



Sustainable IGH Community Recognition Award Actions

RECOGNITION LEVELS:

There are four Sustainable IGH Recognition award levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Special Recognition. Applicants may apply annually to advance to a higher award level in future years.

Recognition Level	Requirement
Bronze	Complete all required actions.
Silver	Complete all required actions + 5 additional actions
Gold	Complete all required actions + 10 additional actions.
Special Recognition	One resident and one business may be selected annually by the Environmental Advisory Commission and City Council for demonstrating significant achievements.

REQUIRED ACTIONS:

All five bolded actions below are required for an award. Example activities for each required actions are provided.

- ❑ **Practice energy efficiency.**
 - Examples include: using LED light bulbs, weatherizing your home or business such as windows and door seals, completing an energy audit in the last 10 years, using EnergySmart products, asking your landlord to consider taking these actions, etc.
- ❑ **Practice water conservation.**
 - Examples include: taking shorter showers, waiting until washing machine or dish washer are full before starting it, reporting water leaks to property manager, using WaterSense products, watering lawn before the heat of the day (typically 4 a.m.-10 a.m.), using a smart irrigation system, asking your landlord or HOA to consider taking these actions, etc.
- ❑ **Recycle at your [home](#) or [business](#) following these recycling rules.**
- ❑ **Volunteer or donate to benefit the IGH community.**
 - Examples include: donating to food drives or a local organization, or volunteering locally such as with a local school district, City, Darts, Neighbors Inc, place of worship, etc.
- ❑ **Support pollinators or plant native vegetation [Property Owners Only].**
 - Examples include planting a pollinator garden or rain garden, landscaping with native vegetation, planting pollinators-friendly plants in outdoor containers, requesting your HOA consider taking these actions, etc.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS FOR SILVER AND GOLD AWARDS:

Actions below provide examples of additional actions to take to earn a Silver or Gold award. These are just examples. Please share any sustainable actions you've taken in your application!

Energy Actions: Examples of additional actions that promote energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and/or improve air quality.

- ❑ Implement actions recommended by your home energy audit.
- ❑ Use LED bulbs for all lighting.
- ❑ Use a programmable thermostat.
- ❑ Use an [EnergyStar](#) appliance or upgrade to more energy efficient appliances.
- ❑ Participate in home energy savings programs through [Xcel Energy](#) or [Dakota Electric programs](#).

- ❑ Participate in business energy savings programs through [Xcel Energy](#) or [Dakota Electric programs](#).
- ❑ Utilized rebates on energy efficient or renewable energy powered products.
- ❑ Own a home or business certified by a building efficiency standard, such as [LEED](#) or [EnergyStar](#).
- ❑ Utilize energy efficient, [Dark-Sky compliant](#) new or replacement outdoor lighting fixtures.
- ❑ Power your property with renewable energy [solar panels](#), [wind power](#) or [geothermal](#).
- ❑ Subscribe to [Xcel Energy's Renewable*Connect](#) or [Dakota Electric's Wellspring Renewable Energy program](#) to support renewable energy.
- ❑ Subscribe to a [community solar garden](#).
- ❑ Drive an [electric vehicle](#) or purchase [fleet electric vehicles](#).
- ❑ Install an [electric vehicle charging station](#).
- ❑ Use [energy benchmarking software](#) to monitor building energy usage.
- ❑ Bike, ride share, or take public transportation as primary source of transportation.

Landscaping & Water Actions: Examples of additional actions that promote provide habitat for native species, pollinators, and wildlife, and promote local foods, water conservation and good water quality.

- ❑ Plant a [low-maintenance turf lawn](#) with species such as fine fescues, buffalo grass, blue gramma, pussytoes, etc.
- ❑ Plant a [bee lawn](#), [pollinator-garden](#) or outdoor containers with pollinator-friendly species.
- ❑ Build a [rain garden](#) on your property per the City guidelines.
- ❑ Use a Landscaping for Clean Water grant from Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District to complete a [Landscaping for Clean Water project](#), including rain gardens and more.
- ❑ Remove invasive vegetation and [diseased or infested trees](#) from your property.
- ❑ If recommended by a certified arborist, treat trees to prevent or mitigate emerald ash borer infestations, oak wilt or other [tree diseases](#).
- ❑ Collect rainwater in a [rain barrel](#) or other grey water systems to water your plants and trees.
- ❑ Buy locally grown produce or grow [your own food](#).
- ❑ Use locally made compost in gardens or landscape.
- ❑ Take one or more [Landscaping for Clean Water classes](#).
- ❑ Install bird or bat houses on your property.
- ❑ [Leave grass 2 ½ - 3 ½ inches high during hot weather](#) to promote deep root growth and shade the growth crowns.
- ❑ Complete a [shoreline preservation project](#) per City guidelines.
- ❑ Follow the City's [Smart Salting guidelines](#) in winter.
- ❑ Replace older toilets with [WaterSense](#)-labeled, high-efficiency toilets.
- ❑ Replace faucets and showerheads with [WaterSense](#)-labeled, high-efficiency versions.
- ❑ Select an [Energy Star](#)-approved washing machine.
- ❑ Wait until the dishwasher or washing machine is fully loaded before running it.
- ❑ Utilize rebates on water-efficient products.
- ❑ Take shorter showers.
- ❑ Participate in [Adopt-a-Drain](#).
- ❑ Attend the City's annual Water Pollution Prevention Meeting held during the [April Environmental Advisory Commission meeting](#).
- ❑ Participate in the [Master Water Stewards](#), [Master Naturalist](#) or [Master Gardener](#) programs.
- ❑ Participate in the [aquatic invasive species detector](#) program.

