

# The Yard Smart Pledge

*"I pledge to use ecologically-smart practices in my yard."*

I believe these sustainable yard practices will help keep our community healthy, naturally beautiful, and safe from harmful chemicals, unnecessary pollution and waste. I will also try to educate others in my community about the benefits of these practices.



- Are safe for children, adults, pets, wildlife and all living things.
- Conserve natural resources like water and fossil fuels.
- Support native diversity in plants and wildlife.
- Do not pollute air, soil or water.
- Work with (not against) nature
- Avoid or minimize synthetic pesticides and high-nitrogen fertilizers

Ecology Action Center  
202 West College Avenue  
Normal IL 61761



## Yard Smart Program

**Ecology Action Center  
202 W College Ave  
Normal, IL 61761**

**Phone: 309-454-3169  
[www.ecologyactioncenter.org](http://www.ecologyactioncenter.org)**

## Why Be Yard Smart?

We want a lot from our yards. We want them to bring beauty to our home and neighborhood. To invite play, laughter, and gatherings with family and friends. To provide sanctuary from the hectic daily busy-ness

But sometimes our attempts to "beautify" our yards can cause unintended harm, especially when synthetic pesticides (like weedkillers and insecticides) are used. The simple choices we make for yard care can have a big impact on the health of the whole community, from the water we drink, to the air we breathe.



### "Unintended" Human Health Concerns

- Weedkillers (i.e. 2,4-D) have been linked to rising rates of lymphoma in 75 of 99 human studies according to the National Lymphoma Society.
- Women who used lawn services had higher rates of breast cancer, according to a Massachusetts study.
- Children have been found to be 6 times more likely to have leukemia if their parents used garden pesticide and herbicides once a month or more, according to a Los Angeles study.
- Over the long term, several types of cancer, damage to nervous systems, birth defects, and infertility have been associated with exposure to common lawn care products.

### Environmental Concerns

- A study of air pollution in California found that mower emissions per year equaled that produced by 3,500,000 automobiles driven 16,000 miles each
- Habitat loss is the number one threat to wildlife today. You can help restore the balance by creating a place for wildlife in your yard.

## Three Categories of Certification

### The Chemical-Free Yard

Avoids aesthetic use of pesticides, which can harm humans, wildlife and the environment. Avoids the use of synthetic ammonia fertilizers which can contaminate groundwater and kill beneficial soil micro-organisms.

### The Easy on the Earth Yard

Reduces waste and conserves natural resources like water and fossil fuels. Minimizes lawn and promotes a healthy, diverse ecosystem. If synthetic pesticides are needed, homeowners practice Integrated Pest Management with use of the least toxic pesticides.

### The Wildlife Habitat Yard

Provides the basic requirements for wildlife to survive and flourish. Encourages a diverse wildlife population by landscaping with native plants, supplying adequate food and water, and providing a variety of shelter areas.

## How Do I Apply for Certification?

To apply for Yard Smart certification, stop by the **Ecology Action Center** or visit the website ([www.ecologyactioncenter.org](http://www.ecologyactioncenter.org))

Take the Yard Smart Pledge, complete the form and send it with a \$15 donation to the Ecology Action Center to receive a yard award sign. You can request certification guidelines and applications forms with this order, or download forms from the above websites.

Next, complete the application(s) for certification of choice and mail them in for review (\$5 donation per certification). For each qualified certification level, you will receive a sticker to affix to the back of your Yard Smart sign. You can apply for additional certification levels at any time.

## The Yard Smart Program

When you join the Yard Smart program and display the Yard Smart Award in your yard, you are indicating that you've taken the pledge toward supporting ecologically-sustainable practices our community.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to order the following items:**

| Item (check item)   | Cost per item |
|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metal "Yard Smart" award (8" )           | \$5           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metal Stake (must pick up*)              | \$5           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical- Free Application               | No charge     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy on the Earth Application            | No charge     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Habitat Application             | No charge     |
| <b>Postage and handling (no charge if you pick up at the EAC)</b> | <b>\$4</b>    |
| <b>Total Donation</b>   |               |

Mail this PLEDGE FORM and CHECK to:

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