



# SERT Spotlight



What is a  
**RED DAY** high  
energy cost alert?



## Peak Load Management and Red Day Alerts

**THE TERM “PEAK LOAD”** refers to a period of time when electrical power is needed for a sustained period based on demand. The peak demand, or peak load contribution, is a shorter period when electricity is in particularly high demand. A great example of peak demand is a very hot summer weekday when both homes and businesses are using much higher amounts of electricity for air conditioning.

In our June issue, we explained how Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) initiates a late afternoon curtailment of air conditioning operations in schools each summer from 4:00–5:00 p.m. We call this important energy savings protocol Peak Load Management (PLM). Summertime energy conservation is vital because the summer peak load periods determine the amount of the demand charges that are added to our commercial electric bills for a 12-month period. Our 2019 PLM season began on June 19 and will be in effect through August 23, when teaching staff returns to school.

During the summer, our energy providers send MCPS an alert whenever they predict that there is the potential for peaks (high demands) for energy. We refer to those peak days as “red” days—days when our energy use will be extremely expensive based on the high demand for energy.

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# Peak Load Management and Red Alerts

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When SERT receives red day alerts from our energy providers, SERT will send an email to all building services managers and assistant managers asking them to properly turn off all unnecessary lighting, computers, and appliances. **Exception:** computer servers, network printers and copiers, and cafeteria computers should remain on to preserve data and memory. Remember to check your email regularly throughout the summer to ensure that you don't miss receiving this important alert, which we will send by 10:30 a.m. on red days.

As previously mentioned, red days typically occur on exceptionally hot and humid weekdays when both businesses and homes are using high amounts of energy for air conditioning. When this happens, the high demand for power can make the cost of electricity (kWh) skyrocket and impact the demand charge (KW) for 12 months.

Our utility companies randomly select five days between June and September with the highest demand for energy and base our annual rate on these final red days, some of which may occur when school is in session. This is why it's vital for us to practice good conservation habits every day, but especially on those days when we've been warned to be on alert. Since 2007, our PLM program's cost avoidance has averaged more than \$650,000 per year, proving that our conscientious conservation practices make a positive impact on MCPS's budget.



While MCPS is in PLM mode, chillers should not be running between 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.—especially on expensive red days! Limited exceptions are made based on the activities at individual schools. If you notice that your chiller is on at 4:00 p.m., call the EMS hotline **(301-252-3533)** and notify them immediately. If necessary, leave a voice mail with your school name, date, and time. [Click here](#) for more information about PLM.

## Hitting the Mark with Energy Shutdown Checklists



**WHENEVER SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED** for a long weekend or extended break, MCPS has an opportunity to save a tremendous amount of energy, which helps conserve natural and fiscal resources. During the 2018–2019 school year, there were seven such opportunities, for savings. The schools listed below completed and submitted SERT energy shutdown checklists for each of the long weekends and breaks, and we commend them for a job well done!

Belmont Elementary School  
 Briggs Chaney Middle School  
 Brown Station Elementary School  
 Clopper Mill Elementary School  
 Cloverly Elementary School  
 Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School  
 William H. Farquhar Middle School  
 Great Seneca Creek Elementary School  
 Stephen Knolls School  
 Laytonsville Elementary School

Roscoe R. Nix Elementary School  
 William Tyler Page Elementary School  
 Ritchie Park Elementary School  
 Rocky Hill Middle School  
 Silver Creek Middle School  
 Somerset Elementary School  
 Stone Mill Elementary School  
 Viers Mill Elementary School  
 Woodfield Elementary School  
 Woodlin Elementary School

# Third Quarter Recycling Awards

**WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT** that for the third quarter of the 2018–2019 academic year (March–May), the average pounds per person (PPP) recycled in our MCPS elementary schools was 6.21, middle schools averaged 4.93 PPP, and high schools achieved 2.99 pounds per person. Our schools have been doing a great job recycling during breakfast and lunch, in offices, classrooms, hallways, and other areas.

We thank our students and staff for their remarkable recycling efforts throughout the quarter and applaud the top 25 schools (15 elementary, 5 middle, and 5 high) listed below for earning a SERT recycling award for the third quarter of last school year. Schools shown in **bold blue text** earned quarterly awards for the first, second, and third quarters of the school year, and have also received a SERT Recycling Champion award.

Remember that recycling happens all day, 365 days a year! Please make sure that recycling bins are available throughout the summer for a variety of activities including ICB, Head Start programs, summer meals, summer school, summer camps, and more.

