

# Minnesotans Go Green

## Witness to a Tipping Point

Presented by Jeff Ledermann



**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

# Presentation Plan

1. "The Tipping Point"
2. Stories of MN Going Green
3. Next steps
4. Community-level Success
5. Questions



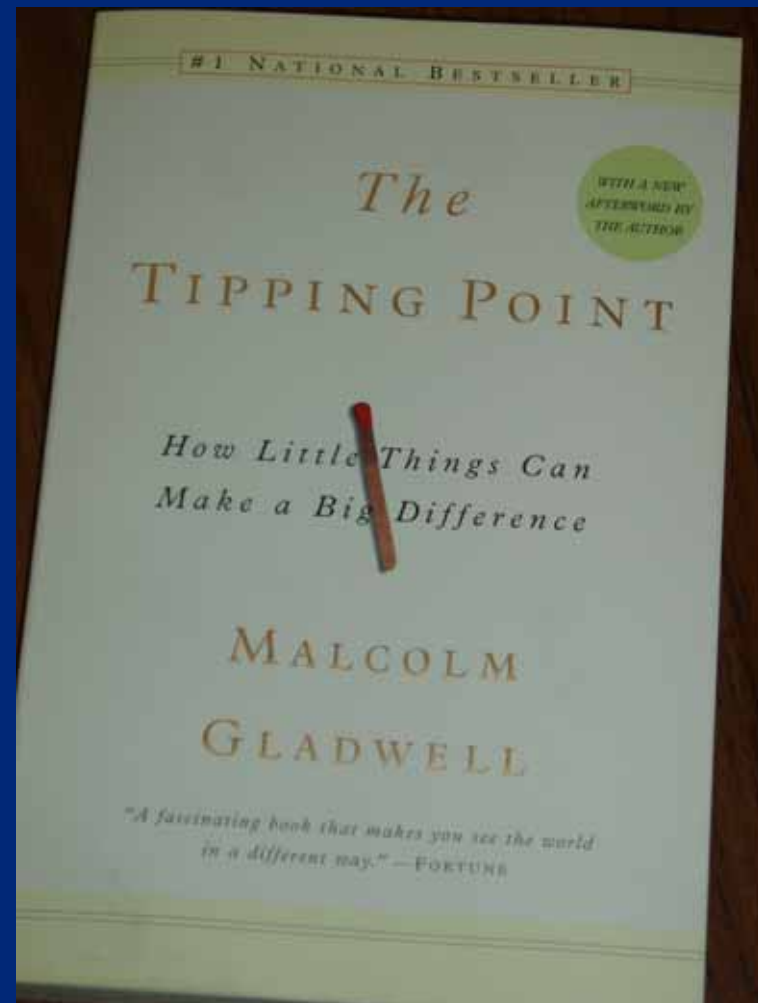
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

# Have We Witnessed a GREEN Tipping Point?



# The Tipping Point

- o Malcolm Gladwell
- o Examination of social epidemics
- o “ideas can be contagious”
- o Three Rules of Epidemics



# #1 - The Law of the Few

- o 80/20 principle
- o Word of mouth
  - o Connectors - Know lots of people (acquaintances), bring people together
  - o Mavens - Knows everything about something
  - o Salespeople - Skills to persuade
- o It is "Who You Know"!



# #2 - Stickiness

- **Message makes an impact**
  - Contagious
  - Memorable
- **Can be done with simple changes**
  - Focus
  - Interaction
  - Repetition



# #3 - The Power of Context

- Human beings are a lot more sensitive to their environment than they may seem
- Inner states are the result of our outer circumstances - Broken Window Theory and NY subway clean-up
- The Rule of 150



# Radical, Dude!

- o Change is possible!
  - o Radically with the right impetus
- o Lessons from Gladwell:
  - o **Focus**
  - o **Test**
  - o **Believe**



