

# **EXHIBIT 31**

Did anyone answer your question? I'll see what I can find from my NGA email.

Irene

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Irene  
Moderator

<http://www.freecycle.org/> Freecycling--changing the world one gift at a time!

Irene Johnson <majortennisbum@gmail.com>

Tue, Jul 5, 2005 at 3:52 PM

Reply-To: Irene Johnson <majortennisbum@gmail.com>

To: Darren Wyn Rees <darren@cymraeg.org>

#### Group Guidelines

It was requested that I attempt to lay down some guidelines for groups. I know there are already some out there somewhere but here are some basics I can think of off hand.

1) ERSATZFRIEND. Each group must have ersatz as a co-owner. This was voted on by all group moderators worldwide in the freecyclemodsquad. The poll may be viewed under polls in that group. This rule was made

for several reasons: 1) as a way to delineate which is the official group in each area, 2) to enable the "main office" to help out a local mod if their own owner address is locked out of the group by Yahoo (This does happen on occasion). 3) if an owner leaves and says "man, a group of ten people who never post is no fun" and the group grows to several hundred and there is no longer an owner, we can then step in and find a new owner. 4) Trust. We as an organization trust each local mod/owner to follow the basic rules. In turn, the local owner trusts The Freecycle Network by adding in this address. Realize that e-mails to this address are never read and are deleted out automatically by a software program, so contacting it will not get a response. This address has never been used to "delete a group" or something evil. If we have a problem with a group, ersatzfriend is removed by us as a co-owner and the remaining owner is then asked to remove the freecycle name from their group.

2) Geographic Guidelines: The idea here is not to be a stickler but instead to leave all doors open for the smallest viable size. Freecycling is about community and if possible we want to leave every door open for as many local communities as possible to have their own group. We also want to limit driving time and use of fossil fuels as much as possible which is totally compatible with "smallest viable size". That size is somewhere between 10,000 and 30,000 population in a town or area. 10,000 is probably a little low and 30,000 more than enough.

a) Regional groups are a no-no. Let's assume the area is sparsely populated. Why no regional group? In such cases I recommend that a central city or county serve as the hub. Name the group "Springfield City Group" and include the entire region in the intro paragraph. The idea is not to say there isn't a reason for larger area groups, but instead to leave the door open for later so that other groups can crop up in that area. If the group is called "Ohio Valley Freecycle" covering three counties, this leaves no room for new groups. If it is

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called Springfield and mentions the greater "Ohio Valley" area in the intro, Springfield won't have to change its name later to allow for other groups as the concept grows, but merely its intro paragraph: no big deal.

One regional group in Ohio was around a long time, never complained about all the city groups being set up in her region until there was no city left for her to shrink down to. When her regional group had really run its course, she got understandably ticked. This is what ultimately happens if they don't complain about cities being set up in their area.

b) Defer to existing group owner. What if a new group crops up in an existing larger group's area? In a pinch, I always defer to the existing group. What if the existing group is larger than the mentioned "smallest viable / optimum size"? For example, the Ohio Valley group already exists and there are 2-3 cities in that area which could serve as self-sustaining local groups and the regional group already has several hundred members. I notify the regional group owner that a) a new group has been set up in his/her area, b) Your area can easily sustain more local groups (see stats above), c) at some point you, existing group owner, will want to engineer a split of your group into 2-3 smaller group by towns of say 20,000 plus or so. d) you, existing owner, may accept or reject the new group as you please, but if you accept it, you'll need to start your split up now. If not, then I just tell the new smaller group, I'm sorry but there is already an exi

isting group for your area, why not offer your enthusiasm and help to them?

It is always better when the existing mods runs such a split up, hand picks skilled, experienced new local mods AND remains the owner of the new groups until he/she feels confident that the new mods can pick up the reins (a couple months)..

c) Can a county group be ok? Particularly in rural areas county groups can be just fine. In very rural areas they may even be the "Spring County group" and include a couple of surrounding counties in the intro paragraph. Here again, we want the group name to reflect the smallest viable group size. If the county only has 30,000 people and they are scattered all over the place, then this makes sense. 1) Does your county have at least two cities of 20,000-30,000 or more? Then a county group is probably not a good long-term solution because both of those

cities have a good shot at their own group at some point down the road as long as they are not right next door to each other geographically. If a county does have the two or more such cities I always recommend they name the group after one of the cities and include the greater county and other city in their intro paragraph. This gives them exactly the same coverage geographically but leaves teh door open for the second city to start its own group some day.