## TOP 15 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

- Belmont Elementary School
- Chevy Chase Elementary School
- Cold Spring Elementary School**
- Damascus Elementary School**
- Germantown Elementary School**
- Glen Haven Elementary School**
- Highland View Elementary School**
- Laytonsville Elementary School**
- Monocacy Elementary School**
- New Hampshire Estates Elementary School**
- North Chevy Chase Elementary School
- Oak View Elementary School**
- Sligo Creek Elementary School**
- Travilah Elementary School**
- Westbrook Elementary School**

## TOP 5 MIDDLE SCHOOLS:

- John T. Baker Middle School
- Gaithersburg Middle School**
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School**
- Redland Middle School**
- Rocky Hill Middle School**

## TOP 5 HIGH SCHOOLS:

- Damascus High School
- Albert Einstein High School**
- Northwood High School**
- Quince Orchard High School**
- Seneca Valley High School**



*School may be out for the summer, but recycling doesn't take a break!*

Although the regular daily functions at your school have changed for the summer, your recycling schedule remains the same as it was during the school year. If you believe that your dumpster has not been serviced according to the schedule, or if you need to request an additional pickup, please call 240-277-3285.

As always, recycling dumpsters should be locked except for the brief period that recycling materials are being placed in the dumpster. This is a critical step in avoiding contamination of your recyclables.

# SERT is Not on Summer Break!

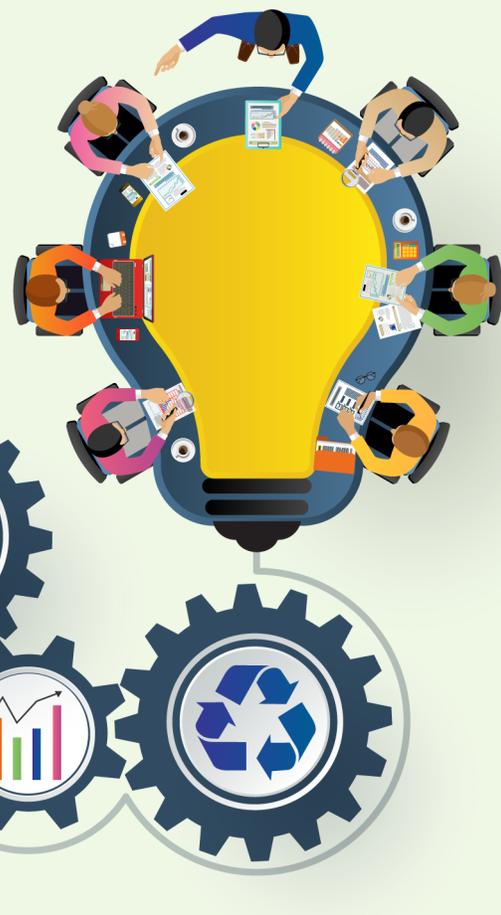
**IN THE PAST, SERT SPOTLIGHT** has taken a hiatus during July and August, but we realized that so much happens during those months that we need to publish our newsletter year round! While many schools are closed for the summer, many others are still occupied for summer education programs, summer camps, day care, other community use activities, and environmental conservation activities still need to take place on a daily basis.

The SERT facilitators continue to visit schools promoting conservation practices and looking for issues that may impact MCPS' use of natural resources. Summer also offers a good opportunity to analyze the data and performance of chiller systems and energy conservation tools (like the WiFi thermostats that installed in the relocatable classrooms last summer). Data generated during the last school year is finalized and recorded, allowing us to provide historical statistics of each school's performance and participation in the SERT program.

Our recycling team is geared up for another hectic summer season. They will be ordering, delivering and setting up recycling infrastructure items for schools with new construction activity. They'll also be coordinating with other departments to ensure that the mixed paper generated from school/teacher moves, construction projects, tech mods, and other upgrades is properly recycled. The recycling team will continue to constantly evaluate the recycling achievement, infrastructure, and procedures systemwide, implementing methods for improvement.

Summer is also a busy time for communication. This year, we're working on a brand new recycling handbook; getting the new *Watts Up?* posters ready for print; updating our website resources; creating new Google energy shutdown checklists; and getting materials ready for a brand new video contest that we'll tell you about soon.

All in all, the SERT staff will have an active July and August. But we're never too busy to help you conserve energy and increase recycling participation. We're here to assist in any way that we can.



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**SERT SPOTLIGHT** is produced by the School Energy and Recycling Team (SERT) program and distributed to school-based SERT leaders and teams, building service personnel, and many others who are interested in conservation and environmental sustainability.

As part of the Montgomery County Public Schools Department of Facilities Management, the SERT program provides opportunities for all schools to participate and receive incentives and recognition for their energy conservation and recycling efforts. The SERT program supports a balanced environment for the integration of all students to work together in a culturally diverse environment. Our goal is to provide the resources, support, and vision of the future for a successful conservation program at each school. SERT's motto, "It's your world. Choose to conserve!" promotes the connection between human behavior and its impact on the environment. It reinforces our culture of conservation and encourages participation in our mission to conserve resources and recycle actively.

