

Eco Expo Guidebook

ESRAG Event Resources

Introduction

This guidebook was created by the Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club. We gathered information after our third annual EcoExpo as a means of passing on information that others could use to create/enhance their own EcoExpo's. This type of event is designed to inspire the local community to implement sustainable practices to achieve the communities' sustainability goals. This activity can also evolve into a fundraiser for the club.

A typical approach is to create a family-friendly community event to provide residents (and surrounding community members) with information to make eco-smart decisions and take eco-smart actions.

This may include some combination of the following:

- Informational booths
- Eco-vendor sales
- Children's eco-friendly creative area (animals such as goats, art, and gardening)
- Small appliance repair clinic
- Musical entertainment
- Food
- Electric Vehicles and Vehicle Drives
- Speaker presentations

Considerations

The 3 “W”s:

- **When** – Consider timing, we found that the Saturday nearest Earthday has worked for us.
- **Where** – An appropriate venue. In our first year we were in the local community center for about 30 exhibitors and attracted ~ 250 participants. In our second year, we booked the Eden Prairie Center Mall that has space for ~ 55-60 exhibitors. In addition, we had a store front for a Family Fun Zone and a second store front that had space for an EV Store. We attracted ~ 3000 participants. We attribute the increase due to the walk-in foot traffic at this retail location.
- **Who** – The first couple of years are hard work. Can you club resource this? In addition, think about the potential EcoExpo audience. It might be very local or quite broad across a Metro area. This impacts the work plan and marketing for the event.

Develop a positive user experience:

For the Audience:

- Designed to be a high-quality experience, for participants of all ages, that is fun, positive, non-judgmental, informational, experiential, and inspiring.
- Seniors: Accessible, pertinent for them and to share with extended family (kids, grandkids)
- Adults: Accessible, cost effective and easily implemented ideas for self, home, and work.
- Children: Accessible (age appropriate, at their physical level), hands on, take aways, art projects with recycled stuff

With topics that address such as:

- Weatherization (insulation)
- Rooftop Solar and Community Solar (if available in your area)
- Clean Water
- Healthy Eating
- Transportation (Electric Vehicles, public transport)
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
 - Sanitation companies
 - Furniture Restoration
 - Repair Shops
- Electrification – Look for organizations that:
 - Perform home energy audits.
 - Non-profits that support Energy investment decision-making
 - Appliances
 - Electric Utility Companies
 - HVAC – Heat pumps specifically

- Non-profits (Conservation, Water, Lawn and Garden, Energy, Land Use)

Think of how to attract kids.

One approach is to create a “Family Fun Zone” that may include:

- Goats (these are use to eat invasive species in some parts of the country)
- Dog Adoption
- Seed Planting
- BeeKeeping

The High Level Workplan

See detailed workplan in Appendix A

Timing	Task
12 months before the event	Find/Contract Venue
6 months before the event	Name the Eco Expo Chairperson
5 months before the event	Recruit other club members to be on the planning committee
	Create a website
4 months before the event	Start contacting exhibitors & sponsors
	Set a budget (estimated income and expenses)
	Start all planning (marketing, volunteers, family fun zone, equipment needs)
Month of the event	Communicate with the exhibitors & volunteers about the final event details
	Enjoy the Eco Expo!
Month after the event	Send Thank You's to everyone involved

Costs that you may incur:

- Venue
- Marketing (Banners, Posters, Website, and Social Media Boosting)
- Tables and Chairs
- Supplies (Gaffers Tape, Garbage Bags, Hand Sanitizer, Zip Ties to hang things, Maps, Exhibitor Lists)

Marketing Opportunities

- Post on Earthday. Register at www.earthday.org.
- Newspapers
- TV Stations (In the third year, we were covered by the local news stations including morning spots on the day of the event).
- Local Magazines (They have early publishing deadlines)
- Non-profits websites that stress sustainability, the environment, EV's, Conservation, etc...
- Kid Websites that promote "Things to do"

APPENDIX A – Detailed Workplan

Timing	Task
12 months before the event	Find/Contract Venue
6 months before the event	Get club buy-in on the event
	Name the Eco Expo Chairperson
5 months before the event	Recruit other club members to be on the planning committee
	Begin researching venues, possible exhibitors, sponsors
	Create a website
4 months before the event	Create a sales plan (prices, deadlines, exhibitors & sponsors to target)
	Start contacting exhibitors & sponsors
	Set a budget (estimated income and expenses)
	Confirm the venue and sign any contracts
	Contact Rotary for any required insurance
	Start planning the Family Fun Zone
	Start the marketing plan
	Start volunteer recruiting
	Start planning for the raffle
	Start meeting with the Eco Expo Planning Committee regularly
	Invite local government & Rotary officials
2 months before the event	Rent any needed equipment (chairs, tables, etc.)
	Order any banners or signage needed
	Continue recruiting exhibitors, sponsors, volunteers, family fun zone planning, raffle, marketing, website updates.
	Invite media to cover the event
Month of the event	Stop taking exhibitors and sponsors
	Finalize the table layout plan for the exhibitors
	Print programs
	Communicate with the exhibitors about how to check-in on the day of the event
	Communicate with the volunteers about expectations and any other details
	Enjoy the Eco Expo!
Month after the event	Send Thank You's to everyone involved
	Document the income & expenses

