

## **St. Luke's Hospital Wins Smart Business Award**

St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth has been recognized as a Minnesota Waste Wise Smart Business. Minnesota Waste Wise is a business membership program of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce devoted to help businesses reduce waste voluntarily and save money.

"The partnership between St. Luke's and the Institute for a Sustainable Future is bringing awareness to the fact that healthy people and a healthy environment are interrelated," said Mark Blaiser, Minnesota Waste Wise executive director. "We are not separate from the environment. And St. Luke's is demonstrating that food that is healthy from a nutritional, environmental and community perspective is important to the health of its patients."

By sourcing food from local outlets, including fish from Lake Superior fishers, bison from a nearby farm, local produce and milk without added hormones, St. Luke's knows where its food is coming from and how it is grown and harvested. Purchasing local products means less transportation as well, reducing the impact of air pollution and fossil fuel consumption. Even the cookies are purchased from a bakery just four blocks from the hospital.

In addition to sourcing, St. Luke's partners with Second Harvest Food Bank to donate food that can no longer be served but is edible. Over 10,000 meals are saved per year and donated to those in need. Leftover food that cannot be used is composted at a local facility.

The Healthy Food in Health Care Project is the first local, sustainable healthcare food pilot in Minnesota. Through its efforts, St. Luke's is hoping to build a model of preventative health for Minnesota and the nation. As a result, St. Luke's Hospital received a 2008 Minnesota Waste Wise Smart Business Award and was presented the Governor's Award for Waste and Pollution Prevention at the Minnesota Air, Water, and Waste Environmental Conference in February.

Minnesota Waste Wise helps businesses find ways to reduce, reuse or recycle under the philosophy that "less waste is smart business for a better environment." This service is available to all businesses in Minnesota. For information, call (651) 292-4662, or visit [www.mnwastewise.org](http://www.mnwastewise.org).