Waste Reduction Actions: Examples of additional actions that promote waste reduction, reuse, composting, safe disposal, recycling and/or litter cleanup.

- ❑ Reduce [food waste](#) meal planning, storing food properly and more.
- ❑ Prevent [unwanted mail](#) by unsubscribing from mailing lists.
- ❑ Use [homemade green cleaners](#) or [Safer Choice](#) cleaning products.
- ❑ Take home free second-hand products from the [Reuse Zone](#), located at The Recycling Zone.

- ❑ Participate in a [Community Swap](#).
- ❑ Participate or volunteer at a [Dakota County Fix-It Clinic](#).
- ❑ [Rent equipment](#) such as tools, outdoor gear and event supplies instead of buying.
- ❑ Shop secondhand at [brick-and-mortar stores](#), garage sales or through online outlets such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Craigslist, and ThredUP.
- ❑ Sell gently used goods at a local donation center, garage sale or online outlets.
- ❑ Use reusable bags, mugs, and to-go containers, utensils and napkins.
- ❑ Compost organics via a residential [organics drop-off, at home](#) or [at your business](#).
- ❑ Use the City's online [Recycling Guide](#) to find out where to get rid of hundreds of unwanted items.
- ❑ Participate in a the [Dakota County Recycling Ambassador Program](#).
- ❑ Attend a [City residential special collections event](#) to recycle unwanted items such as Clean-Up Day or Paper Shredding Collection.
- ❑ [Join a tour](#) of local recycling facilities.
- ❑ Utilize [The Recycling Zone](#) to dispose of hazardous waste, small electronics, recyclables and more.
- ❑ Adopt an [IGH park](#).
- ❑ Host or organize a cleanup event/day for ponds, parks, natural areas, wetlands, etc.
- ❑ Incorporate sustainability into your business purchasing.
- ❑ Operate a waste reduction, recycling or composting business.
- ❑ Participate in a [Very Small Quantity Generator](#) (VSQG) business program, [Dakota County Multifamily Recycling Program](#), or [Dakota County Business Recycling Program](#).
- ❑ Offer public recycling opportunities for plastic bags, batteries, or other recyclable materials.
- ❑ Offer reusable bags, mugs, and to-go containers, utensils and napkins to customers.
- ❑ Purchase and donate second-hand equipment through [Minnesota Materials Exchange](#).

Community Actions: Examples of additional actions that promote a strong community and community wellbeing.

- ❑ Teach IGH residents or other businesses about your completed actions.
- ❑ Offer free or reduced-cost assistance to a neighbor(s) in need.
- ❑ Organize a local community group or complete a community project.
- ❑ Participate on a local community board.
- ❑ Donate produce from your garden to a local food shelf.
- ❑ Donate to, volunteer at, or run a local organization that offers free or low-cost community assistance services.
- ❑ Promote [workplace diversity](#) during the hiring process.
- ❑ Offer free or reduced-cost services to vulnerable populations (food, shelter/housing, transportation, education, healthcare, counseling, childcare, etc.)
- ❑ Offer free or reduced-cost services to employees (transportation, education, healthcare, counseling, childcare, etc.)
- ❑ Accept food stamps.
- ❑ Host employee appreciation events and/or activities.
- ❑ Have an [internal wellness committee](#) that coordinates wellbeing initiatives for employees.
- ❑ Have an [internal green team](#) that coordinates environmentally friendly business practices.
- ❑ Offer an employee volunteer service day, when employees are encouraged to donate their time.

QUESTIONS?

Email Ally Sutherland at asutherland@ighmn.gov or call 651-604-8511.

Additional program information at ighmn.gov/SustainableIGH.

