

**City of Fort Collins**  
**Sustainability and Climate Wise Internship**  
**Amanda Sutton**

The nice thing about Environmental Health is that it is not only for the environmental scientists who are interested in regulatory compliance and government work, but for people who want to help make a positive change in their community that can lead to improving the health of the environment. Seeing as how I was more of a tree hugger than a regulatory officer, I decided to focus my attention to sustainability and conservation. With the help of the amazing Environmental Health Department staff I was able to apply for and receive an internship with the City of Fort Collins Natural Resources department. Working with a team of experts in air quality, solid waste reduction, recycling, and sustainability I assisted with both internal and public outreach education campaigns.

One of the major programs I worked with was the Climate Wise program which assisted local business with reducing their impacts on the environment. Free technical assessments were offered that focused on energy and water conservation, solid waste reduction and recycling, and transportation. Afterwards an assessment was written that included the findings of the on-site visit and the resulting recommendations. Businesses could choose which projects to implement and then report their progress at the end of the year. This program has been very successful and in 2006 alone the Climate Wise program partner business reduced 62,202 tons CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which is equivalent to planting 4,975,000 trees!

In addition to gaining valuable experience in all areas of sustainability, this internship showed me that people can accomplish great feats when they work together. It was a great experience that has helped me to decide the career path I would like to follow in the future.



*Performing an on-site assessment for the Climate Wise program*



*Sustainability outreach at one of many Earth Day events*

For more information in this internship please contact Amanda Sutton at [asutton@fcgov.com](mailto:asutton@fcgov.com).