8.1 Hold a Sustainability Event

5 Points | 10 Points | 15 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2020)

Objective

Bring together your community in fun, informative, and constructive ways through energetic events that can model and engage residents and business owners in sustainability practices.

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn. **(up to 15 points)**

A sustainability event is a free, public event on a specific sustainability topic, or a free, public event on any topic that incorporates a sustainability practice (e.g., zero waste event) and educates participants about that sustainability practice. For the purposes of this action, a sustainability topic is one that aligns with any of the Sustainable CT action categories (e.g., thriving local economies, clean and diverse transportation systems and choices). For a series of sustainability events held on multiple dates, each date counts as one event (e.g., each date a farmers' market is held is an event, each date in a multi-day film series counts as an event). Points will be awarded as follows:

- Hold 1 sustainability event = **5 points**
- Hold between 5 and 10 sustainability events = **10 points**
- Hold more than 10 sustainability events = **15 points**

Activities that are used to earn points toward this Action may not be used to earn points toward any other Sustainable CT Action (i.e., no "double-counting").

1. Support and hold a sustainability event, track data and evaluate. **(variable points, see above)**

   You must complete all of the following submission steps for each event. Please complete the Hold a Sustainability Event template as part of your action submission.

   a. Hold a sustainability event. Possibilities for events include, but are not limited to:

   - ***Panel Discussions*** on different aspects of sustainability;
   - ***Film Festival*** of earth-friendly documentaries;
   - ***Local Food*** farmers' market or dinner;
   - ***A Green Fair*** that educates and encourages people of all ages to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle;
   - ***House Tour*** of homes that have introduced green technologies or passive technologies;
   - ***Car Show*** of fuel-efficient vehicles that includes education about driving and maintenance practices that reduce emissions and consumption and shows how to avoid idling;
   - ***Art Attack*** showcases environmentally-themed, or sustainably made artwork in and around areas of your community not typically designated as art spaces;

- ***Themed/Holiday Event*** such as an energy vampire walk through a school to discover energy losses (it's a haunted house that's scary because it isn't sustainable);
- ***Active and Passive Recreation*** events such as trail system creation or beautification;
- ***Mobility Awareness Day*** provides information about transit and vehicle options, offers transit tickets at town offices and local stores, and shares a list of places in town open to recreational walking and biking;
- ***Safe Routes to Schools Program*** shows families safe bicycle and walking routes for their children to get to school;
- ***Large-scale Open Streets Event*** temporarily closes the street to cars in multiple neighborhoods, thus encouraging outdoor play, walking, biking, and neighborhood block parties; and
- ***Zero Waste Event*** for any public event that promotes waste reduction and manages materials so that all are recycled or composted.

Submit: The Hold a Sustainability Event template. Requested information includes the date of the event and a description of the event that identifies the sustainability focus or practice.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Events, Meetings, Trainings" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

b. Provide municipal support for the event. Municipal support can include one of the following: financial support, use of a municipal building to hold the event, municipal staff support, or meaningful public outreach provided by the municipality.

Submit: The Hold a Sustainability Event template, including a description of the municipal support provided.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Events, Meetings, Trainings" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

c. Track the number of event attendees. Identify the highlights, lessons learned, or next steps. Identify partners, if relevant (e.g., community organizations, other municipalities).

Submit: The Hold a Sustainability Event template, including the number of participants; highlights, lessons learned, and/or next steps; and event partners (if relevant).

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Events, Meetings, Trainings" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim New Action Credit for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for Rolling Credit for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance

Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the public works, or parks and recreation departments, the town manager/selectman/mayor's office and representatives from local arts groups, local educational institutions, nonprofits or ad-hoc groups interested in sustainability could be helpful in implementing this action.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Municipal Grant Program (MGP)
- 2021 Sustainable CT Community Match Fund

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Town of Mansfield, "Planning Guidance for Low Waste Events and Gatherings"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "Green Your Training, Meetings and Events"
- Yale Sustainability, "Green Events"
- GoNewHavenGo, a sustainable transportation coalition
- CT Green Bank: No-cost technical assistance

Why This Matters

In and of themselves, events are excellent communications tools. If your community wants to become a leader in sustainable living and working, then adding a sustainability component to an existing event or developing a new one that focuses on environmental stewardship will communicate that intention both within and outside the community.

Benefits

Events bolster town pride by giving all community members the chance to come together, share experiences, build collective memories, and plan for the future. An engaging event can have educational value, entertainment value, and opportunity for new business or economic development that will contribute to overall community health.

A well-planned event, customized to meet the needs, interests, and unique character of your community, will weave sustainable considerations into your culture.

CT Success Stories

- Fairfield - Oct 2018 Certification
- Greenwich - Oct 2018 Certification
- Mansfield - Oct 2019 Certification
- Woodbridge - Oct 2018 Certification
- Old Saybrook - Oct 2020 Certification
- Wethersfield - Oct 2020 Certification
- Cheshire - Jun 2021 Certification