Does the entire county have only one city of 20,000 plus? Then a county group is fine. Is that city in the center of the county? You may still want to name it after the city particularly if there is a large city just over the county border in the next county to make clear a geographic separation with the other group. Then the outlying areas

need to pick a city they want to joinn just like they need to pick which city they are going to drive to to get groceries. No problems with that.

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d) What about a county line issue? Let's say your town is springfield, and lancaster is across the county line. Springfield has 40,000 people, Lancaster is relatively small with 20,000 inhabitants. Maybe it could someday have it's own group but is not even close to that now. Or maybe not, doesn't matter. In this case a county group name would make no sense. It would make more sense to call the group Springfield Freecycle and should include "lancaster and logan and blah in our surrounding area" in the intro paragraph.

This way you give these folks a place to call home in your group, while leaving open the option for Lancaster or maybe even logan to have their own group someday.

3) One group per owner rule: It is asked that each group owner only own the group where they actually live. We ask this because you then know your local recycling contacts, can plan a local cafe meetup (and attend it), or local event which an "out-of-towner" really couldn't. This doesn't mean you can't be an occasional helper mod of a neighboring friend's group. For those larger groups orchestrating a split up we also strongly encourage the old owner to be the owner of the new groups during the transition for a couple of months before passing on the reins.

REASONS: 1) Someone who lives in the area knows the area best.  
 2) Having someone local shows that the area is ready for a group  
 3) Prevents over-enthusiastic people from setting up lots of new groups but then becoming tired and later abandoning them  
 4) Prevents one person from damaging a large number of groups  
 5) Spreads the load so no one burns out

In addition we recommend that group owners have a backup owner and moderators in addition to ersatzfriend

I'll try to add to the confusion here:

- 1) We don't allow new groups in existing groups' areas, ever. No overlap allowed.
- 2) We don't allow new groups to be larger than one county in size and they should actually be named after the main city and just include the county as their greater outreach area, leaving open room for new groups to crop up in that county later.
- 3) What if a mod wants to set up a new group in a city in an existing county group? If it makes sense, we can talk to the existing county group mod to ask them to consider shrinking their group up to once city and surrounding area. But if the existing mod says no, then it's a no-go for the new group.
- 4) What if the existing group covers multiple counties? It really should split up and Deron needs to talk to them and apply real but positive pressure. This has never not worked.

Interesting situations: a city group calls itself Metro Columbus or Metro Nashville and starts refusing suburb groups to the NGA. This is not cool. They have the city only, not the metro area. Suburbs are not their call. No metro tricks please. It doesn't make sense and is more a control and fear thing than a good solution. The city group doesn't get to approve the suburb or not. Same goes for LA. We ask them nicely if they want to start splitting up LA or trying a small group or two in LA on the fringe and if they say no, we are out of luck and we honor that decision. However, if a suburb comes along, it ain't their call to make or not.

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In general, we offer local county group mods positive advice and tips on how to split, but we don't use force. We ask them to think about it. They may come around with time. If not, it is not the end of the world. When the new site is done, people will be able to post also to only within two miles of their residence; for example. So they can limit teh post distance anyway. So no need to pressure here. Sometimes with huge county groups (like a couple in NJ), it is a real bum! mer, but there is nothing we can do at this point.

We are tending more towards "point-centered" groups like Gita pointed out. Renaming a group after the main city and including the county as the outreach area in the description is a good idea which leaves room for other groups down the road.

Hope this helps.  
Deron

On 7/4/05, Darren Wyn Rees <[darren@cymraeg.org](mailto:darren@cymraeg.org)> wrote:

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**Darren Wyn Rees** <[darren@cymraeg.org](mailto:darren@cymraeg.org)>  
To: Irene Johnson <[majortennisbum@gmail.com](mailto:majortennisbum@gmail.com)>

Fri, Jul 8, 2005 at 11:37 AM

That was very kind of you to send the Group Guidelines information.

Many thanks.

Darren

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