



# Taunton Municipal Light Plant Pandemic Pounds Weight Loss Challenge

## Wellness Success Story

Amidst a pandemic, essential employees at the Taunton Municipal Light Plant in Taunton, MA, decided to tackle their 2020 quarantine weight gain with an eight-week weight loss challenge.

The challenge, developed organically by the participants, was a big success with 15 employees registering a total weight loss of over 92 pounds. At the end of the challenge two participants were awarded cash prizes of \$150 dollars, one prize was for the most pounds lost and the other for the biggest percentage of weight loss.

“Congratulations to our weight loss challenge participants for their hard work and great success on reaching their wellness goals,” said Lynn Davine, HR Administrator for Taunton’s Municipal Light Plant. “Special acknowledgements to Eva Henualt for serving as a terrific accountability coach and to one of our mechanical engineers and our general foreman for losing over 20 pounds each.”

### **An accountability team approach to losing weight**

The weight loss challenge began in January 2021 and was developed and run by Eva Henualt, a member of the Transmission & Distribution engineering department. Eva kept the challenge on track by sending motivational emails and reminders to help her fellow team members stay accountable for each week’s goals.

Participants held each other accountable each week for achieving their goals that they had set for themselves. The accountability and friendly competition really helped everyone keep engaged along the way. And wellness research has shown that if you want to adopt and maintain new habits, especially lose weight, it helps to not do it alone. Teammates can support each other, learn from one another and share successes and struggles.

### **Small, manageable goals add up to big results**

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, participants were not able to meet as a group for their challenges and had to resort to activities and contests they could do on their own and then share their results with the team.

Mini contests with small prizes such as water bottles, were held throughout the 8 week period and included challenges such as push-ups of at least 10 per day, squat and plank positions held for at least one minute, and drinking water that equaled half of your body weight in ounces.

Weight loss bingo was also played to put some fun into dieting. It became easier to reach goals by repeating three easy and manageable steps while playing bingo, such as drink one glass of water at a time versus thinking of drinking eight glasses of water per day.

Healthy recipes and photos of what's for dinner were shared. Several employees adopted a vegan approach and others practiced a low carb/low sugar diet and a Nutri-Bullet blender was added to the staff kitchen to whip up healthy shakes and drinks.

Throughout the challenge the participants competed and cheered each other on via emails, photos and text messages to stay on target as they tracked their steps, walked a mile each day and completed their Monday weigh-ins each week on two new scales that were purchased for the main offices.

### **More healthy challenges underway**

Challenge participants are committed to maintaining their results and are already thinking up ideas for their next challenge. And some employees have joined the Mayor's Walking Challenge this spring. A hearty "well done" to the Taunton Municipal Light Plant employees for their hard work and great success in reaching their wellness goals.