# The Importance of Message and Audience

## Living Green Expo and Eco Experience

- o EVERYONE can make an impact
- o Living Green is for people along the green spectrum –one size does NOT fit all!
- o Living green can be SIMPLE, HEALTHY, save you MONEY



# Goals - Living Green Expo and Eco Experience

- o Reach individuals no matter where they're at on the sustainability path – the Living Green spectrum
- o Creating an epidemic of green action:
  - o Inform
  - o Educate
  - o Motivate
  - o Empower to act



# Results - Green is growing

## Living Green Expo, May 3-4

- o 22,000 attendees
- o 247 exhibitors (sold out)
- o 66 workshops

## Eco Experience

- o 350,000 attendees
- o 100+ partners
- o Media
  - o 115 Stories (78 TV)
  - o 22 million impressions
  - o \$2.5 million ad value
- o Local and International Awards
- o At least 10 others states and regions copying



# Green Research from the Living Green Expo and the Eco Experience

## Interesting findings from surveys:

- High majority believe **Green is good for jobs and the economy.**
- There is a very strong correlation between perceived **difficulty** and number of people who are taking these **actions**, but if they think about the action's **effectiveness** (vs. **difficulty**) they are also more willing to try it.
- Don't call me an "**environmentalist**".
- 64% have begun **making changes** in their lifestyles because of these problems. Another 29% have not yet made any changes, but they are **willing** to do so.
- Over half of the folks surveyed at Eco Experience "**just wandered in**".



# Next Steps for Living Green

- o Living Green Team
- o Improving LGE and Eco Experience
- o Expanding Reach and Audiences
- o Adding Value



# Tipping a Community Green

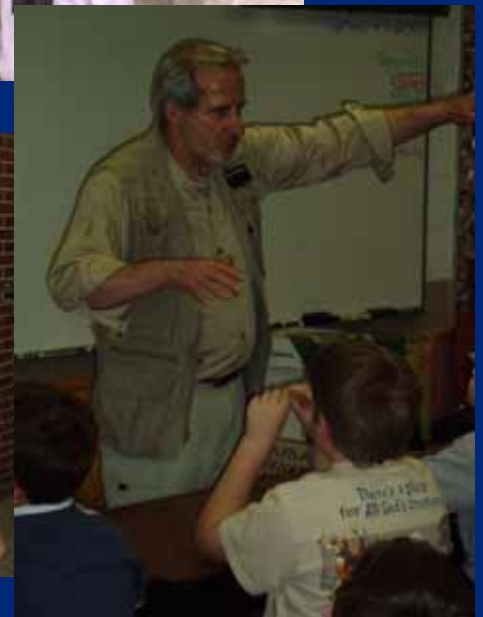
Mahtomedi, MN

- Suburban St. Paul
- History
- Middle to upper income
- Mix of old and new housing
- Parks, trails and White Bear Lake
- Limited open space



# Becoming A Community Connector

- Shy, small-town kid
- Passionate about learning and nature
- Not shy anymore!
- Invested in the community (2 kids)
- 8 years in Mahtomedi



# Community Results

- **Land use and water quality workshop for city officials**
  - **Natural resource inventory**
  - **Low impact development proposals**
  - **Increased use of raingardens**
- **Signed onto US Mayor's Climate Change Agreement**
- **City Environmental Commission**
- **Establishment of environmental stewardship team at the largest church**
- **Creation of Mahtomedi Area Green Initiative – Planning for a sustainable energy future**



# School Results

- New Community Education EE programs
  - Before/after school
  - Summer program
  - Re-establishment of residential ELC trip
- Waste Reduction and recycling programs
  - Composting
  - Resource management contract
  - Increased recycling
- Resident naturalist program at school and city park
- Integration of EE into science curriculum
- 3-acre native prairie restoration at OHA Elementary (650 kids planting and seeding!)



