

RACINE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS NETWORK FOSTERING ECOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

RSBN is a collaboration of businesses and other entities that provides the knowledge, tools, and resources to attain greater ecological, economic, and social sustainability.

If you answer “yes” to any of the following questions, the Racine Sustainable Business Network is an organization you will want to explore.

- Are you ready for a lighting project to save energy and money?
- Would you like to learn what other businesses are doing about sustainability?
- Are you planning to upgrade an HVAC system and want to consult with a company that’s done this?
- Would you like to reduce waste being sent to the landfill? Or maybe you have completed a recycling program and want to share your success?
- Are you considering a green team or developing a sustainability plan?

The Racine Sustainable Business Network is eager to promote business sustainability. In addition to encouraging the most positive impacts on our environment, RSBN seeks to improve a company’s bottom line and enhance the well-being of employees, customers, and the community. The initiative engages businesses and organizations through frequent networking opportunities and information sharing, through meetings and services that are free and open to everyone. Corporations, small businesses, government agencies, schools, and non-profits face similar sustainable challenges and benefit from the collaboration that RSBN’s networking opportunities facilitate. Small and large businesses have sustainability plans that may include: lighting projects, waste reduction measures, “greening” offices, a sustainability officer, a green team. S. C. Johnson and CNH have plans with robust standards; Butter Buds’ plan has been in place for years; a number of companies post regular sustainability reports.

Planning has yielded results that Racine Sustainable Business Network promotes regularly. Here are just a few ways companies are succeeding at incorporating sustainability in their products, manufacturing processes, and business practices:

- BRP Evinrude makes outboard engines that use 50% to 75% less oil and attain maximum fuel efficiency, and uses a major heat recovery system.
- CREE’s LED lighting uses 85% less energy than an incandescent bulb and lasting 25 times longer.
- Great Northern is an industry leader in the



Julie Hueller, current Manager of the Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health, promoting RSBN at EcoFest.

- development of environmentally sustainable packaging and in-store displays.
- InSinkErator manufactures household garbage disposals that keep food waste out of the landfill.
- Modine products enhance fuel economy and engine performance for vehicles as well as HVAC systems for buildings.
- S.C Johnson’s Greenlist™ initiative consistently seeks to lower or eliminate harmful chemicals from products and uses wind, solar, and methane to power their plant.

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RSBN participants—Tom Buhler, Butter Buds, and Shirley Heck, John XIII Educational Center.

- United Natural Foods Incorporated (UNFI) is the leading, independent national distributor of natural, organic food and food supplements.
- Alter Metal Recycling has spearheaded a program to safely remove harmful refrigerant gases from appliances.
- Gateway Technical College received the 2018 Green Ribbon School Award from the Department of Education for their comprehensive sustainability effort.
- UNFI has a LEED-certified building at the “Gold” level.
- The CNH Industrial plant has attained “zero waste” through comprehensive recycling.

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- S. C. Johnson, CNH Industrial, BRP, and Butter Buds are active members of the Green Masters Program of the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council.

What RSBN involvement has meant to participants:

"The RSBN meetings are an excellent opportunity for us to learn from other Racine businesses and use that as a benchmark against how Butter Buds is doing."

*Tom Buhler,
Director of Business Development at Butter Buds*

"At a RSBN meeting, I was able to learn what other counties are doing to implement sustainable practices for restructuring infrastructure within a county setting."

*Jeff Seitz, Public Works Director
for the Village of Sturtevant*

"We are serious about corporate social responsibility at BRP US Inc. and have developed a structure to ensure that BRP is doing the right thing in the areas of governance and ethics, product safety, supply chain management, employee relations, environment and in our involvement in the communities where we are present. We believe it is important for us to participate in this effort of benchmarking and sharing best practices."

*Marco Gauthier,
Facility Manager at BRP Evinrude*

"It is exciting to see this community is embracing sustainability as part of a thriving community. I have picked up so many new ideas for my business as well as offered many new ideas to the RSBN. If you are a leader in the business community or a nonprofit the reward of being a part of the RSBN is great."

*Damon Hassell,
Facility Manager at Alter Trading*



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Jonathan Delagrave, Racine County Executive, sees RSBN as “a key component in Racine County’s economic blue print.” According to Delagrave, “Bringing businesses together to share best practices not only allows for solutions to energy sustainability, but in the long term will help businesses grow and in turn create more jobs for Racine County.”

Until 2009, RSBN had a predecessor organization of sustainable businesses that met as part of RAMAC. In 2015, Greening Greater Racine created RSBN, which includes some core members of the previous RAMAC group. A launch event was held in November 2016 where the director of the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council, Tom Eggert, addressed “The Significance of Sustainability.”

Since then, RSBN has held open quarterly meetings on subjects related to sustainable practices (see inset). These meetings feature experts in the field along with success stories and networking opportunities. They are held at different companies and often provide an opportunity to tour a plant, such as CREE, CNH Industrial, BRP, and UNFI.

In the future, RSBN plans to hold energy workshops for small businesses, sponsor evening meetings that follow up on the quarterly meetings, and develop resources on its website. To learn more, visit www.racinesustainablebusinessnetwork.weebly.com. Contact them at racinesustainablebusiness@gmail.com.

A RAMAC member since 2019.



Jeff Neubauer (right), Executive Director of Higher Expectations, and Jim Ladwig, Sr. Director Global Community Affairs, SC Johnson, networking at the 2016 launch event.

Ways to Become Sustainable

- Lower energy use for lighting
- Save energy on HVAC
- Embrace renewable energy
- Aim for zero waste through recycling
- Conserve water
- Maintain land to protect the watershed
- Order green office supplies
- Adopt green cleaning products
- Develop human resources for a sustainable workforce
- Support the community and serve as a model




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