**Practice Greenhealth’s 2019 Environmental Excellence Awards**

# Sample news items and award descriptions

This document includes two sample news stories as well as a brief description for each of the Environmental Excellence Awards. Feel free to use some or all of this content as you promote your win internally and externally. You can find additional resources, including award logos, [on our website](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org/awards). If you have any questions, please reach out to press@practicegreenhealth.org.

**Sample news story 1**

**<Hospital name> recognized for its leadership on environmental sustainability**

*Something about efforts to support healthier patients, staff, and communities*

In recognition for its achievement and innovation in health care sustainability, <Hospital name> received the <award name> from Practice Greenhealth, the nation’s leading organization dedicated to environmental sustainability in health care.

<Insert individual award language – see below>

“As more and more hospitals embed sustainability into their operations, the bar for environmental excellence increases every year,” said Gary Cohen, president of Practice Greenhealth. “<Hospital name> demonstrates the kind of leadership, innovation, and performance that can drive the entire health sector toward more environmentally responsible practices.”

<Add details about programs and achievements leading to this recognition>

The award is one of Practice Greenhealth’s [Environmental Excellence Awards](https://practicegreenhealth.org/awards) given to honor health care’s achievements in sustainability. The award will be formally presented at the Environmental Excellence Awards Gala May 9 in Nashville during [CleanMed](https://cleanmed.org/), the premier national conference for leaders in health care sustainability.

**About Practice Greenhealth**

Practice Greenhealth is the leading membership and networking organization for sustainable health care, delivering environmental solutions to more than 1,100 U.S. hospitals and health systems. Learn more at [practicegreenhealth.org](http://www.practicegreenhealth.org).

**Sample news story 2**

**<Hospital name> wins national award for environmental sustainability**

Sustainability is at the heart of our healing mission – and we’re proud to share that our sustainability strategies have won us a national award. <Hospital name> received the <award name> from Practice Greenhealth, the nation’s leading organization dedicated to environmental sustainability in health care.

<Insert individual award language – see below>

In health care, sustainability means eliminating mercury, reducing and recycling solid waste, cutting down on regulated and chemical waste, lowering energy and water consumption, sourcing food and products sustainably, and establishing green purchasing policies. At <Hospital name>, we know that sustainability is essential to better care for our patients, for our communities, and for the planet.

In recent years, we have made great strides toward reducing our impact on the environment, and we are committed to doing even more. <Add details about programs and achievements leading to award>

The Environmental Excellence Awards recognize health care facilities for their efforts in environmental stewardship and sustainability. The award will be formally presented at the Environmental Excellence Awards Gala May 9 in Nashville during [CleanMed](https://cleanmed.org/), the premier national conference for leaders in health care sustainability.

**Award descriptions**

**Top 25 Environmental Excellence Award**

The Top 25 Environmental Excellence Award is Practice Greenhealth’s highest honor for hospitals. These hospitals are leading the industry with innovation in sustainability, demonstrating superior programs, and illustrating how sustainability is a core part of their culture.

**Greenhealth Emerald Award**

The Greenhealth Emerald Award recognizes health care facilities that are setting the standard in eliminating mercury, reducing and recycling waste, sustainable sourcing, and other areas. Winning hospitals have demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability and shown leadership in the local community and in the health care sector.

**Greening the OR Leadership Award**

The Greening the OR Leadership Award recognizes the facility demonstrating the most success in reducing the environmental impact of its surgical suites. Operating rooms are large contributors to a health care facility’s environmental footprint, creating opportunity for significant cost savings and sustainability improvements.

**Making Medicine Mercury-Free Award**

The award is given to health care facilities that have virtually eliminated mercury and have policies in place to prevent it from re-entering the facility. Award criteria include strong mercury-free purchasing policies and management practices, staff education, and a commitment to continuing to be mercury-free. Mercury is one of the most hazardous chemicals, associated with many health risks.

**Partner for Change Award**

The Partner for Change Award recognizes health care facilities that continuously improve and expand upon programs to eliminate mercury, reduce and recycle waste, source products sustainably, and more. Winning facilities must demonstrate that they are recycling at least 15 percent of their total waste, have reduced regulated medical waste, are on track to eliminate mercury, and have developed successful sustainability programs in many areas.

**Partner Recognition Award**

The award is given to health care facilities that are changing their practices to become more sustainable and have achieved progress in areas such as waste reduction, renewable energy adoption, food purchasing and mercury elimination. They also must have a recycling rate of at least 10 percent for their entire waste stream.

**System for Change Award**

The System for Change Award recognizes health systems that are working cohesively and across hospitals and facilities to set and meet goals related to sustainability, from reducing energy use to increasing recycling to establishing green building practices. System for Change Award winners have at least four acute-care hospitals and have demonstrated cohesive and effective strategies to achieve sustainability.

**Circles of Excellence**

This award highlights hospitals that are driving innovation in sustainability performance across different categories.

* The **Leadership** category honors hospitals demonstrating excellence in supporting a long-term commitment to healthier environments through committee structure, reporting, data tracking, communication, and education.
* The **Chemicals** category honors hospitals with sound chemical reduction policies and practices. Winners address toxicity through greener cleaning programs and avoidance of chemicals of concern in purchasing products, services and equipment.
* The **Less Waste** category honors hospitals that have excelled in waste prevention and material handling, as demonstrated through high recycling rates, low regulated medical waste generation and low rates of total waste generated per patient day. These programs address all facets of the complex health care waste stream.
* The **Greening the OR** category honors hospitals for leadership in implementation and innovation in the surgical department. Winners have demonstrated innovative approaches to waste minimization, clinical plastic recycling, reformulation of operating room kits, single-use device reprocessing, use of reusable sterilization cases, and a range of other programs and associated metrics.
* The **Healthy Food** category highlights leaders in sustainable food services, including meat and sugar-sweetened beverage reduction, healthier meat procurement, local sourcing, food waste prevention and management. Top contenders have written policies and an educational strategy that addresses the food system as a critical component in an overall sustainability plan—for human and planetary health.
* The **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing** category celebrates the best in environmentally preferable purchasing programs. Facilities are evaluated on their supporting policies, interactions with suppliers, environmentally preferable contracts and use of environmental attributes in RFPs and business reviews.
* The **Energy** category celebrates hospitals that are leading the sector in energy efficiency and strategic energy use planning. Leaders generally have energy managers and written programs to reduce energy use over time. They are tracking energy use intensity and ENERGY STAR performance metrics and sharing details on comprehensive project implementation and staff engagement strategies.
* The **Water** category recognizes hospitals for exemplary programs in water conservation and efficiency. These early adopters boast fewer gallons of water consumption per square foot, tracking of implemented conservation projects, written plans to reduce water consumption over time and have water-tracking mechanisms in place.
* The **Climate** category highlights visionary hospitals taking the lead on tracking and measuring carbon emissions and developing overall climate programs. Winning hospitals demonstrate an understanding of the health impacts of climate change and are acting to mitigate those impacts and educate their staff and communities on playing a supporting role.
* The **Green Building** category is presented to hospitals that have demonstrated LEED and other green building achievements over the past five years. These hospitals emphasize policies that show a commitment to or even requirement of LEED-level construction standards for all major new builds or renovations. Their achievements include energy and water efficiency, safer materials, regional sourcing, integration of nature and other mechanisms to create high-performance healing environments.