** 2018 Environmental Representative Guide**

online at the [***Enviro Reps Page***](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/):

[**www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps**](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps)

1. **My role:**

I am an **environmental ambassador** and **house committee** member – **accountable** to my fellow residents.

1. **The critical environmental concerns:**

There are many environmental concerns in South Africa; poor and marginalised communities who lack access to resources are the worst affected. Critical concerns, which undermine the wellbeing of society, apply to our town and to us at Rhodes University:

* **Water**: Water restrictions apply in our town. Water supply is too low. Threatened by droughts, poor sewage & waste management. Pollution of catchments impacts our health.
* **Energy:** Costly. Coal-fired power causes pollution, impacts our health. Delays in implementing renewable energy. High energy consumption is linked to higher residence fees.
* **Waste**: Our throw-away culture leads to excessive waste. Littering & illegal dumping. Poor law enforcement & landfill site management impacts our health.
* **Biodiversity:** Diversity of life is a natural insurance policy, vital for food security. It is threatened by invasive species, changes in land-use & climate, which makes society vulnerable.

1. **My duties:**
   1. **Promote Environmental Awareness in my Res/Hall**: ***REQUIRED***

Regularly remind students my warden about critical environmental concerns in various ways so they feel inspired to do something to help make a difference. For example, I can:

* Send status updates about concerns & activities on WhatsApp, Facebook, email, etc.
* Put posters on noticeboards, notes/stickers on bathroom mirrors, light switches, etc.
* Chat, e.g. at res meetings, meals, talks, etc.
* Have informal quiz, debate, or performance (song, poem, drama) – this can be fun, thought-provoking, and get people involved.

Topics on ***Action Page***: ***www.ru.ac.za/environment/action‌***

* 1. **Coordinate Practical Environmental** **Activities in my Res**: ***REQUIRED***
     1. **WATER: *PRIORITY!***

1. **Water saving**: involve ALL students in saving water.
2. **Rainwater tanks** (if present): create roster of volunteer students to do weekly check (no leaks or damage, connections in place, tap closed, etc).
3. **Monthly rainwater quality testing** (I can also test tap water, if desired): use the low cost kit to test once a month, and send results to Prof Tandlich.

Guiding info at [***Enviro Reps Page***](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/) go to ***1. Enviro Reps Resources*** – grab downloads under:

***a. Water-wise resources***  and ***b. Water test kit resources***

* + 1. **WASTE: *PRIORITY!***

1. **Reducing waste**: alert ALL students about the different types of waste, and involve them in reducing their total waste.
2. **Recycling**: involve ALL students in ensuring that there is a 2-bin system so recyclable waste can be collected separately in clear bags.
3. **Re-using**: involve ALL students in re-using containers, boxes, carry bags, etc. Promote:

* *Tough shopping bags* (instead of plastic)
* *Re-fillable water bottles* (instead of disposable plastic bottles)

1. **Separate hazardous waste**: involve ALL students in ensuring hazardous items are placed in the appropriate separate containers for safe disposal:

* *Batteries, chemicals*, *etc* – place in dedicated container, when full take to RU Chemistry Dept
* *Sharps* (including broken glass) – place in dedicated glass container for recycling
* *Body fluids, blood, etc* – place in dedicated sanitary (SHE) bins provided by Housekeeping
* *Cigarette butts* – place in dedicated butt bin or pot of sand, which must be at least 10 m away and downwind of windows/doors/aircon inlets.

Guiding info at [***Enviro Reps Page***](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/) go to ***1. Enviro Reps Resources*** – follow the links under:

***c. Waste-wise resources***

* + 1. **OTHER: *REQUIRED***

Involve students in my res/hall in **at least one additional** focus areas, or more (go the extra mile!). It may be linked to other RU activities such as community engagement, *Trading Live*, etc, or initiatives in the wider community. Use the list below as a guide:

1. **Power saving**: involve students in saving electricity.
2. **Travel-wise**: involve students in car-sharing, or promote walking/cycling on campus, etc.
3. **Biodiversity**: involve students in learning about the diversity of plants/animals, removing invasive alien weeds or litter, bird or wildlife projects, gardening, tree-planting, etc.
4. **Food focus**: involve students in growing imifino, veggies or fresh herbs (with permission from RU Grounds & Gardens). Could be combined with a worm farm for biodegradable waste, tap off the worm ‘tea’ to use as fertiliser or sell for extra funds.
5. **Other options**: any activity that helps promote socio-ecological sustainability is great!

