

Partner Case Study: Bowater



FACTFILE:

Bowater

Industry:

Pulp and paper

Location:

Catawba, SC
York County

Statistics:

- 1,000 employees
- 26 new carpoolers

Reasons for joining *Clean Air Works!*

- To increase carpooling among employees, improve air quality

Challenges Overcome:

- Promoting carpooling due to shift schedules. Its carpool hotline and transportation events were a great way to roll out the carpool program.

Business Benefits:

- Meeting industrial standards will become easier as the area's air quality reaches attainment
- Increased morale

Results:

- To improve operations, no-spill gas containers and power shedding regulations were implemented
- Through clean commuting, participants eliminated 9,569 vehicle miles from area roads
- Bowater reported improved employee morale, increased productivity and benefited from being seen as a concerned corporate citizen.

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Program Summary: 2006

Bowater employs approximately 1,000 individuals, most of whom work varying shift schedules. Due to its somewhat remote location, transit, biking, and walking are not viable options for Bowater employees. Therefore, the focus of its program centers on encouraging carpooling and providing air quality education.

Employees participated in an "air quality awareness" training program to learn how their actions can improve air quality. To encourage ongoing involvement, Bowater posted weekly air quality trivia questions on its internal Web site and awarded *Clean Air Works!* prizes to winners.

Bowater jumpstarted its program with a "Carpool Hotline" for employees to find matches. And, by setting up Transportation Days each Wednesday in July (and through the second week of August), the *Clean Air Works!* team reached approximately 75 percent of Bowater's work force. The staff distributed informational material and rewarded those who carpoled to work.

During four of the five weeks that *Clean Air Works!* held transportation events at the main mill entrance, Try-It Days were also held. Carpooling employees were given raffle tickets, with a chance to win a \$25 gas card. Over the course of the four weeks, carpooling among employees increased by 34 percent!

Air quality awareness also improved, as employees were encouraged to refuel their cars after 6 PM, stay in for lunch and to participate in many other pollution-reducing behaviors. The company made changes to its own operations by implementing no-spill gas containers, power shedding when the temperature reached 90 degrees or higher, and holding a "Gas Cap Check" event in which 120 vehicles were checked for leaky caps. Bowater even educated its vendors about the air pollution problem and encouraged them to join the efforts to improve air quality.

For all of these efforts, Bowater earned nominations in four of the five Clean Air Challenge award categories. It was presented with the Clean Air Challenge Award for large employer, and Project Leader Dale Herendeen was also recognized.



"The Clean Air Works! project is extremely important for improving air quality in the Charlotte region. Bowater is proud to have made a positive contribution in this endeavor and we look forward to continuing to achieve higher standards of air quality for our community."

J.M. Forest

Vice President - Catawba Operations



Clean Air Works! is a project of the Regional Air Quality Board, a regional entity that brings together businesses, elected officials, and public staff from cities and counties throughout the Charlotte Region to work collaboratively on projects to improve air quality. The project is funded by Mecklenburg County Government and federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funds ("CMAQ") awarded throughout the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization. For more information, visit cleanairworks.org.