

HEALTH REPORT

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CITIES NOW ENGAGING IN CAMPAIGNS TO BRING WELLNESS TO LOCAL COMPANIES

In a number of areas of the country, city-sponsored organizations are taking the lead to push for increased wellness for their residents. The city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and six others around the country are currently pushing area businesses and individuals toward higher participation through Well City campaigns to improve the overall health of their communities.

Milwaukee and other cities are working hand-in-hand with an organization known as Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA) to provide information and incentives for local businesses and organizations that offer wellness programs to their employees. In addition to Milwaukee, these municipalities are now involved: Greeley, CO., Fort Collins, CO., Fremont, NE., Morgantown, WV., Charleston, SC., and Mesa County, CO.

The aim of the campaign is to get business organizations motivated toward providing and promoting wellness programs to their employees. When this happens, the employees, the company, and, hopefully, entire cities and regions of the country benefit as well.

“More and more organizations are recognizing the contribution healthy lifestyles can have on the health and well-being of our entire region,” said Dick Tillmar who is the Co-chairman of the Well City Milwaukee campaign. “We’ll not only benefit from lower healthcare costs and healthier, more productive employees, but we’ll all benefit from making our region a healthier, more attractive place to work, live and play.”

The Well City Milwaukee group is receiving excellent support throughout their community. It’s become a partnership that includes the City of Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Committee and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce. The initiative gained strength with the recent addition of the YMCA, the Wellness Council of Wisconsin and several associations with healthcare providers and local businesses.

The area is now engaged in a 3-year campaign to get at least 20 percent of area workers employed by Well City award earning companies. When that happens, Milwaukee will be awarded Well City status with WELCOA. So far, nine cities and locales around the United States have achieved this status. They are: Jacksonville, FL., Omaha, NE., Chattanooga, TN., Hobart, IN., Lincoln, NE., Kearney, NE., Kanawha Valley, WV., Gainesville, FL., and Bangor, ME.

Well City Milwaukee launched a website on Valentine’s Day to provide information on the initiative, data on how employers can get involved, plus numerous resources and support for companies who wish to provide better wellness programs for their employees. “We are really gaining momentum,” said Co-chairperson Mary Meechan. “Our commitment to bringing the entire community into the initiative is paving the way for participation and support from corporations across the community.”

Source: Well City Milwaukee. Press Release. “The City of Milwaukee gets Special Valentine.”

February 2008. <http://www.wellcitymilwaukee.org/atf/cf/{BC1ECDCB-79F4-4995-A4DF-69AD1248D0EB}/WellCityLaunchesWebsite021208.pdf>