At [***Enviro Reps Page***](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/) go to ***1. Enviro Reps Resources*** – follow links and grab ideas etc under:

***d. Energy-wise resources***, ***e. Travel-wise resources***, ***f. Biodiversity resources***,

***g. Food-wise resources***, ***h. Worm farming, i. Additional sustainability resources***

* 1. **Participation in Environmental** **Events**: ***REQUIRED***

Involve as many students in my res/hall as possible in *at least two* environmental events – one per semester. It can be organised by others, or by me and other Enviro Reps in my Hall. Try to include one of each type:

1. **Outdoor, recreational or practical hands-on**: nature walk, fun run, visit and/or volunteer, e.g. at Redbeard’s permaculture farm, SPCA, etc.
2. **Educational**: enviro movie, talk, seminar, Environmental Award ceremony, etc.

Options on ***Events Page***: ***www.ru.ac.za/environment/events*** – follow the links

* 1. **Reports, Records and Handover**: ***REQUIRED***

As Enviro Rep, I am accountable to my res and to the SRC Environmental Councillor, and I must keep them informed by sharing updates on environmental activities in my res/hall.

* + 1. **House Reports: *REQUIRED***

1. **Term 1 – first week of March**: explain my plan for environmental activities for the year to House Committee, and incorporate any useful feedback.
2. **Term 1 – last week of March**: verbal report-back and updates on environmental activities at house meeting(s), and incorporate any useful feedback.
3. **Term 2**: verbal report-back and updates on environmental activities at house meeting(s), and incorporate any useful feedback.
4. **Term 3**: verbal report-back and updates on environmental activities at house meeting(s), and incorporate any useful feedback.
5. **Term 4**: do survey in res to find out if environmental activities were effective, and give verbal report-back at house meeting.
   * 1. **SRC Reports: *REQUIRED***
6. **Term 1 – 11 March**: Meeting with SRC Environmental Councillor.
7. **Term 2 – 20 May**: *Written report* on environmental activities (1 page max) – to SRC Environmental Councillor (srcenvironmental@ru.ac.za) including: (i) Brief description of activities; (ii) Aims; (iii) Progress update (achievements & challenges); and (iv) Way forward.
8. **Term 3 – 17 July**: Meeting with SRC Environmental Councillor.
9. **Term 4 – 20 September**: *Written report* (1 page max) reviewing effectiveness of environmental activities (use feedback from your res survey) – to SRC Environmental Councillor (srcenvironmental@ru.ac.za).
   * 1. **Handover Records: *REQUIRED***
10. I will keep electronic records – stored safely in clearly labelled and dated folders on a flash stick, or the res Google Drive, or other system – as arranged with my Warden.
11. I will hand over records to the next person who will be Environmental Rep, to ensure the res environmental activities will continue to run smoothly – ***before*** November exams
12. **Who supports me:**

I am supported by the **SRC Environmental Councillor**, and by my **Warden**. My guiding webpage is:

**www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps**

1. [Enviro Reps Resources](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/#Resources) – includes this guide, plus training materials, and RU Environmental Sustainability Policy.
2. [Enviro Reps Support Networks](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/#SupportNetworks) – includes Enviro Reps contact info, WhatsApp, Facebook & mailing list info.
3. [Enviro Reps Leadership](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/#Leadership) – includes details of those who can support and assist me.
4. [Enviro Reps Roles and Responsibilities](http://www.ru.ac.za/environment/students/enviroreps/#Role) – includes my key performance measurements.

**Notes**

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