APPENDIX B – Reference Materials

Web Presence Example:

Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club Website: www.epecoexpo.org

Exhibitor Recruitment Letter - Business:

Hi ,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to make you aware of the 2025 EcoExpo at _____ (Location) _____ being held on _____ (Date) _____!

Coming off a successful 2024 year, our Rotary Club is moving ahead with a bigger and better Expo in 2025. The 2024 event drew xx Exhibitors/Sponsors and xxxx participants from the community! We expect participation to grow to xxxx participants this year!

The benefits of participation includes:

- Gaining visibility for your company in the community
- Developing a reputation for sustainable solutions for members of the community
- Sales Leads for your business

Event Details include:

- Timing: Saturday April 20nd from 10 AM to 6 PM
- Venue: _____ (Location) _____

A quick reply to this email will guarantee a preferred spot as an early registrant!

The attached registration form provides additional information. I am also happy to answer any questions you have over the phone.

Your commitment to environmental consciousness and your innovative contributions would greatly enrich our event in 2025!

I look forward to your reply!

Exhibitor Recruitment Letter – Non-Profit

Hi ,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to make you aware of the 2025 EcoExpo at _____ (Location) _____ being held on _____ (Date) _____!

Coming off a successful 2024 year, our Rotary Club is moving ahead with a bigger and better Expo in 2025. The 2024 event drew xx Exhibitors/Sponsors and xxxx participants from the community! We expect participation to grow to xxxx participants this year!

The benefits of participation includes:

- Gaining visibility for your organization
- Developing a reputation for sustainable solutions for members of the community

Event Details include:

- Timing: _____ (Date and Time) _____
- Venue: _____ (Location) _____

A quick reply to this email will guarantee a preferred spot as an early registrant!

The attached registration form provides additional information. I am also happy to answer any questions you have over the phone.

Your commitment to environmental consciousness and your innovative contributions would greatly enrich our event in 2025!

I look forward to your reply!

Media Communication Examples from Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club:

Pre-Event Media Announcement – see example:

<https://www.eplocalnews.org/2024/03/22/eden-prairie-eco-expo-set-for-april-20/>

Post Event Media Announcement:

<https://www.eplocalnews.org/2024/04/24/eden-prairie-celebrates-earth-day-with-eco-expo/>

Press Release Example from Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Published Date

MEDIA CONTACT:

Name,

ECO EXPO Committee Chair

Phone

Email

Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club 3rd Annual Eden Prairie ECO EXPO Event
Get inspired to “Live Sustainably” and to “Do Good”

EDEN PRAIRIE, MN - The Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club is hosting its 3rd annual Eden Prairie ECO EXPO on Saturday, April 20 from 10 am to 6 pm in the Center Court at Eden Prairie Center.

This family friendly event was created to inspire residents of Eden Prairie and surrounding communities to “Live Sustainably”, contribute to their city’s sustainability goals, and to “Do Good” by helping to fund the Rotary Club’s community and global grants. Admission is free, but a \$10 donation to the Eden Prairie AM Rotary Foundation is suggested to help fund the Rotary Club’s upcoming grants.

The event boasts 45+ informative Eco-Exhibitors & Sponsors, a Family Fun Zone of Eco-based hands-on activities and a raffle for exhibitor-donated “Eco-Friendly” items which are listed on the event website at EPecoexpo.org.

“We are so excited to partner with our Sponsors, and Exhibitors to bring this inspiring, informative, and fun event to our community,” said Rotary Club Event Chair Tim Conners, who added that the focus of the fundraiser was motivated by Rotary International’s recently added seventh focus “Protecting the Environment.”

Event exhibitors are eager to share how they are contributing to a safer and healthier environment. They will offer practical steps each of us can take that together can make a huge impact for the community and the world. Students are encouraged to attend to have fun and to talk with the experts about eco-based internships and careers. All are welcome!

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About

The EPAM Rotary Club is one of the 46,000 worldwide Rotary clubs that embrace the motto “Service Above Self.” They meet for fellowship, to volunteer in the community, and to fund community and global grants. Community members are invited to attend EPAM Rotary Club meetings every other Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. More information is available at www.epamrotary.org.