



# Best Practices in Local Governance 2007

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**"Eco Savers"**  
**Marikina City, Philippines**

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### *Eco Savers* *Marikina City, Philippines*

Waste segregation is basic in ecological waste management. And what better way to educate people about waste segregation and reduction than by starting them young. In Marikina, the local government introduced a waste reduction program that involved school children. This has enabled the program to instill waste segregation and recycling practices at the household level.

Through this program, a total of 238,000 kilograms of waste have been diverted from dumpsites, which could have contributed to air and land pollution. The monetary value of the recyclables has reached a total of P1.3 Million, which could have ended up in the dumpsite had they not been recovered.

Introduced in June 2004 by Marikina's Waste Management Office, in coordination with the Department of Education, the Eco- Savers program required students to bring recyclable garbage from their respective households during an assigned Eco Day—the day when the garbage is going to be weighed and credited to their issued eco passbooks. Each of the 18 public elementary schools in the city is assigned an Eco Day, which is once a week.

Accredited junk shops weigh the recyclables, record these in the passbooks and haul all the recyclables collected. The recyclables are then valued according to the prevailing market price and reflected in the individual passbooks using a point system (PhP1.00 = 1 point). Points earned entitle the eco-saver to shop in the Eco-Savers Mobile Store, which visits the school twice within the school year. This mobile store carries educational materials such as dictionaries, books, school supplies and educational toys. An eco-saver only needs to present the passbook to purchase school supplies.

Records show that individual savings or points earned, within a school year period, ranged from PhP50.00 to PhP1,800.00, which helped reduce household expenses on school supplies. The Eco-Savers program has also decreased the cost incurred in the disposal of local solid waste. The 50 truckload-trips a day to the dumpsite went down to an average of 30 trips a day and has also contributed to traffic decongestion, less air pollution, and energy conservation. Moreover, the program has provided junk shops within the city with a regular supply of recyclable materials.

There was no financial equity from the participants. They only have to bring recyclables from their households. This made it easier for the city government to elicit enthusiastic participation. But it is the positive impact of the initiative that has encouraged them to help sustain it.

The program has been presented to the Metro Manila Spouses Association, which has been handling the clean and green program of the cities. It was also presented during the

consultative conference between MMDA and the Solid Waste Managers of Metro Manila. It is also among the best practices listed in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources website. Between July 2004 to June 2005, there were 5,612 Lakkay Aral groups that visited Marikina to study the city's Solid Waste Management Program. For sure, more people could benefit if the other local government units succeed in adopting the program.

### **Waste by the Numbers**

Estimated waste generation per day: 230 tons or 690 cubic meters/day

Percentage of biodegradable wastes: 45%

Percentage of non-biodegradable wastes: 55% (about 80% recyclable)

Cost of waste management: PhP1.00/kg. or about PhP230,000.00/day

*Galing Pook Foundation*

[www.galingpook.org](http://www.galingpook.org)

[http://www.galingpook.org/awardees/2007/2007\\_outstanding\\_marikina.htm](http://www.galingpook.org/awardees/2007/2007_outstanding_marikina.htm)

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