation, with proper photographic credit given to the respective Groundwater Guardian Green Site.



Share the Green

Additional Suggestions for Publicizing Green Site Designation

- **Post your Groundwater Guardian Green Site plaque in a prominent location.**
Show off your plaque and designation by posting your Green Site plaque where people will see it! Put it in the clubhouse, office, pro shop, or other location where site staff and visitors can readily see it.
- **Post items bearing the Green Site logo around your site.**
Make your designation as visible as possible by using the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo whenever possible and appropriate. The Groundwater Foundation can help get you started with reflective aluminum signs and window clings bearing the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo, which will soon be available for purchase. See the "Use the Logo" section for more suggestions for ways to use the logo on your site. If you have other ideas for useful products with the Green Site logo, please let Groundwater Foundation staff know!
- **Mention Green Site designation in any site advertising.**
As mentioned previously, the term "green" is now very marketable. Utilize the green trend in your advertising by including your Green Site designation. To help draw new visitors to your site, use the phrase "designated Groundwater Guardian Green Site" and feature the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo in:
 - Printed advertisements
 - Promotional pieces (i.e. brochures, fact sheets, event fliers, etc.)
 - Presentations
 - Television or radio advertising
- **Special events**
Take advantage of any special events going on at your site to promote your designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site. Events like golf tournaments, meetings, conferences, seminars, community festivals or fairs, tours, and exhibitions are yet another opportunity to showcase your site's good work. Some ideas to make the most of promoting your designation at these special events include:
 - Putting information in participant packets
 - Setting up a display
 - Posting the Green Site logo around the site
 - Passing out brochures or business cards
 - Featuring the Green Site logo on an event banner.

Your local celebration will depend on your site's needs and resources. Also, these celebrations can vary greatly from year to year, with more elaborate celebrations held to mark outstanding achievements and anniversaries.



- **Write articles**

Include information about your designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site in industry and trade newsletters, magazines, and other publications. Use the news release template provided in this kit to get you started, or do your own thing and write an original article. Feel free to use any verbiage on the Green Site section of The Groundwater Foundation's website (www.groundwater.org/greensites.html) to help describe the program. You may want to include a quote or two from Groundwater Foundation staff or site staff to add additional interest. Contact The Groundwater Foundation at 402-434-2740 or email guardian@groundwater.org.

- **Develop a positive working relationship with local media representatives.**

Help get your site's Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation and groundwater stewardship in the news by making local media personnel your colleagues and friends. Consider designating a staff member, whether it's the site's public relations coordinator, the site manager, superintendent, or other appropriate staff member to deal with the media whenever possible. Having a consistent message and consistent media contact person will help foster a positive working relationship and ensure more positive media coverage of your site's activities.

In addition, consider inviting members of the media for a tour of your site, explaining and pointing out the groundwater-friendly practices in place that earned you designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site. When sending a news release or other information to the media, either by mail, email, or fax, follow up with a phone call to ensure it was received and answer any questions. Also, return all media calls as soon as possible.

- **Include information about your designation as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site on your website.**

Add the Green Site logo to your website, as well as some basic information about the Green Site program, such as:

“*[Site Name]* is a proud Groundwater Guardian Green Site. Groundwater Guardian Green Sites is a program of The Groundwater Foundation that recognizes sites for their groundwater stewardship related to fertilizer and pesticide use, water use, pollution prevention, water quality, and environmental stewardship. Visit www.groundwater.org/greensites.html for more information.”

A low resolution copy of the Groundwater Guardian Green Site logo, appropriate for inclusion on your website, is available for download online at http://www.groundwater.org/gg/images/greensites_logo_lq.jpg.

Also, feel free to link your website to the official homepage of The Groundwater Foundation, www.groundwater.org, or the Green Site program homepage, which is listed in the sample text above.

- **Groundwater educational events**

Think about connecting your site's efforts with existing groundwater or environmental education efforts in your community (i.e. fairs, festivals, workshops, conferences, etc.), or



even consider holding your own event to publicize your designation. Successful past events have included water festivals, rain garden workshops, educator’s conferences, and more.

Connecting with your community through groundwater and environmental education is a great way to increase impact and visibility. Groups in your community may already be holding water festivals and fairs or giving classroom or community presentations, and will more than likely welcome your participation! Donating your site as a potential location for any future groundwater educational events is a win-win – event organizers secure a location for an event at no cost, and your site and its good practices are exposed to new audiences of potential future visitors.

If no community groups are conducting groundwater education, think about taking advantage of the opportunity to fill this void, and use your site as an example of groundwater stewardship. Visit www.groundwater.org/sc/sc.html to shop The Groundwater Foundation’s catalog. The Groundwater Catalog has a variety of guide books and other useful products to help plan a groundwater education event in your community.

- **Local events and groups**

Utilize existing local events and partner with local groups to help further publicize your Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation and connect yourself with the community your site calls home. Consider:

- Having a booth at a local fair or festival
- Conducting a groundwater education activity or lesson for a school classroom or student organization
- Speaking at a meeting of a local service or social organization
- Offering to host a group meeting at your site

- **Association websites, newsletters, etc.**

Many professional associations welcome news and notes of member accomplishments, and your site earning Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation is certainly worth noting. Be sure to notify your respective professional associations at the state and national levels of your site’s designation by sending a news release, making a phone call, or sending an e-mail. You may suggest or request that the announcement of your designation be added to their website or published in their newsletter.

Some of these associations may include:

- Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
- Sports Turf Managers Associations
- Turfgrass Associations
- Landscape Associations
- Parks and Recreation Associations



- **Form or join an existing Groundwater Guardian team**

A great way to show off your designation is by getting involved in community efforts to educate the public about groundwater and protection activities. Groundwater Guardian is a program of The Groundwater Foundation that recognizes communities for their groundwater protection and education efforts on the local level. Groundwater Guardian Communities form teams of community stakeholders, including citizens, local government, education, and business and/or agriculture representatives that work to address groundwater concerns in their community.

Connecting your Green Site designation to a broader community effort is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate your role as a good neighbor and increase your site's visibility within the community. To learn more about the Groundwater Guardian program, or to see if there is a Groundwater Guardian Community in your area, visit www.groundwater.org/gg/gg.html.

