



12 Tips for a Successful Wildflower Seed Giveaway

Celebrating Earth Day in 2004, the **TxDOT Dallas District** pioneered giving away

wildflower seeds to coworkers. Because wildflowers are popular, especially with TxDOT, the district gathered a sizable crowd to share information on TxDOT's environmental initiatives.



Based on their experience, Jim Crisp, Dallas District Recycling Coordinator, encourages other districts to follow these tips to conduct successful **Wildflower Seed Giveaways**:

- 1. GET APPROVAL.** Secure approval from your supervisor or District Engineer.
- 2. RECRUIT TEAM.** Work with other employees, such as the Landscape Architect, Vegetation Manager, Recycling Coordinator, Environmental Coordinator, Public Information Officer, and staff in Area Offices to:
 - Promote – send e-mail, display signs, post fliers
 - Secure wildflower seeds
 - Coordinate site logistics – location, tables
 - Assemble educational materials – display, brochures, other groups
 - Gather other giveaway items
 - Recruit and schedule volunteers
- 3. PICK DATE & TIME.** Earth Day, April 22, the day after an optional holiday—San Jacinto Day—can fall on any day of the week, of course, so celebrations are usually held on a convenient date within a week before or after. Conducting the event over a long lunch hour minimizes time away from work for participating co-workers and allows for adequate set up and clean up for coordinators.
- 4. SELECT LOCATION.** A central location outdoors with lots of shade trees, plenty of water, near a babbling brook and frolicking deer, and within sound of singing birds would be nice. The Dallas District staged their giveaway next to a bed of blooming lanceleaf coreopsis they were giving away.
- 5. PICK WILDFLOWERS.** The District landscape architect or a master gardener can help select a species of flower that is well adapted to your area—drought resistant and easy to grow and maintain.

- 6. ORDER THE SEEDS.** Estimate the number of participants, including those from participating area offices. Determine the area of coverage you want to provide. Given the application rate of the selected seed, area to be covered, and the number of participants, you can figure the number of pounds of seed you will need. (Dallas spent \$125 on lanceleaf coreopsis seeds and filled 500 zippered baggies with enough seeds to cover 100 sq ft per baggie.)
- 7. BAG SEEDS BEFOREHAND?** Your choice. You can purchase small Ziplock® bags (2" X 3") at craft stores for less than \$.01 each in lots of 500. Your team can make labels with information on planting and stick them on the bags. Then, they can either stuff the bags with seeds or and let Earth Day celebrants fill their own bags.
- 8. SHARE THE FUN.** Environmental and other community groups may want to staff tables or provide educational materials to promote their messages.
- 9. PROMOTE IN ADVANCE.** Send out e-mail to district employees and post flyers one week ahead advertising the event and Earth Day.
- 10. REMIND.** On the day before the event, e-mail coworkers to remind them to pick up their free wildflower seeds. Display large signs or posters in visible areas directing fellow employees to the spot.
- 11. EDUCATE.** Hand out brochures and giveaway items promoting compost, recycling, and other TxDOT environmental initiatives. The TxDOT Recycling Program can provide magnets, notepads, and special pencils and direct you to other TxDOT environmental information sources.
- 12. PRIZES.** Through a drawing to give away prizes you can keep track of who came.

Have fun and send us some pictures.

For more support, contact TxDOT Recycling Team members
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