# Steps to Success

- Start small
- Dream big
- Be patient
- But persistent



**“Things can happen all at once, and little changes can make a huge difference.” - MG**



# It's All About Relationships

- Build trust
- Follow through –  
“Do what you say,  
say what you do”
- Capitalize on  
opportunities
- Recognize others



# Become a Connector

- **Get involved**
  - join, belong, go to community events and meetings
- **Participate**
  - Volunteer - coach, teach, work
- **Feature your talents**
  - share your passion



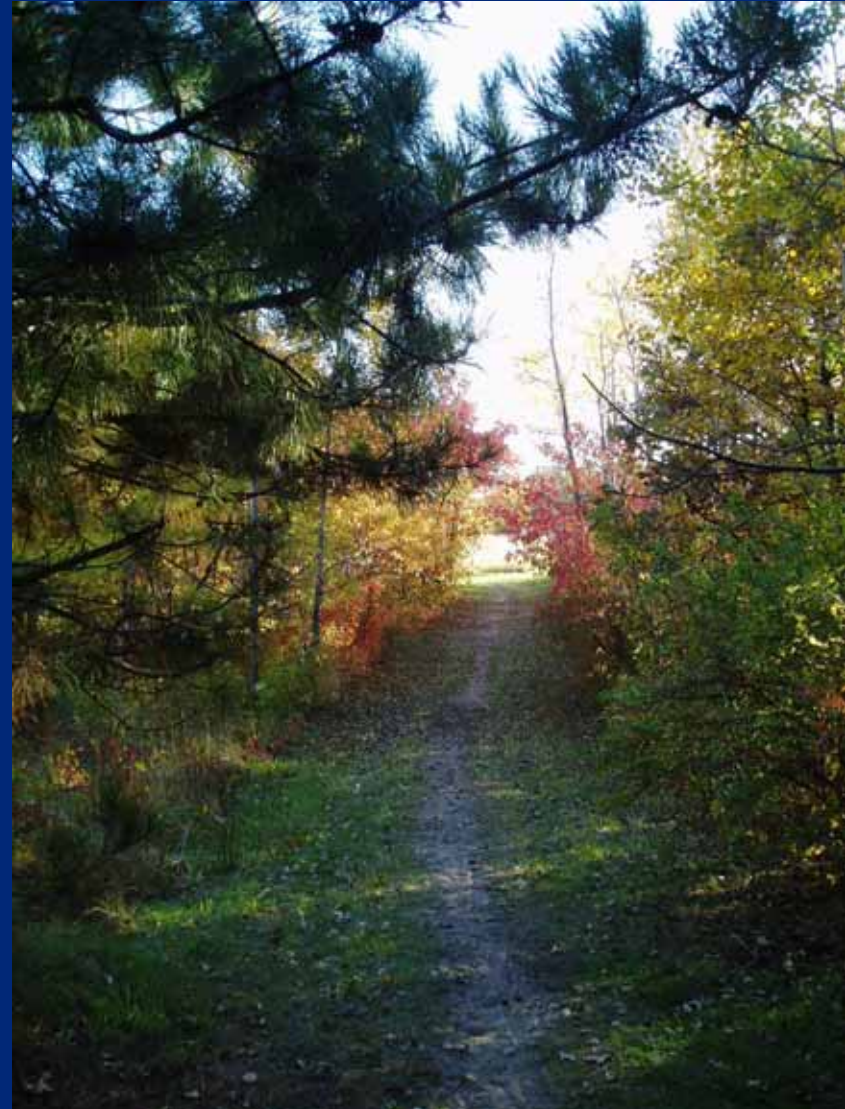
# Taking it to the Next Level

- **Make a connection**
  - Every person is a resource
  - Smile and say, "Hi!"
  - Meet and greet
  - Share your interests
  - Mutual Support
    - You scratch my back...



# In Summary

- **Get Involved**
- **Become one of the "Few" –**
  - **Connector**
  - **Maven**
  - **Salesperson**
- **Cultivate mutually-beneficial relationships**
- **Build respect and trust**



# Questions?

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